A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

Hiſtorical BOOKS

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT.

7
2. L. i.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING

JOSHUA.
JUDGES.
RUTH.
I. SAMUEL.
II. SAMUEL.
I. KINGS.
II. KINGS.

I. CHRONICLES.
II. CHRONICLES.
EZRA.
NEHEMIAH.
ESTHER.

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

BY THE

Right Reverend Father in GOD,

Dr. *SYMON PATRICK*,

Late Lord Biſhop of *ELY*.

The Fifth Edition Corrected.

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MDCCXXXVIII.

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A COMMENTARY UPON THE Book of *JOSHUA.*

THIS Title doth not neceſſarily ſignify that this Book was written by *JOSHUA*, as the five foregoing were by *Moſes*, but only that it contains the Acts done by *Joſhua*. Yet there wants not Arguments to prove that *Joſhua* was the Author of this Book: For though *Grotius* and many other modern Writers, with ſome of the Ancients, think they find Reaſons in the Book itſelf againſt this Opinion; yet the ancient *Talmudiſts*, and ſeveral of the latter, aſcribe it to him, being principally induced thereunto by thoſe Words in the laſt Chapter of this Book, *Ver.* 26. which I cannot ſay are an evident Proof of it (for thoſe Words may relate only to the Covenant mentioned in that Chapter;) but thus they ſay expreſly in *Bava Bathra*, *Cap.* 1. *Joſhua wrote his own Book, and the eight laſt Verſes of the Law*; and then concerning the five laſt Verſes of this Book, they write after this manner in the ſame Place; *Eleazar wrote the* 29*th Verſe*, &c. *of the* xxiv*th Chapter, as Phineas did Ver.* 33. And there are Men of excellent Learning who have undertaken to anſwer all that can be objected unto this, (particularly *Daniel Huetius* in his *Demonſtratio Evang. Propoſ.* IV.) Which Objections I ſhall conſider in their proper Places, where they ſeem to ariſe in this Book.

Which the *Jews* reckon among the firſt Prophets (as they call them) tho' it contain only an Hiſtory of what paſſed till the Death of *Joſhua*; which, in all likelihood, he would not neglect to write himſelf, as *Moſes* did, what paſſed in his Time, that every Tribe and every Family might have an unqueſtionable Title to their Inheritance under his own Hand, who had by God's Order made a Diviſion of the Land; and that all Poſterity might ſee the Promiſes made unto them by *Moſes* were ſo punctually fulfilled, that there failed not ought of any good Thing which the LORD had ſpoken, but all came to paſs; as he obſerves xxi. 45. and that in a ſhort Time; for this Book contains the Hiſtory of the *Iſraelites*, from the Death of *Moſes* to the Death of *Joſhua*; that is, as ſome compute, for the Space of ſeventeen Years, or rather near twenty-ſeven. See upon xiv. 10.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW after the Death of Moſes.*] Thus thoſe Books are wont to begin, whoſe Argument relates to the Book before-going. As the Book of *Judges* is in this manner connected with this of *Joſhua*, and the Book of *Ruth* with that of *Judges*; and the LXX. make ſuch a Preface to join the Book of *Lamentations* with the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*.

After the Death of Moſes.] I ſuppoſe immediately after the Days of mourning for him were ended, *Deut.* xxxiv. 8.

The Servant of the LORD.] See *Deut.* xxxiv. 5.

It came to paſs that the LORD *ſpake unto Joſhua the Son of Nun.*] Out of the Sanctuary, it is moſt likely, from whence he had ſpoken to him a little before *Moſes* his Death, and made him a Promiſe of what he orders him now to accompliſh, (*Deut.* xxxi. 14, 23.) and where *Eleazar* was appointed long before to aſk Counſel for him, when there was great Occaſion, *Numb.* xxvii. 21.

Moſes Miniſter.] Who had attended upon *Moſes* from the Beginning, in his higheſt Employment, *Exod.* xxiv. 13. *Deut.* i. 38.

Ver. 2. *Moſes my Servant is dead.*] He hath finiſhed his Work, and can do me no farther Service.

Now therefore ariſe.] Put an end therefore unto your mourning for him, and go about the Buſineſs which he hath left thee to perform.

Go over this Jordan.] Within Sight of which they lay encamped.

Thou and all this People, unto the Land which I do give to them, even to the Children of Iſrael.] As he promiſed when he changed his Name from *Oſhea* into *Joſhua*, *Numb.* xiii. 16. *Deut.* i. 38. *Deut.* iii. 28.

Ver. 3. *Every Place.*] Within the Limits mentioned in the next Verſe.

That the Sole of your Foot ſhall tread upon, that have I given you, as I ſaid unto Moſes.] He would not have them doubt what *Moſes* ſaid from him, (*Deut.* xi. 24.) tho' he were dead.

Ver. 4. *From the Wilderneſs.*] This was the Bounds of the Country, on the South.

And this Lebanon.] Which was the Bounds on the North. And *Joſhua* ſeems now to have been in the Sight of it; to which the Divine Majeſty directed his Obſervation, as the moſt eminent Mountain in thoſe Parts of the World.

Even unto the great River, the River Euphrates.] Which was the Eaſtern Bounds, and called by other Authors the *great River*, as I have obſerved on *Deut.* i. 7.

All the Land of the Hittites.] Who were a very powerful People in the Country, dwelling, together with the *Amorites*, in the mountainous Parts of it, *Numb.* xiii. 29. ſome of which were of the Race of the Giants, and are therefore particularly mentioned, to ſhew that the moſt terrible People ſhould not be able to ſtand before *Joſhua*; but he ſhould either deſtroy them, or expel them, and make them flee their Country, as theſe *Hittites* did; of whom we read, and of their Kings, 2 *Kings* vii. 6.

Unto the great Sea.] The *Mediterranean*, which was the Weſtern Border, as it here follows.

Towards the going down of the Sun, ſhall be your Coaſt.] See upon *Deut.* xi. 24. and other Places.

Ver. 5. *There ſhall not any Man be able to ſtand before thee all the Days of thy Life.*] Deut. vii. 24.

As I was with Moſes, ſo I will be with thee.] To ſubdue all the People of *Canaan* before him; as he did the *Egyptians*, the two Kings of the *Amorites*, and the *Midianites* before *Moſes*: To counſel alſo, and adviſe him in all Difficulties, as he had done *Moſes*.

I will not fail thee, nor forſake thee.] See upon *Deut.* xxxi. 6, 8. On which Promiſe they relied in future Times, 1 *Kings* viii. 57.

Ver. 6. *Be ſtrong and of a good Courage.* This Charge he had given him before the Death of *Moſes*, *Deut.* xxxi. 23. And *David* gave the ſame to *Solomon*, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 20.

For unto this People ſhalt thou divide for an Inheritance the Land which I ſwear unto their Fathers to give them.] He had promiſed him, in the Place before named, that he *ſhould bring them into the Land*, &c. and here now adds, that he would ſettle them in the Poſſeſſion of it, by aſſigning every one their Portion in it; which he did by ſuch a divine Direction, as ſilenced all Diſputes about it.

Ver. 7. *Only be thou ſtrong and very courageous, that thou mayeſt obſerve to do according to all the Law, which Moſes my Servant commanded thee.*] It requires the greateſt Courage and Reſolution, eſpecially in a Governor, to be truly pious and religious, by obſerving the Laws himſelf, and ſeeing them obſerv'd by others.

Turn not from it to the Right-Hand or to the Left.] By adding to it, or taking away from it, *Deut.* xii. *ult.* or, more ſimply, No way deviate from it; for it is a Metaphor from Men in a Journey, who go ſtrait forward in the plain High-Way, and turn not aſide into By-paths, which lead they know not whither.

That thou mayeſt proſper whitherſoever thou goeſt.] Or *do wiſely*, as it is in the Margin; for it is the greateſt Policy to be truly religious.

Ver. 8. *This Book of the Law.*] The Original of which was preſerved in the Sanctuary; from whence GOD now ſpake to him, *Deut.* xxxi. 26.

Shall not depart out of thy Mouth.] He was to read in it continually, that he might inſtruct others, and be thereby an Example to all future Governors and Kings, according to the Law, *Deut.* xvii. 18, 19. By which it is evident, that *Joſhua* had a Copy of the Law; which was then written and extant in his Time.

But thou ſhalt meditate therein Day and Night.] His other weighty Employments were not to hinder him from pondering, as well as reading, the Law of GOD; becauſe it was to be his Rule in all his private Tranſactions and publick Adminiſtrations.

That thou mayeſt obſerve to do according to all that is written therein.] Which was not poſſi-

ble,

ble, without the ſerious and attentive Conſideration before mentioned.

For then thou ſhalt make thy Way proſperous, and then thou ſhalt have good Succeſs.] Or, *do wiſely*. Prudence and Proſperity go together; but no Prudence comparable to the ſtrict Obſervance of the Laws of GOD, upon which the Felicity of Kingdoms and States depend.

Ver. 9. *Have not I commanded thee? Be ſtrong and of a good Courage; be not afraid, neither be thou diſmayed; for the* LORD *thy* GOD *is with thee whitherſoever thou goeſt.*] He confirms him in the Reſolution he had put into him (*Ver.* 6.) by two Arguments, the Divine Vocation, and the Divine Preſence with him. See *Deut.* i. 29, 30. xxxi. 6, 7, 8. The latter of which the *Targum* thus expreſſeth, *For the WORD of the* LORD *thy* GOD *ſhall be for thy Help, in every Place where thou goeſt.* See *Ver.* 14.

Ver. 10. *Then Joſhua commanded the Officers of the People, ſaying.*] I have often obſerved, that as *SCHOPHETIM* were Judges, who heard Cauſes in their Courts, and pronounced Sentence; ſo *SCHOTERIM* were inferior Officers belonging to the Court, who ſummoned People to attend, and executed the Sentence: For after *Moſes* had mentioned (*Deut.* i. 15.) the Chief of their Tribes, Captains over Thouſands, and Hundreds, and Fifties, and Tens, he at laſt mentions theſe Officers among their Tribes; who were employed, it appears by this Place, in the *Camp*, as well as in the *Courts* of Juſtice.

Ver. 11. *Paſs thro' the Hoſt, and command the People, ſaying, Prepare you Victuals.*] They were to make Proclamation not only in all the four Camps of *Iſrael*, but in the ſeveral Tribes who were under thoſe Standards, to provide themſelves with ſuch Victuals as the Country of *Sihon* and *Og*, which they had lately conquered, afforded. For being, after three Days, (iii. 1.) to remove very early in the Morning, perhaps they might not have had Time to gather Manna ſufficient, and to prepare it before they began their March.

For within three Days.] See iii. 1, 2.

Ye ſhall paſs over this Jordan.] Which was not ſo far from *Shittim*, where they now lay, but they could ſee it.

And go to poſſeſs the Land, which the LORD *your* GOD *giveth you to poſſeſs it.*] He conſtantly remembers them of this Donation from GOD; both to ſtrengthen their Faith, and to excite their Thankfulneſs. *For they gat not the Land in Poſſeſſion by their own Sword, neither did their Arm ſave them; but his Right Hand*, &c. *becauſe he had a Favour to them*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, xliv. 3.

Ver. 12. *And to the Reubenites, and to the Gadites, and to Half the Tribe of Manaſſeh, ſpake Joſhua, ſaying.*] Here he begins to do according to the Command of *Moſes*, as GOD before directed him, *Ver.* 7, 8. For *Moſes* had given this Charge to the *Reubenites*, &c. when he gave them their Poſſeſſion on this ſide *Jordan*, *Numb.* xxxii. 20, 21, *&c.* and put them in Mind of it again, *Deut.* iii. 18, *&c.*

Ver. 13. *Remember the Word which Moſes the Servant of the* LORD *commanded you, ſaying.*] It is very obſervable, how gently and not imperiouſly *Joſhua* exerciſes his Authority, at his firſt Entrance upon his Office. For he only puts them in Mind of what *Moſes* required from them, and leaves them to reflect upon the Promiſe they made to him.

The LORD *your* GOD *hath given you Reſt, and hath given you this Land.*] That is, actually beſtowed upon them a Country to ſettle in. For here their Wives, and Children, and Cattle remained, (with a ſufficient Number of Perſons to look after them) when they marched into *Canaan*, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 14. *Your Wives, your little ones, and your Cattle, ſhall remain in the Land which Moſes gave you on this ſide Jordan; but ye ſhall paſs before your Brethren armed.*] March in the Front of them, to ſhew their Forwardneſs to bring them into the ſame happy Condition with themſelves.

All the mighty Men of Valour to help them.] Such as *Joſhua* picked out; for it is evident they did not all go over; but only Forty Thouſand of them, iv. 13. The reſt, tho' fit for War, were left to defend their Wives, Children, and Flocks, while thoſe mighty Men of Valour went to *help* their Brethren.

Ver. 15. *Until the* LORD *have given your Brethren Reſt, as he hath given you.*] A ſettled Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*, as they had of the Land of the two Kings of the *Amorites*.

And they alſo have poſſeſſed the Land which the LORD *your* GOD *giveth them.*] He would have them look upon the Conqueſt of the Land as certain, becauſe GOD had made a Grant of it to their Brethren.

Then ye ſhall return to the Land of your Poſſeſſion, and enjoy it, which Moſes, the LORD'S *Servant, gave you on this ſide Jordan, towards the Sun-riſing.*] According to the Agreement which *Moſes* had made with them, *Numb.* xxxiii. 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 16. *And they anſwered Joſhua, ſaying, All that thou commandeſt us, we will do; and whitherſoever thou ſendeſt us, we will go.*] It is likely, this was the Anſwer not only of the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and *Manaſſites*, but of all the reſt of the Tribes: Before whom, *Joſhua* put theſe two Tribes and an Half in Mind of their Duty: Which they all engage to perform exactly; theſe Words containing a full Recognition of *Joſhua*'s Authority, and their abſolute Submiſſion to it.

Ver. 17. *According as we hearkned unto Moſes in all Things, ſo will we hearken unto thee.*] Here they acknowledge his Authority to be equal to that of *Moſes*, who was undoubtedly ſet over them by GOD; as they now own *Joſhua* to be.

Only the LORD *thy* GOD *be with thee, as he was with Moſes.*] Theſe Words are not a Reſtriction of their Obedience, which did not depend upon his Succeſſes; but a ſolemn Prayer to GOD, of whom they deſired no other Governor than *Joſhua*, that he would make him as victorious as *Moſes* was over all their Enemies. Therefore ſome tranſlate the Words, not *Only*, but *May the* LORD *thy* GOD, *&c.* or *Since the* LORD *thy* GOD *hath promiſed to be with thee.* The *Targum* paraphraſe theſe Words as he did,

Ver.

ver. 9. *Only let the* WORD *of the* LORD *thy* GOD *be thy Helper, as he was to Moſes.*

Ver. 18. *Whoſoever he be that doth rebel againſt thy Commandment, and will not hearken unto thy Words in all that thou commandeſt him, he ſhall be put to Death.*] This ſeems to be the Voice of all the People, and of their Elders, or a Decree made by the Elders, as the *Jews* underſtand it: Who looking upon *Joſhua* to be a King, as *Moſes* was, extend this to all the Kings of *Iſrael* in following Times. So *Guil. Schickard* obſerves out of *Maimonides* in his *Miſchpat Hammelech, Cap.* IV. *Theor.* XIV. *p.* 101. But it ſhould rather be ſaid, that *Joſhua* was a King and a Prophet as *Moſes* was; and the Law, as *Ruſi* obſerves, ordered him to be put to Death that tranſgreſſed the Orders of *Moſes*, and of a Prophet.

Only be ſtrong, and of a good Courage.] He had the greater Reaſon to be courageous, ſince they reſolved, as one Man, to ſtand by him, and never to diſobey him. And therefore the Word *Rak*, which we tranſlate *only*, ſhould rather be tranſlated *therefore*, as it plainly ſignifies, xiii. 6. where, ſpeaking of the Land that remained to be poſſeſſed, God promiſes to drive out the Inhabitants, and *therefore* bids *Joſhua* to divide it to the *Iſraelites* for an Inheritance.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Joſhua the Son of Nun ſent.*] Or *had ſent*, before the Directions given to the Officers, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 10, 11. which beſt agrees with the 22d *Verſe* of this Chapter, and the reſt of the Story.

Out of Shittim.] Which was in the Plains of *Moab*, where *Iſrael* now lay, *Deut.* xxxiv. 1. called *Abel-Shittim*, *Numb.* xxxiii. 49.

Two Men.] Which were ſufficient for the Buſineſs they went about.

To ſpy ſecretly.] So that none were privy to it among the *Iſraelites*, but *Joſhua:* Who, it is probable, did not ſend them without an Order from God, who intended to diſpoſe Things ſo, that they ſhould bring back to him a great Encouragement to his Faith.

Saying, go view the Land.] Not the whole Country of *Canaan*, but only that Part of it which lay about *Jericho*, as it here follows: Whoſe Fortifications they were to obſerve, and the Approaches to it, with the Strength that was in it.

And they went.] Over the Fords of *Jordan*, I ſuppoſe, mentioned *ver.* 7.

And came into an Harlot's Houſe, called Rahab.] Who kept a Publick Houſe, or an Inn, to entertain Strangers: By going into which, they thought they would be leſs ſuſpected of any Deſign. The Word *Zonah*, which is commonly tranſlated an *Harlot*, the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe renders *Pundakitha*; which is plainly the *Greek* Word Πανδοχία, ſignifying ſhe kept a Houſe of publick Reception. And ſo St. *Chryſoſtom* calls this Woman, in his ſecond Sermon of Repentance, πανδοχεύτριαν· for there is no doubt ſhe kept a Publick Houſe. But ſuch Perſons, in thoſe Days, made their Bodies as publick as their Houſes; and therefore ſhe is conſtantly called *Rahab* the Harlot, by the Antients; and even by two Apoſtles, who call her πόρνη, *Hebr.* xi. 21. *James* ii. 25. For ſo ſhe had been; tho' now it is probable, converted by the Faith which was wrought in her. Which was ſo eminent, that ſhe was not only admitted into the Society of God's People, but married into a noble Family of the Tribe of *Judah*, from whom *Chriſt* ſprung, *Matth.* i. 5. and is propounded as an Example of lively Faith unto all Chriſtians, *Hebr.* xi. 31. *Jam.* ii. 25.

And lodged there.] Took up their Lodging in her Houſe, by a divine Direction, and appeared afterwards.

Ver. 2. *And it was told the King of Jericho.*] Who was not negligent, we may well think, to ſet a Watch, to obſerve who came in and went out of the City.

Saying, Behold, there came Men in hither to Night.] In the Evening, which was the moſt proper Time to come into the City undiſcovered, becauſe then the People, whoſe Buſineſs lay out of the City, were generally going home to their own Houſes.

Of the Children of Iſrael.] As they judged by their Habit, or Language, or Aſpect.

To ſearch out the Country.] For they could not think they came for any other End.

Ver. 3. *And the King of Jericho ſent unto Rahab, ſaying, Bring forth the Men that are come to thee, which entered into thy Houſe, for they be come to ſearch out all the Country.*] He ſent ſome Officers with a Warrant to apprehend them, and to require her to deliver them up into their Hands, as Enemies of their Country.

Ver. 4. *And the Woman took the two Men, and hid them.*] Or rather *had hidden* them, before the Officers came; having heard, it is likely, a Rumour, that they were diſcovered, and Search would be made for them.

And ſaid thus, There came Men unto me, but I wiſt not whence they were.] She could not deny that ſhe received ſuch ſtrange Gueſts, but would not own that ſhe knew from what Country they came; nor was it her Buſineſs to make ſuch Enquiry, her Houſe being open unto all.

Ver. 5. *And it came to paſs, about the Time of ſhutting of the Gate.*] The Gate of the City, next to her Houſe, which was wont to be ſhut (as they are now in all well-governed Cities) at a certain Hour.

When it was dark.] And conſequently few or none ſtirring in the Streets.

The Men went out, whither they went I wot not.] She would have them think, they went both out of her Houſe, and out of the City; tho' ſhe knew not which way they went, it being dark.

Purſue after them quickly, for ye ſhall overtake them.] Yet it was ſo little a while ſince they went out, that ſhe would have them believe, they could not, if they made Haſte, but overtake them before they got over *Jordan*. For if they were *Iſraelites*, it might be certainly concluded they went that Way. No body can ſay, that *Rahab* did not tell an Untruth;

truth; but this may be ſaid in her Excuſe: That it is no wonder if ſhe thought it lawful, if not neceſſary, ſo to do, for the ſaving of the Life of innocent Men. Since ſeveral great *Philoſophers* have been of that Opinion, and ſome of the ancient Fathers of the Church; particularly St. *Auſtin* confeſſes it to be a very difficult Queſtion, Cap. XV. *ad Conſentinum*. And *Arias Montanus* upon this very Place, makes it one's Duty to elude thoſe, who we think intend to do Miſchief, to others. Which he pretends to juſtify by many Examples, in a Diſcourſe *concerning Mens true and certain Duties*. But that is too bold an Undertaking; ſince the Fathers before St. *Auſtin*, and all the *Jews* condemn this Practice.

Ver. 6. *But ſhe brought them up*, &c. or rather, *ſhe had brought them up to the Roof of the Houſe.*] Which was made flat, ſo that Men might lie or walk upon it in thoſe Countries. See *Deut.* xxii. 8.

And hid them with the Stalks of Flax, which ſhe had laid in order upon the Roof.] Covered them all over with the Stalks of Flax, which I ſuppoſe were newly cut, and laid upon the Roof of the Houſe to be dried by the Sun, till they were fit to be peeled. Or, as ſome think, theſe were Stalks of Flax cut the Year before; and made uſe of now to ſhew that no body was gone upon the Roof, where ſhe laid them.

Ver. 7. *And the Men purſued after them the Way to Jordan, unto the Floods.*] Where *Jordan* was ſo ſhallow that Men might wade, or ſo narrow that they might ſoon ſwim over it. There the Purſuers lay, three Days, waiting to catch them in their Return.

And as ſoon as they which purſued them were gone out, they ſhut the Gate.] Which being opened to let the Purſuers out, was immediately ſhut again; that if the Spies lurk'd in the City, they might not eſcape in the Dark; and that no other Perſon might enter, who they might poſſibly think, lay watching an Opportunity to get in.

Ver. 8. *And before they were laid down.*] To compoſe themſelves to Sleep; which after their Journey they might be glad to take any where.

She came up unto them, upon the Roof.] To bring them down, it is likely, to a more commodious Lodging.

Ver. 9. *And ſhe ſaid unto the Men, I know that the LORD hath given you the Land.*] Wonder not that I have taken ſuch Care of your Preſervation; for I believe in the LORD as you do, and know that he hath beſtowed this Country upon you, for your Poſſeſſion.

And that your Terror is fallen upon us, and that all the Inhabitants of the Land faint becauſe of you.] She was the more confident of their Succeſs; becauſe ſhe obſerved the People of the Land were ſtruck with ſuch a Dread of them, as not to be able to defend their Country againſt them. See *Deut.* xi. 25.

Ver. 10. *For we have heard how the LORD dried up the Water of the Red Sea for you, when you came out of Egypt.*] And there overthrew *Pharaoh* and his Hoſt, after he had ſmitten him and his Country, with divers miraculous Plagues. The Report of which was come to them, as well as their paſſing though the Sea: Which though it were forty Years ago, was remembred with Aſtoniſhment.

And what you did unto the two Kings of the Amorites that were on the other ſide Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly deſtroyed.] This was a thing of freſh Memory, and could not but ſtrike them with Conſternation; theſe two Kings being very potent; and their near Neighbours and Allies. For they were part of the *Amorites*, who dwelt in the mountainous Parts of this Country; as was before obſerved.

Ver. 11. *And as ſoon as we heard theſe things.*] As *Moſes* propheſied they would, *Exod.* xv. 14, 15.

Our Hearts did melt.] The ſame Phraſe in *Deut.* i. 28. where we tranſlate it *diſcouraged*; and ſo it is here explained in the next Words.

Neither did there remain any more Courage in any Man, becauſe of you.] the moſt valiant among them were utterly diſheartned.

For the LORD your God, he is God in Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath.] This is a plain Confeſſion of the true God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth; wherein he rules and governs all things according to his Pleaſure. This is her Faith celebrated by the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, which moved her to entertain the Spies, and to preſerve them with the Danger of her own Life, if ſhe had been diſcovered.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore, I pray you, ſwear unto me by the LORD.*] The *Targum* hath it, *by the WORD of the LORD.*] An Oath was the greateſt Security that could be deſired for the Performance of what they promiſed. For all Nations expected grievous Puniſhments would fall upon perjured Perſons; which they that feared the LORD, the true God, above all Men dreaded. See *Selden*, Lib. II. *de Synedr.* Cap. XI. N. IV.

Since I have ſhewed you Kindneſs.] As they could not but acknowledge.

That ye will alſo ſhew Kindneſs to my Father's Houſe, and give me a true Token.] She asked two things of them; firſt, that ſhe and her whole Family might be preſerved, as ſhe had preſerved them; and then that they would give her ſuch a Token, as ſhould not fail her; but upon the Sight of it, the *Iſraelites* ſhould abſtain from doing them any Hurt.

Ver. 13. *And that you will ſave alive my Father and my Mother, and my Brethren, and my Siſters.*] This is a particular Explication of what ſhe meant by *her Father's Houſe*, in the foregoing Verſe; and ſhews that ſhe had no Husband, nor Children.

And all that they have, &c.] All her *Kindred*, as we tranſlate it, vi. 23. Or the Children of her Brethren and Siſters: Or perhaps, all their Cattle, that they could bring with them into her Houſe.

Ver. 14. *And the Men anſwered her, Our Life for yours.*] They ſware to her (it appears from *ver.* 17.) and wiſhed they might periſh, if they did not preſerve her and her Family. For they did not doubt but *Joſhua* would ratify what they promiſed, though without his Authority, for the publick Good and Safety.

If ye utter not.] Do not divulge or declare to any one.

This our Buſineſs.] In the *Hebrew*, *this our Word. i. e.* this Agreement they had made

with her. Leſt others ſhould ſhelter themſelves under her Roof, or uſe that Token they intended to give her; and thereby ſecure themſelves from Deſtruction. In this they ſhewed great Prudence and Management; taking care that their Gratitude might not prove an Obſtruction to the publick Juſtice.

And it ſhall be when the LORD hath given us the Land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee.] Upon this Condition, they promiſe, when they had taken *Jericho* (for that's here meant by *the Land*, v. 1.) they would keep their Word faithfully with her, and be as kind to her as ſhe had been to them.

Ver. 15. *Then ſhe let them down by a Cord, through the Window.*] Which in thoſe Countries were large, as appears by the Story of *Jezebel*, whom her Eunuchs threw down out of a Window, 2 *Kings* ix. 30, 32.

For her Houſe was upon the Town Wall.] Both the Time (which was in the Night) and the Place were very commodious to contrive their Eſcape; becauſe her Houſe was adjoining to the Wall of the City.

And ſhe dwelt upon the Wall.] I take the Meaning to be, that the Apartment ſhe reſerved for herſelf was next to the Wall, and built upon it; the reſt of her Houſe towards the Street being kept for Strangers. This gave her the fair Opportunity, without any Noiſe, to let them down.

Ver. 16. *And ſhe ſaid unto them, Get ye to the Mountain, leſt the Purſuers meet you.*] This was prudent Advice, not to go towards *Jordan* preſently, but firſt to one of the Mountains, wherewith the Plain of *Jericho* was ſurrounded, as *Joſephus* tells us, Lib. I. *de Bello Judaico*, *Cap.* 12, 13. and *Lib.* V. *Cap.* 4. And the Scripture itſelf informs us as much, 2 *Kings* ii. 15, 16.

And hide yourſelves there.] In ſome of the Caves, which were frequent in the Mountains.

Three Days.] For ſo long ſhe thought the Purſuers might ſtay about *Jordan*, waiting for their Return.

Until the Purſuers be returned; and afterward may ye go your way.] Which ſhe thought probably would be within that Time; and perhaps ſhe underſtood their Orders were to ſtay no longer.

Ver. 17. *And the Men ſaid unto her.*] As ſhe was about to let them down; for it was not ſafe to have this Diſcourſe together after they were down; which might have been overheard by the Watch.

We will be blameleſs of this thy Oath, which thou haſt made us to ſwear.] The Meaning is, that it ſhould not be their Fault, if their Oath was not kept; and therefore they now name the Token, upon which the Preſervation of her Family ſhould depend; with ſome other Conditions that were reaſonable to be obſerved. Which they mention to ſhew, how ſtudious they were not to be guilty of violating their Oath.

Ver. 18. *Behold, when we come into the Land, thou ſhalt bind this Line of Scarlet Thread.*] It is called a Cord before, *ver.* 15. and no doubt conſiſted of ſo many Threads twiſted together, as made it a Line ſtrong enough to hold the Weight of a Man's Body, and not break. But there are thoſe who doubt whether the *Hebrew* Word *Scheni* ſignify any thing of the Colour, but only a *twined* or *twiſted* Cord, *funiculum conduplicatum*, or *contortum*, from *Shanah* to double. See *Gataker* in his *Miſcellanea*, Cap. xl.

In the Window which thou haſt let us down by.] Or rather, *doſt let us down by.* For ſhe was about to do it, but had not done it, when they had this Diſcourſe with her. Some refer this to the *Window* at which ſhe let them out; but it is moſt natural to refer it to the *Line.* For by that they were let down; and it was to remain in the Window, that the *Iſraelites* might ſee it, as the Token that that was the Houſe, which was to be ſaved. *Procopius Gazæus* compares this Scarlet Line with the Blood which *Moſes* ordered to be ſtruck upon the Side Poſts of their Doors, which was a Token they ſhould be preſerved, *Exod.* xii. 7, 13.

And thou ſhalt bring thy Father, and thy Mother, and thy Brethren, and all thy Father's Houſhold home to thee.] That is, all their Children; and perhaps near Relations, ſuch as Uncles, Aunts, and Couſins; as we ſeem to underſtand it, vi. 23. And one cannot but think, that Great Grand-fathers, and Grand-mothers, if ſhe had any alive, were comprehended in theſe Words.

Ver. 19. *And it ſhall be, that whoſoever ſhall go out of the Door of thy Houſe into the Street, his Blood ſhall be on his Head, and we will be guiltleſs.*] They would be bound to preſerve none but thoſe who kept in the Houſe. Which was but reaſonable, for they did not know how to diſtinguiſh them from others, if they were in the Street.

And whoſoever ſhall be with thee in the Houſe, his Blood ſhall be on our Head, if any Hand be upon him.] They would as ſoon die themſelves, as let any of thoſe periſh. An Emblem of our Safety and Salvation, by continuing conſtantly in the Church in Faith and Holineſs. For her Houſe was a very fit Figure of the Church, eſpecially of the *Gentiles*; who like her, had gone a whoring after Idols, but were converted to ſerve the living God.

Ver. 20. *And if thou utter this our Buſineſs, then we will be quit of the Oath, which thou haſt made us to ſwear.*] They repeat the Condition mentioned *ver.* 14. as of great Importance. *See* there.

Ver. 21. *And ſhe ſaid, According to your Word, ſo be it.*] She agreed to all the Conditions they impoſed upon her.

And ſhe ſent them away, and they departed.] After this mutual Agreement, confirmed with an Oath.

And ſhe bound the Scarlet Line in the Window.] Immediately, as ſome think; that the Spies might know where to look for it hereafter; and that ſhe might have always before her Eyes, ſuch a comfortable Pledge of her Safety. It was more prudent alſo, as *Arias Montanus* obſerves, to do it now, than when the *Iſraelites* came to beſiege the Place; for that Novelty might have made the People of *Jericho* ſuſpect ſome Correſpondence.

Ver.

Ver. 22. *And they went and came unto the Mountain, and abode there three Days, until the Purſuers were returned.*] Being furniſhed, it is likely, with ſufficient Proviſion by *Rahab*. Many think they ſtaid there but one whole Day, and Part of other two, which, according to the Style of the Scripture, may be called three Days: But their only Reaſon for it is to make theſe three Days, and thoſe mentioned in the firſt Chapter, *ver.* 11. to be the ſame; which is not probable.

And the Purſuers ſought them throughout all the Way, &c.] Which led to the Fords of *Jordan*. This expreſſes their Diligence, though it wanted Succeſs; and perhaps there were more Ways than one that led thither; in all which they placed themſelves, or ſome other Perſons, to watch for them.

Ver. 23. *So the two Men returned, and deſcended from the Mountain.*] From whence perhaps they could ſee when the Purſuers came back; or they had ſome Intelligence of their Return; or, as I ſaid before, that they had Commiſſion only to ſearch for them three Days.

And paſſed over.] The River *Jordan*.

And came to Joſhua the Son of Nun, and told him all Things that befel them.] Since they left him. This ſhews that *Joſhua* ſent them ſo privately, that it was unknown to the People, (as I expounded, *ver.* 1.) for they give him alone an Account of what had happened unto them. See vi. 17.

Ver. 24. *And they ſaid unto Joſhua, Truly the LORD hath delivered into our Hands all the Land; for even all the Inhabitants of the Country do faint becauſe of us.*] This was Part of what they had learn'd from *Rahab*, *ver.* 9, &c. who had ſtrengthned their Faith by her own.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND Joſhua roſe early in the Morning.*] The next Morning after he had commanded the Officers to warn the Hoſt, to prepare for their Removal, *Chap.* i. 10, 11.

And they removed from Shittim.] Where they had lain now above two Months; for they came hither on the firſt Day of the *Eleventh* Month of the *Fortieth* Year after they came out of *Egypt*. See *Deut.* i. 3.

And came to Jordan, he and all the Children of Iſrael.] Which River, as *Joſephus* tells us, was ſixty *Stadia* from *Shittim*; but it is ſo uncertain what his *Stadia* or *Furlongs* were, that one can only gueſs how many of our Miles *Threeſcore* of them made. Moſt think about *Seven*.

And lodged there before they paſſed over.] The *Hebrew* Word *Jalinu* doth not neceſſarily ſignify that they lodged there only one Night, for it often denotes a longer Time of Abode; and therefore the Vulgar *Latin* tranſlates it *morati ſunt*, they ſtayed there, *viz.* three Days, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs after three Days, that the Officers went through the Hoſt.*] In the End of the three Days before-mentioned, *Chap.* i. 10, 11. he ſent the ſame Officers there mentioned, to make a new Proclamation: for it ſeems to me the moſt reaſonable to take all this Story in the Order wherein it is related, only ſuppoſing the Spies to have been ſent before the firſt Proclamation made by the Officers (as I obſerved, ii. 1. the words may be tranſlated.) And thus our great Primate of *Ireland* underſtands it: After *Joſhua* was confirm'd in his Office, (*Chap.* i. *ver.* 1, 2, &c.) he ſent out the Spies, and then commanding the People to provide themſelves Victuals, he marched from *Shittim* to *Jordan*; and the third Day (after that Command to provide themſelves Victuals) he gave a new Command to prepare themſelves to paſs over *Jordan* the next Day.

Ver. 3. *And they commanded the People.*] By Order from *Joſhua*, and in his Name and Authority.

Saying, When ye ſee the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, and the Prieſts the Levites bearing it.] "Hitherto, ſaith *Kimchi* upon this Place, "the *Levites* (that is, the "Children of *Kohath*) carried the Ark; but "now the Prieſts are appointed to that Office, "for the greater Sanctification or Honour of it, "and becauſe of the Miracle which was to be "wrought before it. Our *Rabbins* ſay, that the "Prieſts carried it thus *three* times; now in this "Place, and when they compaſſed *Jericho*, and "when *Zadok* and *Abiathar* brought it back to "*Jeruſalem*, when *David* fled from *Abſalom*, "2 *Sam.* xv. 29." Unto which he adds a *Fourth*, when it was brought into the Temple which *Solomon* built; for the *Levites* were not permitted to go into the Sanctuary, much leſs into the moſt Holy Place, into which it was carried by the Prieſts, 1 *Kings* viii. 6.

Then ye ſhall remove from your Place, and go after it.] By this it appears the Ark was carried in the Front of them; whereas uſually it was ordered to be carried in the Middle of their Camps, as we read *Numb.* ii. 17. But at their firſt Removal from Mount *Sinai*, which was a Time extraordinary, it march'd before them for three Days, *Numb.* x. 33. and ſo it did now, (and at no other Time) when they were to enter into *Canaan*, for a ſpecial Reaſon alſo, as I ſhall obſerve on the next Verſe.

Concerning the Phraſe, *the Prieſts the Levites*, ſee *Deut.* xvii. 9.

Ver. 4. *Yet there ſhall be a Space between you and it, about two Thouſand Cubits.*] This is a Demonſtration that it was not uſual for the Ark to go before the whole Army; for if it had, there would have been no need to inſtruct them at what Diſtance they ſhould keep from it, which would have been conſtantly obſerved.

By Meaſure.] It is likely they meaſured the Diſtance by a Line, at which the People were at firſt ſet; and then walking in equal Paces with the Prieſts, kept at the ſame Diſtance, though perhaps not preciſely; for they might chance to move a Pace or two faſter, or take larger Paces; and therefore he ſaith *about* two thouſand Cubits.

That ye may know the Way by which ye muſt go.] There was the very ſame Reaſon for the

Ark's going before them now, that there was when they came from Mount *Sinai*; for then it was *to ſearch out a Reſting-place for them*, i. e. to ſhew them where they ſhould reſt; and now it was to lead them in the Way they were to march, unto their long-expected Settlement in the Promiſed Land. If it had not been for this, it would have been carried in its uſual Place; but the Pillar of the Cloud, which hitherto conducted them, having now left them, as *R. Solomon* obſerves, this ſupplied its Place, and went before them, as that had been wont to do.

For ye have not paſſed this Way heretofore.] They were to be led in an untrodden Path, which the Power of God (of whoſe Preſence with them the Ark was the Symbol) made for them.

Ver. 5. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the People.*] The Night before they went over *Jordan*, as appears by the latter Part of the Verſe; and perhaps he ſpake this himſelf, at the head of every one of their Tribes, it being of great Importance.

Sanctify yourſelves.] Other Places tell us what was their uſual Sanctification. See *Exod.* xix. 10, 11. *Numb.* xi. 18. But beſides the Legal Purifications, one cannot but think that he intended they ſhould diſpoſe their Minds by holy Meditations and Prayer to God to receive his Benefits, and to be more ſenſible of them when they were beſtowed on them.

For to-morrow the LORD will do Wonders among you.] Which he would have them be in a Condition to obſerve, and to lay to Heart; and in order thereunto, prepare themſelves by ſerious Thoughts of God, and of his Providence, as well as by waſhing their Bodies, and abſtaining from their Wives, which were a Part of the Sanctification here intended.

Ver. 6. *And Joſhua ſpake unto the Prieſts.*] The next Morning.

Saying, Take up the Ark of the Covenant.] Upon their Shoulders, for ſo it was to be carried, *Numb.* vii. 9.

And paſs over before the People.] This Precept had been unneceſſary, if they had been wont to carry it before the People.

And they took up the Ark of the Covenant, and went before the People.] After *Joſhua* had ſpoken what follows, *ver.* 7, 8, *&c.* But it is mentioned now, to ſhew the Readineſs of the Prieſts, as well as of the People, to obey the Commands of *Joſhua*; whom they look'd upon as a Prophet, as *Moſes* was, who had Power to give extraordinary Orders from God. Such were theſe for the Prieſts to carry the Ark, and to march with it before the People, not in the midſt of their Camps.

Ver. 7. *And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua.*] By an audible Voice, I ſuppoſe, from the Sanctuary, near unto which he now was; the Prieſts being about to take out the Ark from thence, to carry it before the People.

This Day.] The tenth Day of the firſt Month, on which the Paſchal Lamb was, by the Law, to be ſet apart to be offered four Days after, *Exod.* xii. 3.

Will I begin to magnify thee in the Sight of all Iſrael.] By doing ſuch Wonders before them all, as ſhould convince them *Joſhua* was appointed by God to be their ſupreme Governor, who ſhould give them Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*. See iv. 14.

That they may know, that as I was with Moſes, ſo I will be with thee.] See i. 5. From the Time of *Moſes* to the Days of *Saul*, God declared, by ſome extraordinary Things, whom he would have to be the ſupreme Governor of his People, whoſe Authority he eſtabliſhed by doing Wonders.

Ver. 8. *And thou ſhalt command the Prieſts that bear the Ark of the Covenant, ſaying.*] Every thing was done by his Order, that it might appear he was powerful with God, who wrought thoſe Wonders at his Word.

When ye are come to the Brink of the Water of Jordan.] *Jordan* then overflowed beyond its Banks; therefore they were not to go to the Brink of the River, but of the Water.

Ye ſhall ſtand ſtill in Jordan.] And there ſtop till the Waters above were ſuſpended, and thoſe below run away; and then they went and ſtood in the midſt of the River, *ver.* 17.

Ver. 9. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the Children of Iſrael, Come hither.*] To the Sanctuary, I ſuppoſe, where he now was, *ver.* 7.

And hear the Words of the LORD your God.] Which *Joſhua* reported to them from God, who was about to demonſtrate himſelf to be the omnipotent, LORD of all Creatures, and in a peculiar Manner their God, in Covenant with them, and full of Kindneſs to them.

Ver. 10. *And Joſhua ſaid, Hereby ye ſhall know that the living God is among you.*] Theſe are the Words of the LORD their God, who is called the *living* God, in Oppoſition to the Idols of the Heathen; who could do nothing, much leſs ſuch Miracles as demonſtrated the God of *Iſrael* to be the eternal LORD of Heaven and Earth, who giveth Life to all Things; and he is ſaid to be *among them* (or *in the midſt of them*) whom he takes into his Protection, to defend and preſerve them from all Evil.

And that he will without fail drive out from before you.] Moſt certainly make good his Promiſe made to *Abraham* long ago, (*Gen.* xv. 18, *&c.*) becauſe he lives for ever to perform his Word.

The Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgaſites, and the Amorites, and the Jebuſites.] Here all the ſeven Nations are mentioned (as they are *Deut.* vii. 1.) though ſometimes only ſix of them are mentioned, the *Girgaſites* being omitted. See *Exod.* iii. 17.

Ver. 11. *Behold the Ark of the Covenant.*] So called, becauſe in it were the two Tables of the Covenant between God and them. It is frequently called *the Ark of the Teſtimony*, *Exod.* xl. 20, 21. *Numb.* iv. 5. and here in this Book, iv. 16.

Of the LORD of the whole Earth paſſeth before you.] To take Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*; which he gave them as LORD of the whole Earth, and as particularly engaged by his Covenant to beſtow upon them. The Author of the Book *Coſri* underſtands this, as if

if the Ark of the Covenant was called the *LORD of the whole Earth*; becauſe God was ſo preſent with it, that where the Ark was, there were Wonders wrought; which ceaſed in its Abſence. *Pars* IV. *Sect.* 3. *D. Kimchi*, and *Jos. Albo* ſay the ſame; and I find *Andreas Maſius* following this Fancy; becauſe there is an Accent after *the Ark of the Covenant*, diſtinguiſhing thoſe Words from what follows, which (ſay they) are therefore added by Appoſition. But *Bonfrerius* hath confuted this very judiciouſly; obſerving, that the Accent is not of that Nature; and therefore the LXX, the *Chaldee*, *Vulgar Latin*, *Symmachus*, *Aquila*, the *Syriack* and *Arabick*, tranſlate it as we do, the Ark *of the Covenant of the LORD of the whole Earth*. See *Buxtorf de Arca*, Cap. I. And yet, I know not how it came to paſs, ſome have been ſo bold as to alter our Tranſlation in ſome printed Copies, which I have met withal; where theſe Words are thus tranſlated, *the Ark of the Covenant, even the LORD of the whole Earth.*

Into Jordan.] By which Miracle they were confirmed in their Belief of his Promiſe, when they ſaw the Waters of *Jordan* flee before him.

Ver 12. *Now therefore take ye twelve Men out of the Tribes of Iſrael.*] To do what he ſhould command them, iv. 2, *&c.*

Out of every Tribe a Man.] The Tribe of *Levi* was one of the XII, upon all Accounts but only in the dividing of the Land: *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh* being but one, *viz.* the Tribe of *Joſeph.*

Ver. 13. *And it ſhall come to paſs, as ſoon as the Soles of the Feet of the Prieſts that bear the Ark of the LORD, the LORD of the whole Earth.*] Here the Ark of the Covenant is called the Ark of *Jehovah*, (not *Jehovah*) who is the LORD, or Governor or Ruler of the whole Earth: In which is comprehended the Sea, and the Rivers, and all Waters which he commandeth as he pleaſeth.

Shall reſt in the Waters of Jordan.] Dip their Feet in the Brim of the Waters as it is explained, *ver.* 15.

That the Waters of Jordan ſhall be cut off from the Waters that come down from above.] The Waters which now ran in one Stream, were divided over-againſt the Place where the Prieſts trod; ſo that the lower Part of them ran down the Channel towards the dead Sea; and thoſe above not coming down to ſupply their Place, the Ground was left dry.

And they ſhall ſtand on an Heap.] *Viz.* The Waters above, towards the Head, or Springs of the River, were made to ſtand ſtill, as if they were congealed; riſing in an Heap, piled one upon another, but not running down at all.

Ver. 14. *And it came to paſs when the People removed from their Tents to paſs over Jordan, and the Prieſts bearing the Ark of the Covenant before the People.*] The Prieſts moved firſt, and then the People followed them, at ſuch a Diſtance as *Joſhua* had preſcribed, *ver.* 3, 4.

Ver. 15. *And as they that bare the Ark of the Covenant were come into Jordan, and the Feet of the Prieſts that bare the Ark were dipped in the Brim of the Water.*] Which had overflown, as it here follows, beyond the Bounds of the Channel.

For Jordan overfloweth all his Banks at the time of Harveſt.] This is meant of Barley-Harveſt; which began about the Paſſover, as many have obſerved; and particularly *Hermannus Conringius*, in his Book *De Initio anni Sabbatici.* See upon *Deut.* xvi. 9. And it appears by he next Chapter, iv. 19. that it was the firſte Month, or the Month *Abib* when the Paſſov was to be kept: and therefore muſt ſignifiy that Harveſt. See alſo 1 *Chron.* vii. 15. This was likewiſe a Time when the River was more likely to overflow than in Wheat-Harveſt; becauſe now the Snow began to melt, that was in the neighbouring Mountains; eſpecially in *Lebanon*; at the Foot of which was the Fountain of *Jordan*. By which the River was always ſwoln at this Time and thereby the Miracle increaſed. Such Overflowing of other Rivers, greater than this, are obſerved by Authors, at certain Seaſons; with which I ſhall not trouble the Reader.

Ver. 16. *And the waters which came down from above ſtood.*] Stopt and ran no farther; but were driven back unto thoſe that were coming down.

And roſe up upon an Heap.] Inſtead of flowing down the Channel, were lifted up into the Air; and appeared like a Mountain, as the *Vulgar Latin* tranſlates it.

Very far from the City Adam.] At a great Diſtance from a City then called *Adam*, which lay upon the River.

That is beſide Zaretan.] The former was a ſmall City, and therefore its Situation is deſcribed by a Place of greater Note, called *Zaretan*, which lay on one Side of it, in the Plain of *Jordan*, as we read 1 *Kings* vii. 46.

And thoſe that came down toward the Sea of the Plain, even the Salt-Sea, failed, and were cut off.] Thoſe Waters of the River, which were below, towards the Salt-Sea, into which *Jordan* emptied itſelf, ran all thither, and ſo left the Channel perfectly dry, that the People might paſs over, which they did, directly over-againſt *Jericho.*

And the People paſſed over right againſt Jericho.] Having that famous City in their View, from whence, perhaps, the People on the Walls might, with Amazement, ſee the *Iſraelites* walk through the River on dry Ground. It was a great Refreſhment alſo to the *Iſraelites* after their March, to pitch their Tents in ſo goodly a Plain, as this before *Jericho.*

Ver. 17. *And the Prieſts that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD ſtood firm on dry Ground, in the midſt of Jordan.*] In one and the ſame Place and Poſture, with their Faces towards *Jericho.*

And all the Iſraelites paſſed over on dry Ground.] Keeping, I ſuppoſe, the ſame Diſtance, of Two Thouſand Cubits from the Ark; for there was Room enough on either Side, to march by it, and not come near it.

Until all the People were paſſed clean over Jordan.] Which they could not do in a ſhort

Time, unleſs we ſuppoſe them to have marched all in a-breaſt, which is not likely. For there was a certain Place, called, ever after, by the Name of *Bethabara*, to preſerve the Memory of their paſſing over there, which is mentioned, *John* i. 28. It made therefore the Faith and Conſtancy of the Prieſts very remarkable, who remained ſo long in the Middle of the River, 'till the whole Multitude were got over, without Fear of that great Mountain of Waters from above, coming tumbling down upon them.

They who look upon this Part of the Divine Hiſtory as improbable, if not incredible, ſhould conſider what a Shame it is to have leſs Faith than the Heathens: Who, leſt their Gods ſhould be thought leſs powerful than the God of *Iſrael*, forged thoſe Stories which the *Perſians* tell of *Zoroaſter*'s paſſing over Rivers; and the *Greeks* of *Inachus* dried up by *Neptune*; and other ſuch like; which *Huetius* hath collected in his *Quæſtiones Alnetanæ*, Lib. II. Cap. XII. *Numb.* XV. Why then do they call in Queſtion the Power of the true God; who either by himſelf, or by his Angels, could eaſily ſtop the Courſe of a River, which he himſelf made; and both made the Waters riſe up in a Heap as high as he pleaſed; and alſo ſtand ſo reared up, in a firm Hardneſs, as if they had been congealed?

CHAP. IV.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, when all the People were clean paſſed over Jordan, that the LORD ſpake unto Joſhua, ſaying.*] It is likely he went to return Thanks unto God for ſo wonderful a Mercy; and then God ſpake to him what follows:

Ver. 2. *Take you twelve Men out of the People, out of every Tribe a Man.*] He bids him now call together the Twelve Men formerly choſen, iii. 12.

Ver. 3. *And command you them.*] I ſuppoſe *Joſhua* had ſome of the Elders, or Heads of the Tribes, that joined with him in this Office.

Saying, Take you hence out of the midſt of Jordan.] Which continued perfectly dry for ſome Space after they were all gone over; that is, till the Prieſts removed from thence.

Out of the Place where the Prieſts Feet ſtood firm, twelve Stones.] Some underſtand this ſo preciſely, as if they were to take them from under the very Soles of the Prieſt's Feet; which is not probable; but only near to the Place where they ſtood. For the Prieſts did not ſtir a Step from the Place where they firſt ſtood; and therefore none can tell how they ſhould take theſe Stones from under their Feet, and place others in their Room, (*ver.* 9.) while they remained ſtanding fixed in the ſame Place.

And ye ſhall carry them over with you.] In the Sight of all the People, to make the Miracle more known among them all.

And leave them in the Lodging-place, where you ſhall lodge this Night.] As a Monument of this miraculous Work of God; which remained ever after in *Gilgal*; the Place where they lodged that Night, *ver.* 19, 20.

Ver. 4. *Then Joſhua called the twelve Men whom he had prepared*, &c.] Before they paſſed over *Jordan*, iii. 12.

Ver 5. *And Joſhua ſaid unto them, Paſs over before the Ark of the LORD God into the midſt of Jordan.*] This is a Divine Order to go back again into the River, to the very Place where the Prieſts ſtood with the Ark; by which theſe XII Men were diſpenſed withal, to come nearer to the Ark than the reſt of the Congregation.

And take ye up every Man a Stone upon his Shoulder.] Great Stones as big as they could well lift, and carry. So the *Hebrew* Word imports, *ver.* 3.

According unto the number of the Tribes of the Children of Iſrael.] That they might publiſh in every Tribe this evident Teſtimony of the Power of God; which laid the Bottom of the River dry for ſo long a Time, that they not only all went over on dry Ground; but ſome of them returned again, and took up theſe Stones, and laid others in their Room, *ver.* 9.

Ver. 6. *That this may be a Sign unto you.*] A Token of what God had now done for them.

That when your Children aſk their Fathers in Time to come, ſaying, What mean theſe Stones?] It was natural for Men, in future Ages, ſeeing great Stones, (in a Place perhaps where there were no more) and juſt XII of them, laid together, or one upon another, to aſk how they came there, and for what End they were brought thither, and by whom.

Ver. 7. *Then ſhall they anſwer them, That the Waters of Jordan were cut off, before the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD; when it paſſed over Jordan, the Waters of Jordan were cut off.*] This was to give them Occaſion to report at large, what God had done for them at their Entrance into *Canaan*; that their Poſterity might be affected with it, no leſs than themſelves.

And theſe Stones ſhall be for a Memorial to the Children of Iſrael for ever.] To keep in Memory this Miracle in all Ages to come, as long as this Nation laſted. All People have been wont to erect Monuments of Stone to preſerve the Memory of Covenants, or Victories, or other great Things. And though there was no *Inſcription* upon theſe Stones, yet the Number of them, and the Place where they lay, which was not ſtony, was ſufficient to ſignify ſome memorable Thing; which, upon Enquiry, would be made known to thoſe that ſaw and obſerved them.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Iſrael did ſo as Joſhua commanded*, &c.] That is, the twelve Men did according to his Order, both in taking up the Stones, and carrying them to the Place where they lodged.

And laid them down there.] Which, perhaps, were erected into a kind of Pillar, that they might look like a Monument of ſomething done thereabout. Or, they were ſo placed, as to be ſo many little Monuments of God's Mercy, See *Ver.* 20.

Ver. 9. *And Joſhua ſet up twelve Stones in the midſt of Jordan, in the Place where the Feet of the Prieſts that bare the Covenant, ſtood.*] This renders it probable that the other XII Stones taken out of *Jordan* were ſet up in *Gilgal*, as

theſe, taken out of ſome of the Fields thereabouts, were erected in the midſt of the River, to teſtify to all Poſterity their miraculous Paſſage over it, at this Place.

And they are there unto this Day.] From hence, not only ſuch Men as Mr. *Hobbs*, but *Maſius*, and *Grotius*, and divers others, have argued, that this Book was not written by *Joſhua*, but by ſome Perſon who lived at a great Diſtance from his Time, as theſe Words, they fancy, import. But this is a mere Fancy; for if *Joſhua* wrote this Book in his old Age, or at leaſt then added his laſt Hand to it, (as it is probable he did) he might as well uſe theſe Words, as one that lived an hundred Years after. And at this Rate of arguing, (as *Huetius* obſerves) *Moſes* muſt not be the Author of the Book of *Deuteronomy*, where he ſpeaks in the ſame Style, x. 5. xi. 4.) nor St. *Matthew* the Author of the Goſpel, which he wrote not many Years after our Saviour's Death; who uſes the very ſame Words, xxvii. 8. xxviii. 21. See *Demonſtr. Evang.* Propoſ. iv. Cap. xxiv.

Ver. 10. *For the Prieſts that bare the Ark, ſtood in the midſt of Jordan.*] It is remarkable in this whole Relation, that when the *Prieſts* are mentioned, theſe Words are ſtill added, *that bare the Ark*, or, *the Ark of the Covenant*, (both in this Chapter, *ver.* 9, 16, 18. and in the foregoing *ver.* 13, 14, 15, 17.) to ſhew that this Miracle was not to be aſcribed to them, but to the Power of the LORD, unto whom they miniſtred.

Until every thing was finiſhed, that the LORD commanded Joſhua to ſpeak unto the People.] Concerning the taking up of the Twelve Stones, and placing others in their room; and all that preceded concerning their paſſing over the River; which it is likely he exhorted them to do chearfully.

According to all that Moſes commanded Joſhua.] We do not read that *Moſes* gave any particular Directions about the foregoing Matters; therefore the Meaning is, that *Joſhua* ſtrenuouſly executed all that God ordered, as *Moſes* had admoniſhed him, *Deut.* iii. 28. and other Places.

And the People haſted, and paſſed over.] This doth not refer to all the People, as if they went a ſwift Pace over the River, out of Fear of the Waters overwhelming them, (as ſome think) but to ſuch as remained ſtill behind the Ark, to attend its Motion. Who now ſeeing all that *Joſhua* commanded was finiſhed, made haſte to get over the River, as their Brethren had done before them. It is ſaid, indeed, *ver.* 1. that when all the People *were clean paſſed over*, *Joſhua* gave Order about the Twelve Stones: But the Meaning is, when the main Body of the People were gone over: For it appears by the next Verſe, that they had not all entirely paſſed over until now.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs, that when all the People were clean paſſed over.*] So that none were remaining in the Plains of *Moab*, from whence they came.

That the Ark of the LORD paſſed over, and the Prieſts.] They who went firſt into the River, came laſt out: It being by the Power of the LORD, whoſe Ark the Prieſts bare, that the Courſe of the River was ſtopped, and a Way made for all the People to paſs over.

In the Preſence of the People.] Who beheld the Water ſtanding ſtill on an Heap, while the Ark was in the River; but come tumbling down when it was gone. Which demonſtrated that it was God's Preſence with them, to which alone they owed this miraculous Mercy.

Ver. 12. *And the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and half the Tribe of Manaſſeh, paſſed over, armed, before the Children of Iſrael, as Moſes ſpake unto them.*] They were the firſt that paſſed over, (according to their Engagement, *Numb.* xxxiii. 20, 21, 27, of which *Joſhua* had put them in mind, i. 13.) ready to encounter any Enemy that might have oppoſed their Landing.

Ver. 13. *About forty thouſand prepared for War.*] Or, *ready armed* (as it is in the Margin) and prepared to fight, in caſe they met with any Oppoſition. It is obſervable, that in the laſt Muſter, made not long ago, of thoſe that were fit for War in their ſeveral Tribes, there were above *forty Thouſand* in the Tribe of *Reuben* alone; and above fifty Thouſand in that of *Manaſſeh*, *Numb*, xxvi. 7, 34. And therefore it is likely *Joſhua* pick'd out only this Number of choſen Men; and left all the reſt to look after their Families and Flocks.

Paſſed over before the LORD unto Battle.] Being paſſed over the River, they ſtood in Battle Array before the Ark; at the Diſtance, I ſuppoſe, of two Thouſand Cubits.

In the Plains of Jericho.] Where it might be ſuppoſed the People of *Jericho* would have encamped, to hinder their Paſſage.

Ver. 14. *On that Day the LORD magnified Joſhua in the Sight of all Iſrael.*] As he promiſed, iii. 7.

And they feared him, as they feared Moſes, all the Days of his Life.] This Wonder gained him the like Reſpect and Reverence, that the dividing the Red Sea did to *Moſes*, *Exod.* xiv. 31.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD ſpake unto Joſhua, ſaying.*] All this Buſineſs was managed purely by the Divine Direction,

Ver. 16. *Command the Prieſts that bear the Ark of the Teſtimony, that they come up out of Jordan.*] The midſt of which River, where they ſtood, being the loweſt and deepeſt Part of it, they are properly ſaid *to come up* when they left that Station.

Ver. 17. *Joſhua therefore commanded the Prieſts, ſaying, Come ye up out of Jordan.*] Where they waited for the Divine Order, and did not ſtir till they received it.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs, when the Prieſts that bare the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD were come up out of the River Jordan, and the Soles of the Prieſts Feet were lift up unto the dry Land.*] Where the Waters of *Jordan*, when it overflowed farthermoſt, were never wont to come.

That the Waters of Jordan returned into their Place.] The Channel was filled again by the Deſcent of the Waters. Which for ſome time had ſtood heaped up, and could not ſtir; but now were let looſe to keep their antient Courſe.

And

And overflowed all his Banks, as they did before.] Which was done, it is likely, by a gradual Deſcent of the Water, and not by the tumbling down of that great Heap all at once.

Ver. 19. *And the People came out of Jordan on the tenth Day of the firſt Month.*] In which Month they came out of *Egypt*, upon the fifteenth Day of it: So that there wanted juſt five Days of forty Years ſince their coming from thence.

And encamped in Gilgal.] A Place very famous in After-times, becauſe of their firſt Encampment here; where they ſeem to have continued for ſeveral Years, during the Wars of *Canaan*. Here alſo they were circumciſed, (from whence the Place had its Name, *ver.* 9.) and kept the firſt Paſſover; the Tabernacle and the Ark remaining here, as long as the *Iſraelites* kept their Station in this Place. See ix. 6. x. 6, 43. xiv. 6. which was, I ſuppoſe, till the War was ended, and they had alſo begun to divide the Land. See xiv. 6. After which the Tabernacle was fixed in *Shiloh*, xviii. 1. xxii. 9, 12. Though ſtill *Gilgal* continued a famous Place, as appears from *Judges* ii. 1. 1 *Sam.* xi. 14, 15. xiii. 4, *&c.*

In the Eaſt Border of Jericho.] That is, between *Jordan*, which lay behind them, and *Jericho*, which lay before them.

Ver. 20. *And thoſe Twelve Stones which they took out of Jordan, did Joſhua pitch in Gilgal.*] We are not told in what Form they were pitched; whether they remained ſingle and diſtinct, or, as *Joſephus* will have it, joined together in the Form of an Altar. It ſeems to agree beſt with the End and Intention of them, if we conceive them to have been ſet down ſingle, but in ſome Order, (ſuppoſe three in a Row) repreſenting, like ſo many little Pillars, the Twelve Tribes of *Iſrael*; who paſſing over *Jordan* on dry Ground, a Man out of each Tribe was ordered to bring a Stone, and place them here, for a perpetual Memorial (*ver.* 7.) of what God had done for them. For Stones, every one knows, (eſpecially ſome Sorts of them) are of a very durable Nature, and therefore uſed by all Nations in the Monuments they have made to preſerve the Memory of Perſons and Things. Inſomuch, that if it be true which *Procopius* reports (in his ſecond Book *de Bello Vandalico*) concerning the two Pillars erected by the *Canaanites*, who fled into *Africa* before the Face of *Joſhua*, with an Inſcription ſignifying their Expulſion by him; I conclude it to have been done in Imitation of theſe Stones, whereby *Joſhua* preſerved the Memory of the miraculous Way which was opened to him, for their Expulſion.

Ver. 21. *And he ſpake unto the Children of Iſrael, ſaying, When your Children ſhall ask their Fathers in Time to come, ſaying, What mean theſe Stones?*] See *ver.* 6. where he had ſaid this, at the Time they took up the Stones; and now repeats it, when they pitched them. For then he may be thought to have ſpoken only to the XII Men; but now to all the XII Tribes.

Ver. 22. *And ye ſhall let your Children know, ſaying, Iſrael came over this Jordan on dry Land.*] That it might not be left to every Man's Liberty to give what Anſwer they pleaſed to their Children, when they enquired the Meaning of theſe Stones, he ſets down the very Words they ſhould ſpeak unto them; that they might be ſure to be duly inſtructed in the wonderful Mercy of God to their Nation.

Ver. 23. *For the LORD your God dried up the Waters of Jordan from before ye, until ye were paſſed over.*] He would have Poſterity made ſenſible, it was a Divine Benefit beſtowed on them, by the Divine Power: Which alone could ſtop the Courſe of a River, till a whole Nation paſſed over on dry Ground.

As the LORD your God did to the Red-ſea] At the ſame Time he would have them take Occaſion to remember them of another miraculous Mercy, like unto this, though ſuperior to it. Which the Prophets, in After-times, delighted to commemorate together, as appears from *Pſal.* cxiv. 5.

Which he dried up before us, untill we were gone over.] What he did for their Fore-fathers, he did for them, who reaped the happy Fruit of it juſt as the ſaving of *Noah* and his Family in the Ark, was the ſaving of all Mankind, who ſprang from them.

Ver. 24. *That all the People of the Earth might know the Hand of the LORD.*] All Nations round about, who heard of this, might be made ſenſible of the Power of the God of *Iſrael*.

That it is mighty.] Which can do all Things.

And that ye might fear the LORD your God for ever.] The People of *Iſrael*, eſpecially, (for whom theſe Wonders were wrought) might religiouſly worſhip and ſerve him: For ſo the *Fear of God* frequently ſignifies in Scripture: And therefore the LXX here tranſlate theſe Words ἵνα ὑμεῖς σέβησθε Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν ὑμῶν, *that ye may worſhip the LORD your God*; which includes in it all the Duty owing to him. And ſo they tranſlate the laſt Words *for ever*, ἐν παντὶ ἔργῳ, *every thing that you do.*

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs, when all the Kings of the Amorites.*] Theſe were the principal Inhabitants, and the moſt valiant in all the Country; as hath been formerly noted.

Which were on the Side of Jordan Weſtward.] This ſeems to be added, to ſhew that beſides the two Kings of the *Amorites*, *Sihon*, and *Og*, whom they had already ſubdued on the other Side of *Jordan*, Eaſtward; there were other Kings of the ſame Nation on that Side of *Jordan*, where the *Iſraelites* now were. And it is not improbable, that theſe Kings commanded the *Hittites*, *Hivites*, and *Jebuſites*, as well as the *Amorites*.

And all the Kings of the Canaanites, which were by the Sea.] i. e. the *Mediterranean*, where the People properly called *Canaanites*, dwelt; though there were Colonies of them ſpread in other Places. The LXX here call them Βασιλεῖς τῆς Φοινίκης, *the Kings of Phœnicia*: For upon

upon that Sea were the principal Cities of the ancient *Phœnicians*, viz. *Tyre* and *Sidon*. But though the People that lived upon the Sea-coaſt were peculiarly called by this Name of *Phœnicians*, yet they were ſo powerful, that the whole Country was called χώρα τῶν Φοινίκων, *the Country of the Phœnicians*; as the LXX call the Land of *Canaan*, *ver.* 12. of this Chapter.

Heard that the LORD had dried up the Waters of Jordan from before the Children of Iſrael, until we were paſſed over.] This ſounds like the Language of *Joſhua*, or of ſome other Perſon then preſent, when this Wonder was wrought; which aſtoniſhed thoſe that lived in the remoteſt Parts of the Country; who little thought of an Invaſion on that Side, (which, it is likely, made them not draw any Forces that Way) imagining the River, eſpecially when it overflowed all its Banks, was a ſufficient Security unto them on that Frontier.

That their Hearts melted, neither was there Spirit in them any more, becauſe of the Children of Iſrael.] They quite loſt their Courage; which began to fail them before, as we read, Chap. ii. *ver.* 11. Or, as the LXX expounded it, *their Underſtanding failed them*; and they were in ſuch a Conſternation, that none knew what to adviſe for their Safety. In which the Providence of God is much to be obſerved, that by this means the *Iſraelites* were ſecurely circumciſed (as it here follows) whereas if the People of *Canaan* had been courageous and watchful, they had taken them at a great Advantage, if they had then fallen upon them; as appears by the Story of the *Shechemites*, *Gen.* xxxiv. 25. They had Leiſure alſo, without any Diſturbance, to celebrate the *Paſſover*, ver. 10.

Ver. 2. *At that Time the* LORD *ſaid unto Joſhua.*] The next Day, which was the *Eleventh* Day of the *firſt* Month; as our Primate *Uſher* and others judge moſt likely.

Make thee ſharp Knives.] Or, as it is in the Margin of our Bibles, *Knives of Flints*: Which Stones were plentiful, it is likely, in the Mountains thereabouts. And after they had marched forty Years in the Wilderneſs, it is probable (as *Theodoret* notes) that they were not provided with ſuch Knives as we uſe, of Iron. By the very Words alſo of *Joſhua*, it appears, he ſpeaks of Knives they were now to provide; and not of ſuch as they had already. Nor is it ſtrange ſuch Knives ſhould be uſed, for they were common in the Eaſtern Countries, as may be gathered out of the *Talmud*, in the Treatiſe of the *Sabbath*; where they ſay, *in the killing of Beaſts, they uſe either a Flint-ſtone* (ſo they interpret the Word *Tzur*) *or Glaſs, or a Quill.* From whence *Theodoric Hackſpan* concludes, that if ſharp Stones ſufficed for the killing of Beaſts, there was no need of any other in Circumciſion. Who obſerves alſo, that the *Jews* ſay, they might circumciſe with any Inſtrument, made either of Stone or Glaſs, but not of a Quill; becauſe there was Danger, it might ſlit and hurt ſo tender a Part. And at this Day they do circumciſe in the Eaſt, with Knives made of Stones, ſuch as *Zipporah*, it is ſuppoſed, uſed in the Circumciſion of her Son, *Exod.* iv. 25. See this Queſtion debated in *Sixtinus Amama*, his *Antibarbarus*, Lib. 2. Pag. 282. *Juſtin Martyr* thinks there was ſome Myſtery in the Uſe of theſe Knives. See his Dialogue with *Trypho*, p. 341, 342.

And circumciſe again the Children of Iſrael the ſecond time.] This doth not ſignifiy that they who had been circumciſed heretofore, were to be now circumciſed again, (from whence ſome have drawn an Argument for the repeating of Baptiſm, as St *Auſtin* tells us) but that there had been ſuch a general Circumciſion heretofore ordered, as there was to be now after a long Omiſſion of that Rite. And it is probable that it was at Mount *Sinai*, in the firſt Month of the ſecond Year after they came out of *Egypt*. When they kept a Paſſover on the fourteenth Day of that Month, (*Numb.* ix. 1, 2, 3.) and before they kept it, circumciſed all that had not been circumciſed in *Egypt*, or ſince they came out of it. For no uncircumciſed Perſon, nor any one who had a Son, or a Man-Servant in his Houſe uncircumciſed, was capable to be admitted to it. We do not read indeed of the Neglect of Circumciſion in *Egypt*, or in that Year wherein they came out of it; but, conſidering the great Oppreſſion they lay under in that Country, and the ſeveral Diſtreſſes they were in, after their Deliverance, for three Months, till they came to *Sinai*; and the Abſence of *Moſes* a long Time, after they came thither, it is very probable this Rite was omitted, till God called upon them (as he did now) to celebrate the Paſſover; and then they were conſtrained to take Care of it, becauſe otherwiſe they could not have kept it. See *Selden*, *Lib.* 2. *de Synedr.* Cap. H. N. 1.

Ver. 3. *And Joſhua made him ſharp Knives, and circumciſed the Children of Iſrael.*] Ordered every one that wanted it to be circumciſed; and, it is probable, not only all thoſe that came over *Jordan*, but ſuch of the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and *Manaſſites*, as were left on the other Side, were circumciſed alſo, and all in one Day, that they might be in a Condition to eat the Paſſover: Nor need it ſeem ſtrange that it was diſpatched in ſuch a ſhort time, for they might employ as many Hands as they pleaſed in this Work, there being no Neceſſity that a Prieſt or Levite ſhould do it, but it might be performed by their Fathers or Mothers, or any other Perſon.

At the Hill of the Fore-skins.] In the *Hebrew*, at *Gibeah Naaraboth*; which ſome take to be the Name of the Place where they were circumciſed; but then that Place was ſo called from the Fore-skins that were there thrown; which were ſo many, that being laid upon an Heap and covered with Earth, they made a little Hillock, as the *Jews* conceive. See *Pirke Elieſer*, Cap. xxix.

Ver. 4. *And this is the Cauſe why Joſhua did circumciſe.*] The Reaſon of this Order, and of the Execution of it, is here given.

All the People that came out of Egypt, that were Males, even all the Men of War, died in the Wilderneſs, by the Way, after they came out of Egypt.] That is, all that were then twenty

Years

Years old, for ſuch only were reputed Men of War, and were guilty of the Sedition mentioned in *Numb.* xiv. for which they were doomed to periſh in the Wilderneſs.

Ver. 5. *Now all the People that came out were circumciſed.*] Not only thoſe that died for their Rebellion, but all the reſt under twenty Years old, were generally circumciſed, except ſome Infants, who (as I ſaid upon *ver.* 2) might have been neglected during their heavy Oppreſſion there.

But all the People that were born in the Wilderneſs by the Way, 'as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumciſed.] Never ſince they removed from Mount *Sinai*, where it is likely there was a general Circumciſion, as there was now to be before their celebrating the Paſſover, which had not been kept ſince that Time.

Ver. 6. *For the Children of Iſrael walked forty Years in the Wilderneſs, till all the People that were Men of War, which came out of Egypt, were conſumed*, &c.] Theſe Words ſeem to give the Reaſon why they were not circumciſed, becauſe they were in a wandering Condition, while they remained in the Wilderneſs, and did not know when the Cloud would remove from the Tabernacle to lead them to another Place; which if it had done, when Children were newly circumciſed, their Lives might have been endangered by Motion, while they were ſore. This, a great many think, made *Moſes* diſpenſe with Circumciſion by God's Direction. We do not find him indeed conſulting God about it; but he was ſatisfied that God approved of this Reaſon for the Omiſſion of it. *R. Joſe*, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, gives this Account of the whole Buſineſs: *The Iſraelites kept but one Paſſover all the time they were in the Wilderneſs; the Reaſon was, in that Year* (which was the next to that wherein they came out of *Egypt*) *their Tents were pitched in a place where they might ſafely circumciſe the Males that had been lately born, leſt the Neglect of it ſhould hinder the legitimate Eating of the Paſſover. But in all the Time following, wherein they wandered in the Deſart, they did not circumciſe their Children, becauſe of their incommodious Journeys, and the Danger of Circumciſion by the way*; ſo that they could keep no more Paſſovers till they came to *Canaan.* This is a far better Reaſon than what many of them give, who ſay, Circumciſion was omitted, becauſe the North Wind never blew all the Time they were in the Wilderneſs; and Wounds are very dangerous when it doth not blow. Whence their Medical Maxim mentioned in the *Talmud*; *In cloudy Days, and when the Eaſt Wind blows, we neither circumciſe nor open a Vein.* See *Buxtorf. Synagog. Judaica*, Cap. IV. But If this Matter be well conſidered, we cannot reſt ſatisfied with the foregoing Reaſon; for all the Time they were in the Wilderneſs, Children were born, and Women lay in; and there was greater Danger by their Motion, while they were in Labour, and when they were newly brought to Bed, than there was in their Childrens being circumciſed, who were ſore but for a few Days; whereas the other were not fit to go abroad, or to travel, in a great many. For which, and for ſeveral other Reaſons, *Fortunatus Scacchus* thinks this was not the Cauſe why they were not circumciſed during their Travels in the Wilderneſs; but the true Reaſon was, that they did not look upon the Precept of Circumciſion as obliging them, till they came to ſettle in the Land of *Canaan*: For in the Covenant which *Moſes* made with them at Mount *Sinai*, there is nothing ſaid about Circumciſion, unto which they were bound by the Covenant made with *Abraham* (as our Saviour obſerves, *John* vii. 21.) and that runs thus, *I will give unto thee, and unto thy Seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a Stranger*, &c. *Thou ſhalt keep my Covenant therefore, thou, and thy Seed after thee*, &c. *Every Man-Child ſhall be circumciſed*, Gen. xvii. 8, 9, 10. See *Sacror. Elaochriſm. Myrother.* 2. Cap. liv.

Ver. 7. *And their Children, whom he raiſed up in their ſtead, them Joſhua circumciſed.*] Now that they were come to their Reſt in the Land of Promiſe.

For they were uncircumciſed, becauſe they had not circumciſed them by the Way.] For the Reaſon above-mentioned: To which this may be added, that ſeveral great Men (ſuch as *Theodoret* and St. *Hierom* among the Ancients) think that Circumciſion, being a Note of Diſtinction between the *Iſraelites* and other People, there was no need of it in the Wilderneſs, when (as *Cedrenus* ſpeaks) they were πάντος ἀλλογένους κεχωρισμένοι, ſeparated from all Strangers, by the Wilderneſs itſelf. Others think that the mixed Multitude of *Egyptians*, who, moved by the Miracles they had ſeen done in their Country, went out of it with the *Iſraelites*, and joined themſelves to them, were the Cauſe of this Omiſſion; for they could not preſently incorporate with them by receiving Circumciſion; and therefore it was ſuſpended, that theſe *Egyptians* might not look upon themſelves as quite a different People: But longer than till they came to *Canaan* they would not have it diſcontinued, when all, *Egyptians* as well as *Iſraelites*, received it, that they might not be upbraided as a People of a different Original. And as the Omiſſion of it in the Deſart made the Proſelytes who came out of *Egypt* equal with the *Iſraelites*, while they ſtayed there; ſo, as a moſt learned Friend of mine (Dr. *Alix*) ſuggeſts to me, it ſhewed, that there was no abſolute Neceſſity of this Rite, and that it could not be of eternal Obligation.

Ver. 8. *And it came to paſs, when they had done circumciſing all the People, that they abode in their Place in the Camp.*] Lay ſtill without Motion (which would have hindred the Healing of the Sore) and had not the leaſt Diſturbance given them by the People of *Canaan.*

Till they were whole.] Which they were againſt the Paſſover: for reckoning the eleventh Day for one, there were four Days between their Circumciſion and the Paſſover, which was not kept till the 14th Day at Even, when the Pain was pretty well over, for it was ſmarteſt on the third Day. See upon *Gen.* xxxiv 25.

Ver. 9. *And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua, This Day have I rolled away the Reproach of Egypt from off you.*] It is commonly thought that by

the

the Reproach of Egypt, is meant nothing elſe but Uncircumciſion, with which the *Iſraelites* always reproached other People, particularly the *Egyptians*, among whom they had long dwelt, and with whom they were beſt acquainted. But our learned Dr. *Spencer* thinks *the Reproach of Egypt*, is the Slavery to which they had been there long ſubject, but now were fully declared a free People by receiving the Mark of the Seed of *Abraham*, and made Heirs of the Promiſed Land. This he very often repeats, *Lib.* 1. *de Leg. Hebr. Ritual.* Cap. IV. p. 44, 51, 55. And no doubt *Joſhua* now choſe, immediately upon their Entrance into the Land of *Canaan*, to cauſe them to be circumciſed, not only as a Token they peculiarly belong'd to him, but to oblige them to be careful to obſerve all the Laws of God, many of which could not, and others were not, obſerved in the Wilderneſs, but were now to be regularly practiſed, becauſe they held the Land of *Canaan* by this Tenure. To this Purpoſe alſo *Theodoret* diſcourſes, in his Queſtions upon this Book; They were made now Lords of the Promiſed Land, who were lately Slaves in *Egypt*; for they could not be the legitimate Children of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and Heirs of the Promiſes made to them, till they were circumciſed. *Ralbag* hath another Notion of it; That the *Egyptians* ſeeing the *Iſraelites* wander ſo long as they did in the Wilderneſs, reproached and flouted them, as if they were brought thither to be deſtroyed, and not to poſſeſs the Land of *Canaan*; from which Reproaches God now delivered them, when he aſſured them, by enjoining their Circumciſion, that they ſhould ſhortly enjoy that Country which God promiſed; but which no uncircumciſed Perſon might inherit: But the firſt is the plaineſt and moſt unconſtrained Senſe.

Wherefore the Name of the Place is called Gilgal unto this Day.] This was the firſt Original of the Name, which this Place had ever after; for *Galal* in *Hebrew*, from whence this Word comes, ſignifies to remove, take away, or devolve. And ſo here the LXX. tranſlate the Word *Gallothi* (*I have rolled away*) by ἀφεῖλον, and the Vulgar *Latin* by *Abſtuli* (*I have taken away*;) which makes it ſtrange that *Joſephus* ſhould ſay, (*Lib.* V. *Antiq. Cap.* I.) that this Word *Gilgal* ſignifies *Liberty*, whom *Theodoret* follows; as if this Place was ſo called, becauſe now they found themſelves perfectly freed from the *Egyptians*, and from all the Troubles they endured in the Wilderneſs.

Unto this Day.] Theſe Words are alledged by ſome againſt *Joſhua*'s being the Author of this Book; to which an Anſwer hath been given, iv. 9.

Ver. 10. *And the Children of Iſrael encamped in Gilgal.*] Continued their Camp there, as they were enjoined, *ver.* 8.

And kept the Paſſover.] Which was the ſecond Paſſover that had been kept ſince its firſt Inſtitution, the firſt being obſerved the ſecond Year after their coming out of *Egypt* at Mount *Sinai*; after which it had been omitted thirty-nine Years, becauſe many of the People were uncircumciſed.

On the fourteenth Day of the Month at Even.] According to the Command of God, *Exod.* xii. 6.

In the Plains of Jericho.] Where the Tabernacle was in the midſt of their Camp, unto which they brought their Lamb, for it could be ſacrificed no where elſe, *Deut.* xvi. 2. And therefore hither the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* and *Manaſſites*, on the other ſide *Jordan*, came to offer this Sacrifice; which was eaſier for them, than it was in After-times to go up to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 11. *And they did eat the old Corn of the Land.*] Which the People of the Country had left in their Barns when they fled into *Jericho*, and other ſtrong Holds.

The Morrow after the Paſſover.] There is a great Diſpute among the *Jews*, whether this were the *Fifteenth* Day of the Month, which was properly the next Day after the Paſſover, or, as others take it, the *Sixteenth* Day, which was the ſolemn Sabbath kept on the firſt Day of Unleavened Bread, (*Levit.* xxiii. 10, 11.) when they were to wave the Sheaf of the Firſt Fruits before the LORD. The former are in the right.

Unleavened Cakes.] That is, they kept the Feaſt of Unleavened Bread, which was diſtinct from the Paſſover, as I obſerved, *Exod.* xii. 15, *&c.*

And parched Corn on the ſelf-ſame Day.] This was new Corn, which was growing that Year they entered into *Canaan*, of which it was not lawful to eat, till they had offered the Sheaf before-mentioned, (*Levit.* xxiii. 14.) and therefore it is made an Argument by ſome, that it was the *Sixteenth* Day of this Month when this Corn was parched.

Ver. 12. *And the Manna ceaſed on the Morrow after they had eaten of the old Corn of the Land, neither had the Children of Iſrael Manna any more.*] Becauſe they had no need of it, (as *Kimchi* and others interpret it) being ſupplied by the Store of old Corn which they found in the Land of *Canaan*, and by what was growing upon the Ground.

But they did eat of the Fruit of the Land of Canaan that Year.] After they had offered the Sheaf before-mentioned, *Levit.* xxiii. 11. So that Manna ceaſed on the *Sixteenth* or *Seventeenth* Day of the firſt Month, having continued with them forty Years, wanting about a Month. So *R. Bechai* truly interprets theſe Words, *Exod.* xvi. 35. not to ſignify *Forty Years* compleat, but *near* Forty Years; for it began to fall on the *Fifteenth Day* of the ſecond Month, and ceaſed on the *Sixteenth* or *Seventeenth* Day of the firſt Month of the *Fortieth* Year after they came out of *Egypt*; and therefore, to ſhew that they were not to expound thoſe Words, *They did eat Manna Forty Years*, in a ſtrict and preciſe Senſe, *Moſes* immediately adds, *until they came to a Land inhabited*; *they did eat Manna until they came to the Borders of the Land of Canaan*; which was exactly fulfilled, *Gilgal* being on the *Borders of the Land*, where it now ceaſed; but it continued till that Time, tho' they came *to a Land inhabited*, when they conquered the Kingdoms of *Sihon* and *Og*.

Ver. 13. *And it came to paſs, when Joſhua was by Jericho.*] After he had performed theſe ſolemn Rites of Circumciſion and the Paſſover, *Joſhua* went to take a View of *Jericho*, and to obſerve, as Generals are wont to do, the Approaches to it.

That he lift up his Eyes and looked.] Theſe Words ſignify a ſudden Apparition of a Perſon to him; for ſo this Phraſe is uſed, when ſomething new and unexpected preſents itſelf, as one is intent upon ſomething elſe, *Gen.* xviii. 1. *Dan.* x. 5.

And behold there ſtood a Man before him.] Whom he took to be a Man.

With his Sword drawn in his Hand over-againſt him.] He ſeemed to be a Soldier, or rather a great Commander, and ſtood directly oppoſite to him.

And Joſhua went unto him.] Such was his undaunted Courage, with which GOD had inſpired him.

And ſaid unto him, art thou for us, or for our Adverſaries?] He demands of him, whether he came to help the *Iſraelites*, or the People of *Canaan*; for whom (it appears by the Anſwer) *Joſhua* ſuſpected he came to fight.

Ver. 14. *And he ſaid, Nay.*] *i. e.* I am not on the Side of your Adverſaries.

But as Captain (or *Prince*) *of the Hoſt of the* LORD *am I now come.*] By the *Hoſt of the* LORD, is here meant the whole Body of the People of *Iſrael*, whom the LORD himſelf led forth out of *Egypt*, as his Army, (ſee *Exod.* xii. 41.) and now appeared in this manner, that he might ſhew he would ſtill conduct them, as their chief Commander and Leader, by whom they ſhould be victorious over their Enemies: For tho' many take this to have been a created Angel (*Michael*, ſuppoſe, the Chief of them) yet it is evident that *Joſhua* did not think him ſo to be, for he fell down and worſhipped him, as we read in the Words following.

And Joſhua fell on his Face to the Earth.] With the profoundeſt Reverence.

And did worſhip.] Which he durſt not have given (for GOD alone is to be adored) nor would an Angel have received, without ſuch a Check as an Angel gave St. *John*, (*Revel.* xxii. 10.) if he had not taken him to be the Divine WORD that was come to fight for them. So the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe upon *Joſh.* x. 42. *It was the WORD of the LORD that fought for them*, according to GOD's Promiſe, i. 9, 17. This a moſt learned Friend of mine (Dr. *Alix*) ſhews was the Judgment of the ancient *Jewiſh* Church (ſee his late Book on that Argument, *p.* 234.) and it is moſt certain was the Judgment of the ancient Chriſtians, particularly of *Juſtin Martyr*, *Euſebius*, and *Theodoret*. See *Valeſius* in his Annotations upon *Euſebius*'s Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 2. *p.* 7. And therefore our great Primate of *Ireland* fears not to ſay in his Annals, *Jeſus Dominus noſter, princeps militiæ patris ſui, Jeſu typico ad Jerichuntem gladio ſtricto apparens, promittit ſe populum defenſurum*; that is, Jeſus our LORD, the Prince of his Father's Hoſt, appearing to him who was a Type of him at *Jericho*, with a drawn Sword, promiſed to be the Defender of the People: Where he ſeems by *the Captain of the LORD's Hoſt*, to underſtand our LORD, who commands Angels themſelves; for they are ſometimes called *the Hoſt of Heaven*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 19. *Luke* ii. 13. And it may very well be thought the Meaning here.

And ſaid unto him, What ſaith my Lord unto his Servant?] *Joſhua* was poſſeſſed with ſuch a deep Senſe of the Greatneſs of this Perſon, that he humbly deſires to receive his Commands, and he would obey them.

Ver. 15. *And the Captain of the LORD's Hoſt ſaid unto Joſhua, Looſe thy Shoe from off thy Foot, for the Place where thou ſtandeſt is holy.*] This is the fulleſt Evidence that can be given of the Divinity of this Perſon that appeared to him; who was ſo far from reproving him for doing him too much Honour, that he commanded him to do much more; for that which he here requires, is the higheſt Acknowledgment of a Divine Preſence that was uſed among the Eaſtern Nations, as the ſame Dr. *Alix* obſerves, and conſidering that theſe are the very ſame Words which were ſpoken to *Moſes*, *Exod.* iii. 2, 3. we learn the Reaſon why GOD commanded this to *Joſhua*; which was, for the ſtrengthening of his Faith, that as now he was placed in *Moſes* his ſtead, ſo GOD would be with him, as he had been with *Moſes*. And thus *Joh. à Coch* diſcourſes very reaſonably upon the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. 6. N. 3. *This Angel, who ſuffered himſelf to be worſhipped, and by whoſe Preſence the Place where he appeared was ſanctified, ſo that Joſhua was commanded to put off his Shoes, no doubt was he whom all the Angels in Heaven worſhip.*

And Joſhua did ſo.] Put off his Shoes, in Token of Reverence to that Place; which was holy, while that Divine Preſence remained there, tho' not after it was gone: And it continued there for ſome Space of Time, to give *Joſhua* Advice, and to encourage him to hope for his Protection and Aſſiſtance; as appears from *v.* 2. of the next Chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jericho was ſtraitly ſhut up, becauſe of the Children of Iſrael.*] The *Targum* underſtands it as if he ſpake of the ſtrong Fortifications of *Jericho*, which made it needful *Joſhua* ſhould be encouraged in his Enterprize againſt it. But the Words in the *Hebrew* are literally (as is noted in the Margin of our Bibles) *did ſhut up, and was ſhut up*, which plainly relates to the ſtrict Guards which were kept, that none could get into the City, nor get out of it: So it is explained in the next Words.

None went out, and none came in.] They ſhut up their Gates ſo cloſe, that none could go out to carry Intelligence to *Joſhua*; and they were blocked up ſo cloſe by the *Iſraelites* (to which the latter Part of the foregoing Words may perhaps refer) that none could get in to bring any Intelligence or Relief to the Inhabitants of *Jericho*.

Ver. 2. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Joſhua.*] The ſame Perſon ſpeaks to him (all agree) who is called the *Prince of the* LORD*'s Hoſt* in the foregoing Chapter; and here is called JEHOVAH. Which ſhews he was not a created Angel, but God himſelf; who alone could promiſe and perform what follows.

See, I have given into thy Hand Jericho, and the King thereof, and the mighty Men of Valour.] Who were gathered together in this Place out of ſeveral Nations: It being a Frontier City, which they made as ſtrong as they were able, and defended by the moſt valiant Men they had in the Country. See xxiv. 11. For we are to ſuppoſe that they had refuſed the Offers of Peace which God ordered to be firſt ſent unto them, (*Deut.* xx. 10.) and, truſting to their Forces, took up a deſperate Reſolution not to yield upon any Terms.

Ver. 3. *And ye ſhall compaſs the City, all ye Men of War, and go round the City once.*] At ſuch a Diſtance, I ſuppoſe, that they could not reach them from the City, with their Arrows or Stones ſlung againſt them.

Thus ſhall ye do ſix Days.] Once every of thoſe Days, in ſuch Order as is deſcribed, *ver.* 6, 7, 8, 9. This look'd not like making War; but appeared to the Beſieged, it was probable, as a Paſtime.

Ver. 4. *And ſeven Prieſts ſhall bear before the Ark ſeven Trumpets of Rams Horns.*] Such Trumpets as they uſed to blow withal in the Year of *Jubilee*, Lev. xxv. 9. for ſo the Phraſe is in the *Hebrew*, *Trumpets of Jobel:* And I have obſerved elſewhere, that Rams Horns, not being hollow, Trumpets could not be made of them.

And the ſeventh Day ye ſhall compaſs the City ſeven times.] The ſeventh Day's March differed in two Things from the other ſix; that they compaſſed it but once on other Days, and made not the leaſt Noiſe, but now ſeven times, and made a great Shout at the End of the laſt Circuit. Concerning this Number *Seven*, ſee *Druſius* upon this Place, and upon *Levit.* iv. 6. *Grotius* ſaith of it in ſhort (upon 2 *Chron.* xxix. 21.) *Heptas ſacris propria*; The Number *Seven* is proper to ſacred Things: As appears by the ſeven Angels and ſeven Trumpets, *Revel.* viii. 2.

And the Prieſts ſhall blow with the Trumpets.] All the time they marched ſo often round the City. See *Tertullian*, Lib. 2. *adv. Marcion* Cap. 21.

Ver. 5. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that when they make a long Blaſt with the Rams Horns.*] A loud Sound protracted after a ruſtick manner, as *Bochart* interprets it in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 43.

And when ye hear the Sound of the Trumpet.] And were commanded by *Joſhua* to ſhout, *ver.* 16.

All the People ſhall ſhout with a great Shout.] Such as Soldiers uſe when they make an Onſet upon a Place, or when Armies meet to give Battle.

And the Wall of the City ſhall fall down flat.] Or, fall *under it* as it is in the *Hebrew*; which ſeems to ſignify that the Foundations of the Wall were ſubverted, ſo that it ſunk and fell into the Ditch, or (as the *Jews* explain it) ſunk into the very Ground on which it ſtood, ſo as to leave no Ruins, as in the common Fall of Walls; in which they ſuppoſe another Miracle.

And the People ſhall aſcend up every Man ſtrait before him.] The whole Wall did not fall down, for *Rahab*'s Houſe ſtood, which was upon the Wall, ii. 15. But ſuch wide Breaches were made every where round about, that the *Iſraelites* went ſtrait forward, and found an eaſy Entrance into this City, which the amazed Inhabitants had no Heart to defend; or rather, the whole Wall ſunk into the Earth, only *Rahab*'s Houſe was left ſtanding, which made the Thing more remarkable. And thus God demonſtrated, that it was his wonderful Power which overthrew the City, againſt which they brought no Engines nor battering Rams, *&c.* ἀλλὰ μόνῃ φωνῇ σάλπιγγος καὶ κεφαλίνης, καὶ εὐχῇ δικαίᾳ *&c.* as *Epiphanius* ſpeaks, *Hæreſ.* 66 N. 83.

Ver. 6. *And Joſhua the Son of Nun called the Prieſts, and ſaid unto them, Take up the Ark of the Covenant.*] This is the ſecond Time that the Prieſts are ordered to carry the Ark, which belonged to the Office of the *Kohathites.* See iii. 3.

And let ſeven Prieſts bear ſeven Trumpets of Rams Horns before the Ark of the LORD.] As the LORD commanded, *ver.* 4.

Ver. 7. *And he ſaid unto the People, Paſs on and compaſs the City, and let him that is armed paſs before the Ark of the* LORD.] This explains, *ver.* 3. where he ſeems to command only *the Men of War* to compaſs the City. But the Meaning is, that the whole Body of the People ſhould march in this Circuit, the Men of War going before the Ark, and the reſt of the People following it, as it is explained *ver.* 9.

Ver. 8. *And it came to paſs, when Joſhua had ſpoken unto the People.*] By the Prieſts, as the LXX underſtand it.

That the ſeven Prieſts bearing the ſeven Trumpets of Rams Horns, paſſed on before the LORD, *and blew with the Trumpets, and the Ark of the Covenant of the* LORD *followed them.*] According to the Direction given *ver.* 6.

Ver. 9. *And the armed Men went before the Prieſts, that blew with the Trumpets.*] Here the Order of their March explains the Command, *ver.* 7.

And the Rear-ward came after the Ark.] That is, the reſt of the People who had no Arms, old Men, Women and Children, came in the Rear of the Ark. Concerning the Word *Meaſſeph*, (which we tranſlate *Rear-ward*) ſee *Numb.* x. 23. From whence may be gathered, that by this *Rear-ward*, is meant the Tribe of *Dan*; as the *Targum*, *Raſi* and *Kimchi* underſtand it; who by the *armed Men* before mentioned, underſtand the *Reubenites*, *Gadites* and *Manaſſites*, who were engaged by *Moſes* to go *armed before the* LORD *to War*, Numb. xxxii. 20. and renewed this Engagement to *Joſhua*, i. 12, *&c.*

The Prieſts going on, and blowing with the Trumpets.] The Word *Prieſts* is not in the *He-*

brew, which made the *Vulgar* to tranſlate the Words in ſuch a manner as if the whole Multitude before mentioned made a Sound with Trumpets, *Buccinis omnia concrepabant*. But there being no Order for any to blow with Trumpets but only the *Prieſts*, our Tranſlators have done well to ſupply that Word from *Ver.* 4. as they do alſo from *Ver.* 13. where this is again repeated.

Ver. 10. *And Joſhua had commanded the People, ſaying, Ye ſhall not ſhout, nor make any Noiſe with your Voice, neither ſhall any Word proceed out of your Mouth.*] They were not to talk to one another as they went along, but march in a profound Silence, before and after the LORD, waiting on him, to ſee what he would do for them.

Until the Day I bid ye ſhout, then ſhall ye ſhout.] That is, on the ſeventh Day, after they had compaſſed the City ſeven times.

Ver. 11. *So the Ark of the LORD compaſſed the City, going about it once.*] It is uncertain upon what Day they began to do this; but it is very probable (as the *Jews* ſay in their *Larger Chronicle*) that it was the next Day after the ſeven Days of Unleavened Bread were ended.

And they came into the Camp, and lodged in the Camp.] They ſpent the reſt of the Day in the Camp to refreſh themſelves, and lay there the following Night.

Ver. 12. *And Joſhua roſe up early in the Morning.*] *Viz.* That Morning of the firſt Day of compaſſing the City.

And the Prieſts took up the Ark of the LORD.] Theſe Words, and thoſe that follow in the next Verſe, give a particular Account of what was done the firſt Day, according to that which was ſaid in general, *Ver.* 8, 9.

Ver. 13. *And the ſeven Prieſts bearing ſeven Trumpets of Rams Horns before the Ark of the LORD, went on continually.*] Without reſting or making any Stop, in a continued Motion, till they had finiſhed their Circuit.

And blew with the Trumpets.] As ſoon as they began their Motion.

And the armed Men went before them, but the Rear-ward came after the Ark, the Prieſts going on, and blowing with the Trumpet.] Till they have ended their Circuit.

Ver. 14. *And the ſecond Day they compaſſed the City once.*] In the ſame Order before deſcribed.

And returned into the Camp.] As they had done the firſt Day, *Ver.* 11.

And ſo they did ſix Days.] The remaining *four* Days were ſpent in the ſame pompous Shew, without ſtriking a Stroke, or ſpeaking a Word, that the Subverſion of the City might be aſcribed wholly to the Power of GOD, which ſecretly undermined the Walls, and threw them down.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs on the ſeventh Day.*] The *Jewiſh* Writers ſay this was the Sabbath, as *Raymundus* obſerves in his *Pugio Fidei*, and *Joſ. de Voyſin* in his Annotations upon him, *p.* 625. But I ſhall only mention the Words of *Kimchi*, which are theſe; *The Ark of the LORD compaſſed the City the firſt Time, on the firſt Day of the Week: So our Doctors, of pious Memory, have delivered, that the ſeventh Day whereon the City was taken, was the Sabbath, tho' they killed and burnt upon that Day; for he that commanded the Sabbath to be obſerved, commanded it now to be prophaned for the Deſtruction of Jericho, as he commanded Burnt Offerings to be ſacrificed on this Day:* Which is the very Inſtance whereby our bleſſed Saviour juſtifies his doing ſome Works upon the Sabbath-Day. And here I cannot but note, that it was JEHOVAH, according to this Explication, who gave this Command to compaſs the City on this Day as well as any other. That great LORD who gave the Command to keep the Sabbath, now diſpenſed with it: He that ſpake from Mount *Sinai* was the Perſon who appeared to *Joſhua*: For whether this Day was the Sabbath or no, it is certain, one of the ſeven Days wherein they were thus employed, was the Sabbath, and conſequently their Reſting on that Day was diſpenſed withal, by the ſame Authority that made the Law of the Sabbath.

That he roſe early about the Dawning of the Day.] All the ſix Days, I ſuppoſe, they roſe early, as they did upon the firſt (*Ver.* 12.) but upon this Day very early, as ſoon as they could ſee, becauſe they had ſeven times as much Work to do as they had upon the other Days.

And compaſſed the City after the ſame manner, ſeven times.] Not with a continued Motion, I ſuppoſe, but reſting a while (perhaps after each Circuit) to refreſh themſelves; otherwiſe by ſo much Motion, they might have been diſpirited, and unfit to attack *Jericho*, when the Wall of it fell down before them.

Only on that Day they compaſſed the City ſeven times.] For ſo the LORD ordered, *Ver.* 4.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs at the ſeventh time.*] As ſoon as they had ended the ſeventh Circuit.

When the Prieſts blew with the Trumpets.] Such a long Sound as is mentioned, *Ver.* 5.

Joſhua ſaid unto the People.] By ſuch Officers as he had appointed to give the Order, when they heard that unuſual Sound of the Trumpet.

Shout.] In aſſured hope of Victory, as it follows in the next Words, *for the LORD hath given you the City.*

Ver. 17. *And the City ſhall be accurſed.*] All the Commands given in this, and in the two following Verſes, could not be delivered juſt before he bad them ſhout; but they had been given ſome time before they began to march the ſeventh time about the City. And if any thing of theſe Matters was repeated now, it was very briefly, by bidding them remember the Orders they had received concerning the City, and all that was therein.

I have obſerved elſewhere, that this Word *Cherem* (which we tranſlate *accurſed*) ſignifies ſometimes the Gift itſelf which is devoted to GOD, for his Uſes, *Levit.* xxvii. 24. ſometimes that which is devoted to perpetual Deſtruction, by the Right which GOD hath to puniſh capital Enmities to him, as here in this Place. And thus, Mr. *Selden* obſerves, the great *Sanhedrim* might

might devote those to Destruction, who in War did not observe such Charges as were given them; of which they find an Instance in *Judg.* xxi. 5. See him Lib. 4. *de Jure Nat. & Gentium*, Cap. 6.

Even it and all that are therein, to the LORD.] As the first Fruits of their Victories, in the Land of *Canaan*. All whose Inhabitants God ordered to be exterminated; but thought fit to make such an Example of the first that refused to submit, as to raze their very City, and command it never to be built again: For that this was done by a particular Order from God, appears from 1 *Kings* xvi. 34. Thus he commanded even such Cities in *Israel* to be destroyed, as should hereafter revolt to Idolatry, *Deut.* xiii. 15, 16, 17.

Only Rahab the Harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the House. Which is explain'd in the Execution of this Order, *Ver.* 23.

Because she hid the Messengers.] Who sware unto her that she should be preserved: And therefore, both in Justice and Gratitude, *Joshua* was bound to take Care of her; and, no doubt, had Order from God to make good the Oath of the Spies.

That we sent.] This seems to import, that *Joshua* sent the Spies by the Advice or Consent of the Elders; tho' it may signify no more but that he sent them upon a publick Account. See *Ch.* ii. 1, 23.

Ver. 18. *And you, in any wise, keep yourselves from the accursed Thing.*] Take heed, lest you meddle with any of the Spoils, which are devoted to God, and appropriate them to your own Use.

Lest you make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed Thing.] Bring yourselves under the same Sentence of being devoted to Destruction.

And make the Camp of Israel a Curse.] And, more than that, expose the whole Camp to the same Danger. For many times God takes Occasion to punish the whole Body of a People for their other Sins, when some of them only have highly offended him.

And trouble it.] Disturb the Course of their Victories.

Ver. 19. *But all the Silver and Gold and Vessels of Brass and Iron.*] And other Metals, I suppose.

Are consecrated to the LORD.] Except the Gold and Silver of their Images, which were utterly to be destroy'd, according to an express Command of God, *Deut.* vii. 25, 26.

They shall come into the Treasury of the LORD.] Which was in the Tabernacle. To the Service of which, such Things were wholly appropriated, and might not be employ'd to any other Use. But it is very probable, that before such Things were put into the Treasury, they were purified, by making them go through the Fire: According to the Law, *Numb.* xxxi. 22, 23. The *Jews* think these Things were given to God, because the City was taken on the *Sabbath*.

Ver. 20. *So the People shouted, when the Priests blew with the Trumpets.*] As they had been commanded, *Ver.* 16.

And it came to pass, when the People heard the Sound of the Trumpet, and the People shouted with a great Shout.] This is repeated to shew, that this was all that the People contributed to the Expugnation of this City; Which they wholly ascribed to God.

That the Wall fell down flat.] As the LORD had promised, *Ver.* 5.

So that the People went up into the City, every Man straight before him, and they took the City.] As it was easy to do, when the Garrison was in such a Consternation, at the sudden Fall of the Wall, without any visible Force to throw it down; that, in all Likelihood, they could make little or no Resistance.

Ver. 21. *And they utterly destroyed all that was in the City, both Man and Woman, Young and Old, and Ox, and Sheep, and Ass, with the Edge of the Sword.*] See *Deut.* xx. 16, 17. Some have observed that there are no *Camels* here mention'd; which were not commonly bred in this Country, much less *Mules*, which were not known in the Land of *Israel* till the Days of *David*. As *Bochart* concludes from the Mention, upon several Occasions, of Oxen, Sheep, and Asses; but never of these Creatures till his Time. But if there were any other Animals in *Jericho* besides these here named, they were all killed; for that was the Law of the *Cherem*. As for their killing of *Infants* and *Women*, see *Grotius*, Lib. III. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 4. Sect. 9. And it must also be remembred that they were a People guilty of such foul Idolatry, that it was fit the whole Race of them should be destroyed, as *Sodom* was; where all the Children perished as well as others. And this was a Type of the entire Destruction of new *Babylon*, mentioned in the *Revelation*.

Ver. 22. *But Joshua had said unto the two Men that had spied out the Country.*] He had given this Order before the falling of the Wall; when he began their March on the Seventh Day, the Seventh Time, and before they shouted.

Go into the Harlot's House.] Which, by the wonderful Providence of God over her, was left standing with Part of the Wall upon which it was built, when the rest sunk into the Ground.

And bring out thence the Woman, and all that she hath.] With her in the House.

As ye sware unto her.] Ch. ii. 14.

Ver. 23. *And the young Men that were Spies, went in, and brought out Rahab, and her Father, and her Mother, and all that she had; and they brought out all her Kindred.*] By this it appears, that all related to her, who took Shelter under her Roof, were preserved from Destruction. Such is the great Clemency of God, who, for the Sake of one excellent Woman, spared a great many that had done nothing to deserve his Favour.

And left them without the Camp of Israel.] They were brought out of the House, because it was to be burnt, with all the rest of the City: Which was to be laid desolate without Inhabitant. And they were carried without the Camp of *Israel*, because it was Holy by the

the Presence of the LORD there: Which made it unlawful for them to enter into it, till they had abjured their Gentile Superstition; and, by Circumcision, (and by Baptism, as the Custom was in After-times, if not now) admitted into the Body of the *Israelites*.

Ver. 24. *And they burnt the City with Fire, and all that was therein.*] By the just Judgment of GOD upon it, for the horrible Wickedness committed therein. See *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 3. Cap. 12. Sect. 2.

Only the Silver and the Gold, and the Vessels of Brass and Iron, they put into the Treasury of the House of the LORD.] As had been enjoined before they took the City, *ver.* 19.

Ver. 25. *And Joshua saved Rahab the Harlot alive, and her Father's Houshold, and all that she had.*] It is likely her Father and his Houshold gave Credit to what she said; and consequently were converted, as she was, to the true Religion, by what they had heard before, and now saw with their own Eyes, of the wonderful Works of GOD.

And she dwelleth in Israel unto this Day.] Was incorporated with the *Israelites*, and made a Member of their Body; as all her Kindred, it's likely, were: At least, they became Proselytes of the Gate, (as they called those who renounced Idolatry, and worshipped the God of *Israel*) tho' they were not circumcised. Concerning this Phrase *unto this Day*, see before iv. 9.

Because she hid the Messengers which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho.] Which proceeded not merely from her Humanity, but was a noble Act of courageous Faith.

Ver. 26. *And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying.*] He made the Elders and Heads of their several Tribes (I suppose) bind themselves by a solemn Oath, and they took the same Security of all the People; adding a Curse upon themselves and their Posterity, if any of them broke this Oath.

Cursed be the Man before the LORD.] This shews that this *Cherem*, whereby he adjudged him and his Family to destruction, who should rebuild *Jericho*, was a Sentence pronounced by the LORD; and not by *Joshua* without his Order. And so we read expresly in the First Book of the *Kings*, xvi. *ult.* See concerning this *Cherem*, Mr. *Selden*, Lib. 4. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 7. P. 505.

That riseth up and buildeth this City Jericho.] Whose Ruins GOD would have remain, as a perpetual Monument of his Power, and of his Severity. So *Maimonides*, in his *More Nevochim*, Pars 3. Cap. 50. *This Anathema*, saith he, *was pronounced, that the Miracle of the Subversion of Jericho might be kept in perpetual Memory: For whosoever saw the Walls sunk deep into the Earth*, (as he understands it) *would clearly discern that this was not the Form of a Building destroyed by Man, but miraculously thrown down by GOD.*

He shall lay the Foundation thereof in his Firstborn.] That is, in the Death of his First-born.

And in his youngest Son shall he set up the Gates of it.] The Meaning is, in the Progress of the Work, the rest of his Children should die: And when he had finished it, (which was when he *set up its Gates*) he should lose the last of them. Which was fulfilled exactly in the Days of *Ahab*, as we read in the Place beforenamed, 1 *Kings* xvi. 34. Which, by the way, shews this Book of *Joshua* to have been older than the Book of the *Kings*.

We are not to imagine that this *Anathema* reached any farther, than to the Builder of *Jericho* and his Family; not to those who should inhabit it, after it was rebuilt. For there was a Company of Prophets, who made no Scruple to settle here in future Times, 2 *Kings* i. 15. And if it had been built in any other Place, and not on the Ruins of the old City, (tho' they had given it the Name of *Jericho*) one cannot think he that built it would have fall'n under this Curse. Which either he did not mind, or did not believe, otherwise he would not have ventured to restore this City: Unto which he was tempted by its pleasant Situation, 2 *Kings* i. 19.

Ver. 27. *So the LORD was with Joshua.*] Thus GOD made good his Promise to him, i 5, 9. Where the *Targum*, as I observed, hath it, *the WORD of the LORD thy God shall be thy Helper.* And so these Words run in that Paraphrase, *and the WORD of the LORD helped Joshua*: That Divine Person who appeared to him, and encouraged him in this Undertaking, Chap. v. 13, 14, *&c.*

And his Fame was noised throughout all the Country.] There was no Part of the Country, which did not hear of their wonderful Entrance into it over *Jordan*; and of the miraculous taking of *Jericho*; and the Execution done there; which made the Name of *Joshua* famous among them, as a Captain before whom Rivers fled, and the strongest Walls fell down flat.

CHAP. VII.

Verse 1. *BUT the Children of Israel.*] That is, one among them. Which is an usual Form of Speech in the Holy Scriptures, to ascribe that to many indefinitely, wherein one alone is concerned; because, where Men are united in a Society, they are all to partake in the Good or Evil that every of their Members doth. Instances of which we find in *Gen.* viii. 4. xix. 29. xxiii. 6. *Jugdes* xii. 7. *Matth.* xxvi. 8. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 17. Pag. 212. and a great many more Instances he heaps up, P. 2. Lib. 5. Cap. 3. P. 669.

Committed a Trespass in the accursed Thing.] Offended GOD by purloining to his own Use, some of the Spoils, which were devoted to Destruction, or appropriated to GOD's Treasury, with a Curse upon him that meddled with them.

For Achan the Son of Carmi.] Who is called *Achar*, in 1 *Chron.* ii. 7. because he having troubled *Israel*, (as the Word *Achar* signifies) *Ver.* 25. of this Chapter, it is likely, that, in After-times, they turned his Name into *Achar* instead of *Achan*.

The Son of Zabdi.] Who is called *Zimri*, 1 *Chron.* ii. 6.

The Son of Zerah, of the Tribe of Judah.] For we find *Zerah* was the Son of *Judah*, and came with him into *Egypt*, when he was very young; for we read of no Children he had, *Gen.* xlvi. 12. And if we suppose him to have begotten *Zabdi*, when he was Seventy Years old, and allow as many Years before *Zabdi* begat *Charmi*, and as many before *Charmi* begat *Achan*; we may make Account (with *Bonfrerius*) that *Achan* was now about Fifty Years old; an Age wherein many Men begin to be more covetous than they were in their Youth.

Took of the accursed Thing.] What it was, he himself confesseth, *Ver.* 21.

And the Anger of the LORD was kindled against the Children of Israel.] The Sin of one Member of the Body provoked the Divine Majesty to express his Displeasure against them all, (which they deserved upon other Accounts) that they might be awakened to find out, and to punish him, who had brought them into great Danger.

This Preface is made to this Chapter, to shew whence the ill Success they had at *Ai* proceeded.

Ver. 2. *And Joshua sent Men from Jericho to Ai.*] Called *Hai* in *Abraham*'s Time, *Gen.* xii. 8. Which *Joshua*, I suppose, had summoned to surrender, according to the Precept in *Deut.* xx. 10. but they had refused. It was a City about Three Miles distant from *Jericho*, as the *Jews* say in *Semoth Rabbah*; which *Masius* takes to signify three Leagues.

Which is beside Beth-aven.] Whether *Beth-aven* here signify a City or a Wilderness, is uncertain. See xviii. 12.

On the East Side of Beth-el.] A Place which was but one League from *Ai*, as *Masius* computes, and lay Westward of it, (*Gen.* xii. 8.) for the War was carried on from the East, where *Jericho* was, to the Western Parts of the Country. It was called *Beth-aven*, in future Times, by way of Reproach, when the Golden Calves were set up in it; which made it not a *House of God*, (as *Beth-el* signifies) but an *House of Iniquity*, i. e. Idolatry, which is the import of *Beth-aven*. But it is plain from hence, these were two distinct Places.

And spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the Country; and the Men went up and viewed Ai.] How it lay, and how it was fortified, *&c.* And it seems to have been seated in the Hilly Country; and belonged to the *Amorites*, Ver. 7.

Ver. 3. *And they returned unto Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the People go up, but let about two or three Thousand Men go up, and smite Ai*, &c.] They thought this Number would be sufficient, because, as it follows in the End of the Verse, *they were but few*; and therefore they would not have all *Israel* put to the Trouble of marching thither. In which Counsel a good Providence of God interposed; for if the Flight of Three Thousand Men put the *Israelites* into such a Consternation, (as we read, *Ver.* 5, 6.) what a Condition would they have been in, if all the People had been put to the Worse? as they would have been, if they had attacked *Ai*, while this Guilt remained among them.

Ver. 4. *So there went up thither of the People about three Thousand Men, and they fled before the Men of Ai.*] Who seeing so small a Number, came out and engaged the *Israelites*; whose Courage quite failed them, so that they seem not to have struck a Stroke, but immediately run away. For God had left them; to whom they owed all their Valour and Victories.

Ver. 5. *And the Men of Ai smote of them about Thirty and Six Men.*] Of the hindermost of them, it is most likely, who could not run away so fast as the rest.

For they chased them from before the Gate.] Of the City *Ai*.

Unto Shebarim.] A Place, I suppose, between *Ai* and *Jericho*; which the *Targum* thinks had its Name from the Rout of the *Israelites* there.

And smote them in the going down.] Till they came to the Plains of *Jericho*. For *Ai* standing on a Hill, there was a Descent from thence thither.

Wherefore the Hearts of the People melted.] As Wax doth before the Fire, (*Psalm* lxviii. 2.) or as Ice before the Sun.

And became Water.] Weak and wavering, in uncertain Resolutions; not knowing what to do.

Ver. 6. *And Joshua rent his Cloaths.*] As the Manner was when they were full of Grief, upon Occasion of any great Calamity, or the Commission of any great Crime. Which Custom was very ancient, *Gen.* xxxvii. 34. xliv. 13. and continued in the Times of the Prophets; who make it a Crime that Men did not rend their Clothes, when grievous Sins were committed.

And fell to the Earth upon his Face.] To make his Supplication to God for Mercy.

Before the Ark of the LORD] Not in the Sanctuary, but with his Face towards it. In Imitation of which, the *Præcentor* in the *Jewish* Synagogue, at this Day, falls down before the Chest, wherein they keep the Book of the Law, when he takes it out to read; as *Buxtorf* observes in his *Synag. Judaica*. And on solemn Fast-Days, as the *Misna* tells, such Prostrations were usual.

Until the Even-Tide.] Continued all Day in Fasting and Prayer to God.

He and the Elders of Israel.] Who rent their Cloaths, I suppose, as he had done; and then presented themselves, in this mournful Manner, before God, to implore his Mercy.

And put Dust upon their Heads.] This was still an higher Expression of great Grief, and of a deep Sense of their Unworthiness to be relieved. Which was very usual in this Nation, (1 *Sam.* iv. 12. 2 *Sam.* i. 2. *&c.*) and was imitated by the *Gentiles*; as we see in the Example of the *Ninevites*, *Jonah* iii. 6. and of *Achilles*, who bewailed the Death of *Patroclus*, by throwing Dust on his Head, and lying down in the Dust, as *Homer* describes it in *Iliad*, Σ. *Ver.* 23, 24.

Ver.

Ver. 7. *And Joſhua ſaid, Alas, O* LORD *God.*] A Form of Speech dolefully bewailing their forlorn Condition: Which did not misbecome ſo great a Captain as *Joſhua* was; for the moſt generous Spirits have the moſt tender Senſe of Humanity, as *Arius Montanus* excellently diſcourſes upon this Place.

Wherefore haſt thou at all brought this People over Jordan, to deliver us into the Hands of the Amorites to deſtroy us?] This is not a ſinful Expoſtulation with God (for *Joſhua* is not reprehended for it, but graciouſly inſtructed) but only a Confeſſion of his Ignorance, why God ſhould do ſuch Wonders for them as he had done, and now let them fall into the Hands of thoſe Enemies, whom they had conquered on the other ſide of *Jordan*. And it is, as if he had ſaid, I am confounded in my Thoughts, being unable to underſtand why, *&c.* and conſequently he humbly deſired to be informed in the Reaſon of this Change of his Providence.

Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other ſide Jordan.] As far as he could apprehend, they had better have reſted ſatisfied with what they had in Poſſeſſion, than be thus defeated in their Attempt to acquire more.

Ver. 8. *O* LORD *what ſhall I ſay.*] What Courſe ſhall I take? Or, how ſhall I anſwer the Reproaches of our inſulting Enemies?

When Iſrael turneth their Backs before their Enemies?] What Hope is there of conquering them, or preſerving ourſelves?

Ver. 9. *For the Canaanites and all the Inhabitants of the Land will hear of it.*] They that are at the greateſt Diſtance, by the Sea-ſide, will hear the Report of our Defeat; which will ſoon be ſpread over the whole Country.

And ſhall inviron us round about.] Be encouraged thereby to gather all their Forces together, and ſurround us.

And cut off our Name from the Earth.] Utterly deſtroy us.

And what wilt thou do unto thy great Name?] And, which was worſe, God would loſe the Glory of all the Miracles he had wrought, and be thought unable to accompliſh what he had begun to do for his People. This Argument *Moſes* had formerly preſſed, *Exod.* xxxii. 12. *Numb.* xiv. 16. *Deut.* ix. 28. and God himſelf, in the Song which he bad *Moſes* teach the People, makes uſe of it, *Deut.* xxxii. 26, 27.

Ver. 10. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Joſhua, Get thee up; why lieſt thou thus upon thy Face?*] Theſe Words are not a Reproof, but a gracious Anſwer to his Prayers; for when a Perſon who ſupplicates a Prince is commanded to riſe up from his Knees, it is a Token of Acceptance.

Ver. 11. *Iſrael hath ſinned.*] See *ver.* 1.

And they have alſo tranſgreſſed my Covenant which I commanded them.] They had promiſed Obedience to all God's Commands, *Exod.* xxiv. 7. and aſſured *Joſhua* they would do whatſoever he bad them, i. 16, 17, 18. And this was a late Command delivered by him from God, that they ſhould not meddle with any thing devoted to God, with a ſolemn Curſe.

For they have even taken of the accurſed thing.] That which belongs to me, *ver.* 1.

And have alſo ſtolen, and diſſembled alſo.] Not only purloined that which God reſerved to himſelf; but denied it after the Fact was done. For I ſuppoſe *Joſhua*, after the Deſtruction of *Jericho*, had made Enquiry, whether the Silver and Gold, *&c.* were brought into the Treaſury, and whether they had deſtroyed all other things, as God commanded; and they all anſwered, that they had.

And they have put it even amongſt their own Stuff.] To conceal it from diſcovery: Or, it is an Expreſſion of his impudent Tranſgreſſion of God's Command, in converting it immediately to his own private Uſe. For in this Verſe the Crime is aggravated in a gradual manner, in that *Achan* had not only ſinned, but againſt the Covenant they had ſolemnly made with him; and that in a Matter of great Importance, in which he had lately laid his Injunctions upon them; having not only taken to himſelf what belonged to God, but done it by way of Stealth, as if he could not ſee it; and likewiſe denied the doing of it; and perſiſting in the Sin, by mixing what he had ſtolen with his own proper Goods.

Ver. 12. *Therefore the Children of Iſrael could not ſtand before their Enemies, but turned their Backs before their Enemies, becauſe they were accurſed.*] By having a Man among them, who was fallen under the Curſe of God.

Neither will I be with you any more, except you deſtroy the Accurſed from among you.] Theſe Words ſhew that only one Man among them was accurſed, tho' they all ſuffered for it; and were to continue to ſuffer, till he was deſtroyed. For now that they knew there had been ſuch a crime committed among them, they had been as guilty as *Achan*, if they had not puniſhed it.

Ver. 13. *Up.*] He was not ſtill lying on the Ground, for God had bid him riſe before, and he, I ſuppoſe, had obeyed him: But this is a Word whereby he quickens him to make all the Speed he could, to do as he now directed him.

Sanctify the People.] Call upon them to ſanctify themſelves; as it here follows.

And ſay unto them, Sanctify yourſelves.] As they did when they were to meet the LORD at Mount *Sinai*, Exod. xix. 10, *&c.* and as they were lately commanded to do, when he led them over *Jordan*, iii. 5. For now they were to appear before his Majeſty, that an Inquiſition might be made who he was that had been guilty of this foul Crime.

To-morrow.] For he would not have the Guilt remain any longer upon them.

For thus ſaith the LORD *God of Iſrael, There is an accurſed thing in the midſt of thee, O Iſrael.*] He ſpeaks in this Style, both to awaken them to ſanctify themſelves; and alſo to appear before the LORD next Morning.

Thou canſt not ſtand before thine Enemies, untill ye take away the accurſed thing from among you.] Both the Perſon that had violated the *Anathema*; and the Thing he had purloined.

Ver. 14. *In the Morning therefore ye ſhall be brought.*] Before the LORD.

According

According to your Tribes.] Some principal Persons of every Tribe, representing the rest, were set before the LORD.

And it shall be, that the Tribe which the LORD *taketh, shall come according to the Families thereof; and the Family which the* LORD *shall take, shall come by Households; and the Household which the* LORD *shall take, shall come Man by Man.*] There is no Difficulty in these Words, but only to understand how this Inquisition was made, and the Author of the Fact discovered: Which is not here expressed, there being no Words to signify how the LORD *took* one Tribe, and Family, and Household, and Person, from the rest. The *Jews* (who are never at a Loss in these Matters) tell us, that when they stood before the Sanctuary, the High-Priest was in it with the *Urim and Thummim*; wherein were twelve Stone's, with the Names of the Children of *Israel* engraven in them. And when that Tribe, suppose, to which the guilty Person belonged, was called, that Stone in which was the Name of that Tribe, changed Colour; and so it did when the Family, and the Household, and the Person were called. But this is a mere Fancy of the Stones shining, or becoming duskish; by which, I have shewn elsewhere, Answers could not be given to Enquiries by *Urim and Thummim*. And what others of them say, is not much better: For instance, *Kimchi*, who tells us some are of Opinion, that they being made to pass before the Ark, the Guilty could not stir a Foot. See several other Conceits in *Buxtorf*'s *Historia Urim & Thummim*, p. 304, *&c.*

But the plainest Account of this Matter is this, that they were discovered by casting of Lots, in the Presence of God; which was an usual Way in After-Times of discovering noxious Persons, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 41, 42. *Jonah* i. 7. So *Josephus*, L. 5. Cap. 1. and *Ralbag*.

Ver. 15. *And it shall be, that he that is taken with the accursed thing, shall be burnt with Fire.*] After they had stoned him to Death with Stones, *ver.* 25.

He and all that he hath.] His Children, and his Cattle; his Tent, and all his Goods; as it is explained *ver.* 24.

Because he hath transgressed the Covenant of the LORD.] *Ver.* 11.

And because he hath wrought Folly in Israel.] Committed a very heinous Sin.

Ver. 16. *So Joshua rose up early in the Morning.*] It is probable he acquainted no body with these Orders; but made all the haste he could to put them in Execution: For if they had been known abroad, *Achan*'s Guilt might have made him flee from so terrible a Sentence.

And brought Israel by their Tribes; and the Tribe of Judah was taken.] Who, if we may believe the *Jews*, immediately stood to their Arms, and would not lay them down, till they saw the Man apprehended and punished who had done this thing.

Ver. 17. *And he brought the Family of Judah, &c.*] Every Family of that Tribe, till that of the *Zarhites* was taken.

And he brought the Family of the Zarhites Man by Man.] That is, every Head of their several Households, as he was directed, *ver.* 14.

And Zabdi was taken.] That is, the Lot fell upon his Household.

Ver. 18. *And he brought his Household Man by Man, and Achan the Son of Carmi, the Son of Zabdi, the Son of Cerah, of the Tribe of Judah, was taken.*] Here the *Samaritan* Chronicle tells the very same Story with the *Talmudists*, that the Stone in the Breast-plate of the High-Priest, in which was engraven the Name of *Judah*, was darkned when *Achan* was named. See *Hottinger*'s *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. p. 505.

Ver. 19. *And Joshua said unto Achan, My Son.*] All great Minds are full of Tenderness and Compassion; and nothing more unbecomes a Prince, than violent Passion: Which *Joshua* was so far from expressing on this Occasion, that he speaks to him with the greatest Mildness imaginable.

Give, I pray thee, Glory to the LORD *God of Israel.*] The *Samaritan* Chronicle before named, paraphrases this not amiss; *Lift up thine Eyes to the King of Heaven and Earth, and acknowledge that nothing can be hid from him; who knows the greatest Secrets.*

And make Confession unto him, and tell me now what thou hast done.] Openly confess thy Guilt; and relate to me what it is, that thou hast converted to thine own Use.

Hide it not from me.] Who thou seest have God at hand, to discover that which none of us know but thyself.

Ver. 20. *And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the* LORD *God of Israel.*] Which the *Samaritan* Chronicle thus expresses; *I acknowledge that I have grievously sinned before God, who knows all secret and hidden Things: For I have prevaricated against the Covenant of God, and against his Embassador.*

And thus and thus have I done.] Committed this Sin, with such Circumstances, as here follow.

Ver. 21. *When I saw among the Spoils.*] He doth not say in what Place: but the forenamed Chronicle saith, it was as he entered into one of their Temples.

A goodly Babylonish Garment.] There are a great many Opinions about this Garment; which *Bochart* most probably judges to have been a *Various Garment*, as the LXX translate it; that is, of *divers Colours*, wherein were several Figures either woven or wrought with a Needle; for which sort of Work *Babylon* was famous, insomuch that they were called *Painted Garments*; which made a most glorious Shew, and therefore was very inviting to the Eye of *Achan*: Who was tempted by its Lustre, to reserve one of these Garments for his own Use, or to sell; for they were of an immense Price. See him in his *Phaleg*, Lib. 1. Cap. 6. where he hath a long Dissertation about this Garment.

And two hundred Shekels of Silver.] Which is as much as an hundred *German* Dollars, as *Marsius* observes.

And a wedge of God.] In the *Hebrew* a *Tongue* for it had that Shape.

Of Fifty Shekels Weight.] This may be understood two ways; either that it was worth so many Shekels in Value, that is, Fifty Dollars; or, that it weighed as much as Fifty Shekels,

that is, three hundred Dollars. The laſt Senſe *Maſius* thinks moſt probable.

Then I coveted and took them.] To his own Uſe; when he ſhould have brought them into God's Treaſury, *James* i. 15.

And behold they are hid in the Earth in the midſt of my Tent.] Till he could have Time to diſpoſe of them to his beſt Advantage.

And the Silver under it.] The Silver was immediately under the *Babyloniſh* Garment, and the Gold under that: For both Silver and Gold are here meant, tho' one only mentioned.

Ver. 22. *Then Joſhua ſent Meſſengers, and they ran to the Tent.*] Leſt any one ſhould remove them, and render the Fact dubious; and that the Children of *Iſrael* might be ſpeedily expiated.

And behold it was hid in his Tent, and the Silver under it.] They found the *Babyloniſh* Garment (as was ſaid before) hid in the Earth, and the Silver and Gold under it. The LXX indeed underſtand it, as if the Gold and *Babyloniſh* Garment were uppermoſt, and the Silver under them: For ſo they tranſlate theſe Words both here and in the foregoing Verſe, τὸ ἀργύριον ὑποκάτω αὐτῶν, *the Silver under them.* The Wedge of Gold perhaps was wrapt in the *Babyloniſh* Garment; and ſo the Silver might be ſaid to lie, either *under it*, or *under them.*

Ver. 23. *And they took them out of the midſt of the Tent.*] Where he told them he had buried theſe things.

And brought them unto Joſhua, and unto all the Children of Iſrael.] For they were all aſſembled at the Tabernacle, waiting to ſee the Iſſue of this Matter.

And laid them before the LORD.] That the Fact might be manifeſt, and the LORD acknowledged to be omniſcient.

Ver. 24. *And Joſhua and all Iſrael with him.*] By an univerſal Conſent.

Took Achan the Son of Zerah.] He was *Zerah*'s Great Grandchild.

And the Silver, and the Garment, and the Wedge of Gold.] Which God would not have put into his Treaſury, after they had been thus perverted to a private Uſe.

And his Sons, and his Daughters.] This ſeems very hard, that they ſhould be executed in ſuch a terrible manner, as here follows, for their Father's Fault. But the *Jews* in *Pirke Elieſer* ſay, they were puniſhed, becauſe they were privy to their Father's Stealth, and concealed it. Others think this was a neceſſary Severity in the Beginning of a new Empire, and of a plentiful Fortune, upon which they now entered; that they might not wantonly abuſe it. But there are thoſe, who think this is but a ſeeming Difficulty; *Achan* alone being ſtoned (as we read in the next Verſe, *all Iſrael ſtoned him with Stones*) and his Children brought forth to be Spectators of it. And when it is ſaid, in the Concluſion of the next Verſe, *they ſtoned them with Stones*, it relates to his *Oxen, and Aſſes, and Sheep*, which were ſtoned with him. See *Guil. Vorſtius*, in his Annotations on *Pirke Elieſer*, p. 224.

And his Oxen, and his Aſſes, and his Sheep, and his Tent, and all that he had.] This was done, to repreſent to the People the Heinouſneſs of this Offence; and to ſtrike ſuch a Terror into them, that they ſhould not dare to commit the like.

And they brought them unto the Valley of Achor.] Which had its Name from him, *ver.* 26. See there.

Ver. 25. *And Joſhua ſaid.*] He was the ſole Judge, as the *Jews* think, in this Matter. And whereas, by the Law, none might be condemned out of the Mouth of one Witneſs, nor was any Judge to ſit alone, without Aſſiſtants, (according to their Doctors) nor any Man's Teſtimony to be admitted againſt himſelf, (becauſe in a mad Fit, he might undo himſelf) yet their King had this ſingular Prerogative, that he might try a Man alone by himſelf, and condemn him out of the Mouth of one Witneſs, nay, from his own Confeſſion; as *Joſhua* did here (who was their King or ſupreme Governor) in *Achan*'s Caſe; and as *David* did afterward in the Caſe of the *Amalekite*, 2 *Sam.* i. 15. See *G. Schickard*, in his *Jus Regium*, Cap. 4. Theor. 14. But *Joſhua* is impertinently alledged as a Proof of this extraordinary Power; for it was God who convicted *Achan*, and pronounced this Sentence; which *Joſhua* only put in Execution.

Why haſt thou troubled us? the LORD *ſhall trouble thee this Day.*] The Doctors in the *Hieruſalem Talmud*, in the Treatiſe *Sanhedrim*, Cap. 6. fancy there is a peculiar Emphaſis in theſe Words, *this Day.* As if he had ſaid, *In this Day thou ſhalt be troubled, but thou ſhalt not be troubled in the World to come.* For they think that he having given Glory to God by confeſſing his Sin, had all his Puniſhment here.

All agree *Joſhua* alludes to his Name; the Word *Achar*, ſignifying to *trouble* or *diſturb.* Or rather, his Name was changed from *Achan* unto *Achar*, becauſe of this Diſturbance which he gave to all *Iſrael.*

And all Iſrael ſtoned him with Stones] Which was a Puniſhment of great Crimes, as I have obſerved elſewhere. See *Lev.* xx. 9, 11, 12, 13, *&c.* as I remember. This is ſaid to be done by *all Iſrael*; becauſe they were all preſent, and conſenting to it.

And burnt them with Fire, after they had ſtoned them with Stones.] Burnt their dead Carcaſſes. Why they were both ſtoned, and alſo burnt, *Elieſer* in his *Pirke*, and *Vorſtius* upon him, gives a Reaſon in the Place above-named.

Ver. 26. *And they raiſed over him a great Heap of Stones unto this Day.*] As a Monument of his Sin, and of God's Judgment upon him. Thus they did with *Abſalom*, 2 *Sam.* xviii. 17. And Houſes or Cities which were deſtroyed, are ſaid to be turned into an *Heap*, *Iſa.* xxv. 2. or *Heaps*, *Jerem.* ix. 11. as a Token of their utter Ruin.

And the LORD *turned from the Fierceneſs of his Anger.*] Was reconciled to his People, after they had executed his Sentence againſt him, that provoked his Anger. So the *Samaritan* Chronicle. *Thus the Anger of God was removed from the Children of Iſrael, and he was pleaſed with what they had done.* See *Deut.* xiii. 17.

Wherefore the Name of that Place.] Where he was ſtoned and burnt.

Was called the Valley of Achor unto this Day.] From that Time all the People called this Place by that Name, in Memory of this Execution done upon *Achar:* So he was alſo called ever after this. For tho' his Name was *Achan*, yet from henceforward they called him *Achar*, the Troubler of *Iſrael*. And ſo he is here called in the *Syriack* Verſion, and by *Joſephus*, *Athanaſius*, *Baſil*, and others mentioned by *Bochartus*; as *Ezra* himſelf alſo calls him, 1 *Chron.* ii. 7. See *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 31. in the latter End.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua.*] Who, it is likely, now conſulted GOD about their Progreſs in this War: Which he had not done before (vii. 2.) being ſufficiently authorized by what GOD had often ſaid to him, and by their Succeſs againſt *Jericho:* But this late Defeat before *Ai*, might make him think it neceſſary to take Advice of the Divine Majeſty, before he attempted any thing farther.

Fear not, neither be diſmayed.] Becauſe of the late ill Succeſs; of which he now knew the Cauſe; which was removed.

Take all the People of War with thee.] This Order may ſeem ſtrange, ſince the People themſelves thought two or three thouſand were ſufficient, if GOD were with them. But GOD would have them all to ſhare in the Spoil of *Ai*; that they who had obeyed him in abſtaining from laying their Hands on any thing in *Jericho*, might be now rewarded for it, by the Prey of this City; as it follows in the next Verſe.

And ariſe, go up to Ai.] Which, it appears by this, was in the Hill Country.

I have given into thy Hand the King of Ai, and his People, and his City, and his Land.] He bids him be confident of a complete Victory, as if he had already won it.

Ver. 2. *And thou ſhalt do to Ai and her King, as thou didſt to Jericho and her King.*] Only with ſuch a Difference, as follows in the next Words.

Only the Spoil thereof, and the Cattle thereof, ſhall ye take for a Prey unto yourſelves.] None of the Silver or Gold, or any thing elſe, was ſeparated to GOD's Uſe, nor ordered to be deſtroyed; but they were to enjoy it all entirely themſelves.

Lay thee an Ambuſh for the City behind it.] On the Weſt of it; for they were now in *Gilgal*, which lay Eaſtward.

Ver. 3. *So Joſhua aroſe, and all the People of War, to go up againſt Ai.*] In Obedience to the Divine Direction, *Ver.* 1.

And Joſhua choſe out thirty thouſand mighty Men of Valour, and ſent them away by Night.] When they were leſs liable to be obſerved.

Ver. 4. *And he commanded them, ſaying, Behold ye ſhall lie in wait againſt the City, even behind the City.*] Like a great General, he aſſigns their Poſt to every Part of the Army.

Go not very far from the City.] Lie as cloſe to it as you can, without being diſcovered.

But be ye all ready.] To ſeize upon the City, when all the People were drawn out of it.

Ver. 5. *And I, and all the People that are with me, will approach unto the City.*] As if they intended to aſſault it.

And it ſhall come to paſs, when they come out againſt us, as at the firſt.] Which he rationally preſumed they would, being fluſh'd with ſuch good Succeſs.

That we will flee before them.] Counterfeit a Flight, as ſoon as they appeared.

Ver. 6. *For they will come out after us, till we have drawn them from the City.*] Purſue them, with all their Force.

For they will ſay, They flee before us as at the firſt; therefore we will flee before them.] He gives the Reaſon of their Flight, without ſtriking of a Stroke (as we now ſpeak) that all the People might be enticed out of the City, in Purſuit of them, as he concluded they would be; becauſe now there was a greater Number of the *Iſraelites* than before; which would require their whole Power to deal withal.

Ver. 7. *Then ye ſhall riſe up from the Ambuſh, and ſeize upon the City.*] Upon the Signal given, mentioned *Ver.* 18.

For the LORD your God will deliver it into your Hand.] He would not have them fear to enter the City; which he aſſured them GOD would put into their Poſſeſſion.

Ver. 8. *And it ſhall be, when ye have taken the City, that ye ſhall ſet the City on Fire.*] The Gate where they entered, or ſome of the Skirts of the City; as a Token they were poſſeſſed of it. For they were to take the Spoil of the City before they burnt it, *ver.* 28.

According to the Commandment of the LORD ſhall ye do.] And not tranſgreſs, as *Achan* did.

See, I have commanded you.] Acquainted them with the Will of GOD; in the Obſervance of which, they might be confident of Succeſs.

Ver. 9. *Joſhua therefore ſent them forth, and they went to lie in Ambuſh.*] He ſelected theſe thirty thouſand Men out of the reſt of the Army; and when it was dark, they went upon the fore-named Deſign.

And Joſhua lodged that Night among the People.] The fore-named Detachment (as we now ſpeak) was commanded by ſome great Officer, in whom *Joſhua* confided; but he himſelf lay all Night in the Body of the Army; that he might be ready in the Morning to give the neceſſary Orders.

Ver. 10. *And Joſhua roſe up early in the Morning, and numbered the People.*] He firſt gave Orders to the Officers (for he could not do it himſelf alone) to ſee that none of the People were wanting.

And went up, he and the Elders of Iſrael, before the People, to Ai.] And when he commanded them to march, he was attended by the Elders of *Iſrael*, leading them on towards *Ai*. But it is uncertain who are here meant by the *Elders of Iſrael*. Some think, the chief Comman-

ders in the Army; but they are never called *Elders*, much leſs the *Elders of Iſrael*. But the Rulers and Judges are called by this Name, who, I ſuppoſe, waited upon *Joſhua* as a Council of War; being Men authorized by GOD to aſſiſt the ſupreme Governor, *Numb.* xi. 16, 24, 25.

Ver. 11. *And all the People, even the People of War that were with him, went up and drew nigh, and came before the City.*] The Diſtance between *Gilgal* and *Ai* being but three Leagues, it is likely, the People being muſtered early in the Morning, they got thither before Noon. Thoſe Words, *even the Men of War that were with him*, ſeem to be oppoſed to the *thirty thouſand*, whom he had ſent before to lie in Ambuſh, *Ver.* 3.

And pitched on the North Side of Ai.] Here the main Body of the Army lay, behind the Hills, it's likely, ſo that they were not diſcovered till the Evening, or the next Day.

Now there was a Valley between them and Ai.] Where they of *Ai*, I ſuppoſe, drew up; when they reſolved to engage them.

Ver. 12. *And took about five thouſand, and ſet them to lie in Ambuſh between Bethel and Ai.*] Which Places were but a League diſtant one from the other. See vii. 2.

On the Weſt Side of the City.] Where the former Detachment was ordered to lie, *Ver.* 4. But theſe ſeem to have been a diſtinct Party from them, and ſent, it's likely, for another Purpoſe; to intercept all thoſe that might think to ſave themſelves, by flying thro' By-ways, which they were to guard. There are thoſe indeed who think that there were but *thirty thouſand* Men in all employed in this Expedition againſt *Ai*; and that out of them theſe *five thouſand* Men were ſent to lie in Ambuſh, that they might, in convenient Time, ſet Fire to the City. See *Maſius*. But this is ſo directly contrary to GOD's Command, to *take all the People of War with him*, *Ver.* 1. and to what is ſaid, *Ver.* 3, 11. that I cannot think it to be true. One had better ſay, this Party was added to ſtrengthen the thirty thouſand Men in their Undertaking.

Ver. 13. *And when they had ſet the People, even all the Hoſt that was on the North of the City, and their Liers-in-wait, on the Weſt of the City.*] That is, when Things were thus diſpoſed about the Evening.

Joſhua went that Night into the midſt of the Valley.] To pray to GOD, it is likely, for a Bleſſing upon their Enterprize.

Ver. 14. *And it came to paſs, when the King of Ai ſaw it.*] That is, was informed of their inveſting the City on the North Side of it; which it is likely was in the Evening, or late that Night.

That they haſted.] He called a Council, and they ſpeedily reſolved to diſlodge the *Iſraelites*.

And roſe up early, and the Men of the City went out againſt Iſrael to Battle, he and all his People.] The Meaning is, all that could fight went out, and their King at the Head of them.

At a Time appointed.] They had agreed all to iſſue out at ſeveral Gates (it is likely) at a certain Hour.

Before the Plain.] He means, perhaps, the Valley which lay between *Ai* and the Camp of *Iſrael*; before which they drew up their Army to engage the *Iſraelites*.

But he wiſt not that there were Liers in-Ambuſh againſt him behind the City.] The King had no Intelligence of that ſtrong Party, which *Joſhua* had ſent to lie behind the City; they keeping, I ſuppoſe, their Gates ſhut (as they did at *Jericho*, that none could get in or go out, vi. 1.) and ſuſpecting no Danger from the Weſtern Coaſt, where they lay, but only from the Eaſt, whence they knew the *Iſraelites* were to march.

Ver. 15. *And Joſhua, and all Iſrael, made as if they were beaten before them.*] At the firſt Onſet, *Joſhua* himſelf turned his Back, and all the reſt of his Army; as if they durſt not ſtand before them.

And fled by the Way of the Wilderneſs.] Which lay between *Jericho* and *Ai*.

Ver. 16. *And all the People that were in Ai.*] Who were able to fight.

Were called together to purſue them.] I ſuppoſe ſome of the Men of War might be left in the City till they ſaw the *Iſraelites* fly, and then they were all called out, (as *Ver.* 14.) is to be underſtood) together with thoſe of *Beth-el*, who were come to their Aſſiſtance; being near Neighbours, and both under the ſame King.

And they purſued after Joſhua, and were drawn away from the City.] They were ſo eager in their Purſuit, that they were drawn to a greater Diſtance from *Ai*, than they would have been, if they had conſidered the Danger of leaving it naked.

Ver. 17. *And there was not a Man left in Ai.*] None that were able to fight.

Or Beth-el, that went not out after Iſrael.] For they of *Beth-el*, it appears by theſe Words, were come to the Aſſiſtance of *Ai*, before any of the Army of *Iſrael* arrived: For afterwards they could not, becauſe the Ambuſh lay between *Beth-el* and *Ai*, *Ver.* 9.

And they left the City open, and purſued after Iſrael.] There was not ſo much as a Man left to guard the Gates; but all were engaged in the Purſuit.

Ver. 18. *And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua.*] GOD ſecretly ſuggeſted to him, that now was the Time for the Ambuſh to fall upon the City; when the Army was drawn ſo far from it that they could not return ſoon enough to relieve it.

Stretch out the Spear that is in thy Hand, towards Ai.] He bids him face about (as we now ſpeak) and ſtop the Flight of the *Iſraelites*. It is much diſputed what the *Hebrew* Word *Chidon* ſignifies; which the Vulgar *Latin* tranſlates a *Shield*. But *Bochartus* hath taken a great deal of Pains to ſhew, that it every where ſignifies in Scripture a *Spear* (as we tranſlate it) or a *Lance*, or ſome kind of ſuch-like offenſive Weapon; eſpecially in this Place, he thinks, there can be no Doubt of it: For it was a Weapon he had in his Hand, and was to ſtretch forth towards the City; that it might be a Signal to thoſe in Ambuſh to riſe and enter the City;

and to thoſe who fled, to make a Stand, and encounter the Enemy. To which purpoſe, nothing could be more proper than a Spear, with a Flag, it is highly probable, at the End of it, (like to our Enſigns) which made it more viſible. See *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 8. P. 135, *&c.* The LXX. here tranſlate it γαῖσον, which *Suidas* ſays ſignifies a kind of Weapon, οἷον δόρατος, *like to a Spear*. See the ſame moſt learned Author, in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 42. P. 744.

For I will give it into thy Hand.] As he promiſed, *Ver.* 1.

And Joſhua ſtretched out the Spear that he had in his Hand toward the City.] That all *Iſrael* might ſee it; as they did the Rod of *Moſes*, when they fought againſt *Amalek*.

Ver. 19. *And the Ambuſh roſe quickly out of their Place.*] Being admoniſhed by ſome Divine Suggeſtion (as *Maſius* thinks) as well as by the Signal, that now was the Time to execute their Deſign.

And they came as ſoon as he had ſtretched out his Hand.] Which they might ſee from ſome of the Hills, at the Back of which they lay. But why they ſhould watch for this Sign, or underſtand what it meant, unleſs *Joſhua* had received this Order, and told it them before they went, cannot be conceived.

And they entered into the City, and took it.] For there was no body to oppoſe them.

And haſted and ſet the City on Fire.] In one Place; which it is likely was on the North Side of the City; that both the *Iſraelites* and the People of *Ai* might ſee the Smoak. This the LORD had ſtrictly commanded, (ſee *Ver.* 8.) which made them make ſuch *haſte*, as ſoon as they had poſſeſſed themſelves of the City, to ſet fire to it.

Ver. 20. *And when the Men of Ai looked behind them.*] I ſuppoſe there was a great Shout made by all the *Iſraelites*, when they ſaw the Smoak aſcend; which made the Men of *Ai* look about them.

They ſaw, and behold the Smoak of the City aſcended up to Heaven.] The firing of any Out-Houſes, or Barns, was ſufficient to make ſuch a Smoak; for it is certain the City was not yet burnt. See *Ver.* 28.

And they had no Power to flee this Way or that Way.] Either they were ſo diſmayed, that they ſtood ſtock-ſtill (as we ſpeak) or found themſelves ſo environed, that they could no way eſcape. For on the North and Eaſt Sides, the great Army came upon them; and on the Weſt the Ambuſh iſſued forth againſt them; and the other five thouſand Men block'd up their Way on the South: Which could not but very much amaze and perplex their Minds; and the more, to ſee all their vain-glorious Hopes vaniſhed, which their King no doubt had entertained, of ſtopping the Progreſs of the *Iſraelites*, and being the Deliverer of his Country.

And the People that fled to the Wilderneſs turned back upon the Purſuers.] *Ver.* 15. They counterfeited a Flight no longer, but now boldly look'd their Enemies in the Face.

Ver. 21. *And when Joſhua and all Iſrael ſaw.*] By this it is plain, the whole Body of the Men of War were here; and not only three thouſand of them, as ſome ſuppoſe. See *Ver.* 12.

That the Ambuſh had taken the City, and that the Smoak of the City aſcended.] Whereby they underſtood it was taken.

Then they turned again, and ſlew the Men of Ai.] After they had made a Stand a while, and rallied, they fell upon the Men of *Ai*, and made a great Slaughter of them.

Ver. 22. *And the other iſſued out of the City againſt them, ſo they were in the midſt of Iſrael, ſome on this ſide and ſome on that ſide; and they ſmote them, ſo that they let none of them remain, or eſcape.*] By this Stratagem, they were all entirely cut off.

Ver. 23. *And the King of Ai they took alive, and brought him to Joſhua.*] Perhaps they were ordered ſo to do; that he might be made a publick Spectacle of the Divine Vengeance.

Ver. 24. *And it came to paſs, when Iſrael had made an end of ſlaying all the Inhabitants of Ai.*] That is, the Men of War.

In the Field, in the Wilderneſs wherein they chaſed them.] By this it appears, that they fled before the *Iſraelites*, as ſoon as they turned upon them; having no Heart to fight them, *Ver.* 20.

And when they were all fallen by the Edge of the Sword, until they were conſumed.] This is repeated to expreſs a complete Victory.

That all the Iſraelites returned unto Ai.] From whence they counterfeited a Flight.

And ſmote it with the Edge of the Sword.] All the People that were left in it; as every one was, that was not able to go to War.

Ver. 25.] *And ſo it was, that all that fell that Day, both of Men and Women, were twelve thouſand.*] By which it appears, this was no great City; and that they who were ſent to view the Country, had Reaſon to think a ſmall Party ſufficient to ſubdue it, vii. 2, 3. For the Men of *Beth-el* ſeem to be included alſo in this Number; being mixed with thoſe of *Ai*; from whom the *Iſraelites* could not diſtinguiſh them.

Even all the Men of Ai.] The Inhabitants of the City (as it follows in the next Verſe) and the Territory about it, great and ſmall, Men and Women.

Ver. 26. *And Joſhua drew not his Hand back, wherewith he ſtretched out the Spear, until he had utterly deſtroyed all the Inhabitants of Ai.*] But kept his Arm extended, with the Spear in it; as *Moſes* his Rod was lifted up during the Fight with *Amalek*. Or, the Meaning may be, that he himſelf charged them, and continued to fight, as long as there was a Man left.

Ver. 27. *Only the Cattle and the Spoil of the City.*] *i.e.* Their Silver and Gold, and Houſhold-ſtuff, *&c.*

Iſrael took for a Prey unto themſelves, according unto the Word of the LORD, &c.] Who was ſo far from reſerving any of theſe Things to himſelf that he made an expreſs Grant of them to the *Iſraelites*, *Ver.* 2.

Ver. 28. *And Joſhua burnt Ai.*] After they had gotten all the Spoil of it; which had been loſt, if it had been burnt before by the Liers-in-Ambuſh. See *Ver.* 8, 19.

And

And make it an Heap, even a Deſolation, unto this Day.] Laid it waſte; ſo that it was known only by its Ruins for a long time after; as it was at the time when this was written. See *Ver.* 11, 26.

Ver. 29. *And the King of Ai he hanged on a Tree.*] Being the Head of a very wicked People, who was fit to be made a publick Spectacle of GOD's Diſpleaſure. *Lipſius*, in his Book *de Cruce*, Lib. 1. Cap. 11. produces this as an ancient Inſtance of crucifying notorious Malefactors. But that is a great Miſtake, Crucifixion being no *Jewiſh*, but a *Roman* Puniſhment. Nor were crucified Perſons hanged and ſtrangled, as the King of *Ai* and *Haman* were, but faſtened alive to a Croſs, with Nails ſtruck into their Hands and Feet. The LXX. indeed here expound it, *he was hanged*, ἐπὶ ξύλα διδύμα, wherein they ſeem to have reſpect to the Figure of the Croſs; but there is no ſuch thing in the *Hebrew*. See *Numb.* xxv. 4.

Until the Even-tide; and as ſoon as the Sun went down, Joſhua commanded that they ſhould take his Carcaſs down from the Tree.] For ſo GOD had commanded, *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23. See there.

And caſt it at the entering of the Gate of the City.] Where he was wont to ſit in Judgment; and, in all Probability, had exerciſed a great deal of Injuſtice and Cruelty.

And raiſed thereon a great Heap of Stones, that remaineth unto this Day.] As they did upon *Achan*, vii. 26. and for the ſame end, to be a Monument of his being hanged near to this Place.

Ver. 30. *Then Joſhua built an Altar unto the LORD God of Iſrael in Mount Ebal.*] If this Mount lay between *Ai* and *Beth-el* (as *Gerardus Mercator* endeavours to prove by many Arguments) then this Altar, we may well think, was built immediately after the taking of *Ai*, as ſoon as they came into Poſſeſſion of this Mount: For they look'd upon themſelves, no doubt, as obliged to fulfil the Command of GOD, given them by *Moſes*, as ſoon as it was poſſible. But the Scripture plainly deſcribes this Mount *Ebal*, as near *Shechem*, for there was only a Valley between *Ebal* and *Gerizzim*, from whence *Jotham* ſpake to the Men of *Shechem* (*Judg.* ix. 7.) which was a great way diſtant from *Ai*. And therefore we muſt ſuppoſe that which is here related, not to have been done till they had the Country about *Shechem*.

Ver. 41. *As Moſes, the Servant of the LORD, commanded the Children of Iſrael.*] *Deut.* xi. 29, 30. xxvii. 2, *&c.* See in thoſe Places.

As it is written in the Book of the Law of Moſes, an Altar of whole Stones, over which no Man hath lift up any Iron.] The Altar was built according to the Direction given by GOD, in a foregoing Law of his, *Exod.* xx. 25. and repeated in *Deut.* xxvii. 5, 6. See there.

And they offered thereon Burnt Offerings unto the LORD, and ſacrified Peace Offerings.] For now they renewed their Covenant with GOD the third time, as I obſerved upon that Chapter in *Deuteronomy*, *Ver.* 10.

Ver. 32. *And he wrote there upon the Stones a Copy of the Law of Moſes, which he wrote in the Preſence of the Children of Iſrael.*] It is a great Queſtion what it was he wrote upon theſe Stones. Some fancy all the five Books of *Moſes*; others, only the Book of *Deuteronomy*; which is more likely than the other; but too long for theſe Stones to contain, or for him to write, *in the Preſence of all Iſrael.* Others, therefore, think only the *Ten Commandments*; or a Compendium of the Law of *Moſes*; or, parhaps, the *Bleſſings and Curſings*: But *Fortunatus Scacchus*, with ſome Probability, conjectures, that he only wrote the *Words of the Covenant*, by which the Children of *Iſrael* acknowledged they held the Land of *Canaan*, of GOD, as their great LORD; upon Condition they obſerved his Laws, to which they and their Poſterity were obliged. And this he principally grounds upon thoſe Words, *Deut.* xxvii. 3. *Thou ſhalt write upon them all the Words of this Law.* Where the *Hebrew* Word *Hazoth* (*This*) he thinks hath a particular Reſpect to what he is ſpeaking of; *viz.* their going over *Jordan* to poſſeſs the Land which GOD gave them, upon Condition they obſerved his Statutes. See *Sacror. Elæochriſm. Myrother.* Lib. 2. Cap. 57. P. 570, *&c.* and my Notes upon *Deuteronomy* xxvii. 3.

Ver. 33. *And all Iſrael, and their Elders, and Officers, and their Judges, ſtood on this ſide of the Ark, and on that ſide.*] With their Faces towards the Ark.

Before the Prieſts the Levites, which bare the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.] Who were to pronounce the Bleſſings and the Curſings preſcribed by the Law. See *Deut.* xxvii. 24.

As well the Stranger, as he that was born among them.] For the Law made no Diſtinction between them, *Levit.* xix 34.

Half of them over againſt Mount Gerizzim, and half of them over againſt Mount Ebal, as Moſes the Servant of the LORD had commanded before.] In *Deut.* xxvii. 12, 13 See there.

That they ſhould bleſs the People of Iſrael.] There were Curſings, as well as Bleſſings pronounced: But the Intent of Curſing was, that they might avoid thoſe Sins againſt which they were denounced; and thereby obtain a Bleſſing.

Ver. 34. *And afterwards he read all the Words of the Law, the Bleſſings and the Curſings, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law.*] *Viz.* In *Deut.* xxvii. *Ver.* 15, 16, 17. *&c.* The Word *afterward* is not to be neglected, which imports, that after the building of the Altar, and the offering Sacrifices thereon, and writing the Law on the Stones, and diſpoſing the People in their Place about the Ark, then he read the Law to them. Which was likely to be heard with the greater Attention, when they were thus prepared to receive it, and had ſolemnly worſhipped GOD, and owned his Authority.

Ver. 35. *There was not a Word of all that Moſes commanded, which Joſhua did not read before all the Congregation of Iſrael.*] *Viz.* All that *Moſes* directed in *Deut.* xxvii. or, as others will have it, the whole Book of *Deuteronomy*, wherein theſe Bleſſings and Curſings are contained. See *Deut.* xxxi. 13.

With the Women, and the little ones, and the Strangers that were converſant among them.] By the *Strangers* here mentioned (and in *Ver.* 33.) are to be underſtood ſuch as were *Proſelytes* to their Religion: And had undertaken to obſerve this Law, as well as themſelves; and therefore were to be made acquainted with it. And that they might be moved to have the greater Regard to it, *Joſhua* himſelf, their chief Governor, read it to them. So ſome of the *Jews* underſtand it; after the *Prieſts* had read the Bleſſings and Curſings, then *Joſhua* read all the commanding and forbidding Precepts in the Law.

CHAP. IX.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, when all the Kings which were on this Side Jordan, in the Hills, and in the Valleys, and in all the Coaſts of the Great Sea.*] By the *Great Sea*, is meant the *Mediterranean*; where thoſe People, peculiarly called *Canaanites*, dwelt, as hath been often obſerved. And the *Amorites* ſeem to have been the principal Inhabitants of the Hilly Country, in the South of *Judæa*. See on *Deut.* i. 7, 19, 20.

Over againſt Lebanon.] The LXX. and the *Vulgar* underſtand this, as if he ſpake of thoſe that dwelt near *Lebanon*.

The Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebuſite.] Thus they are reckoned up in *Deut.* xx. 17. where the *Gergaſites* are omitted, as they are here. See an Account of it in my Notes upon that Place: And on *Chap.* xvi. of this Book, *Ver.* 10.

Head thereof.] Of the taking of *Jericho* and *Ai*: For what is ſaid, in the Words immediately foregoing, concerning the *Iſraelites* meeting at Mount *Ebal*, is not inſerted as a Thing wherein theſe Nations were concerned.

Ver. 2. *That they gathered themſelves together to fight with Joſhua, and with Iſrael.*] They entered into a Confederacy to oppoſe *Joſhua*'s farther Progreſs in the Conqueſt of their Country. But they did not gather themſelves to Battle, till they heard what *Gibeon* had done.

With one Accord.] The whole Country were unanimous in that Reſolution: And thereupon rejected the Summons which *Joſhua* had ſent them to ſurrender themſelves and their Cities to him.

Ver. 3. *And when the Inhabitants of Gibeon.*] Or, *But when*, &c. *Gibeon* was a City in the mountainous Country; for we read afterward of an high Place at *Gibeon*.

Heard what Joſhua had done to Jericho and to Ai.] They being *Hivites*, (*Ver.* 7.) had at the firſt rejected the Offers of Peace which *Joſhua* ſent them, as the reſt of their Nation, (*Ver.* 1.) had done. But hearing that *Joſhua* had taken *Jericho* and *Ai*, and deſtroyed all their Inhabitants, they repented of that Reſolution; and conſulted how they might, by ſome Means or other, make their Peace with the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 4. *And they did work wilily.*] It being too late to ſurrender their City to *Joſhua* upon ſuch Terms, as he is ſuppoſed to have offered, (for there was no Mercy to be ſhewn them, after they had ſtood out againſt the three Proclamations, which the *Jews* ſay were made to them) they contrived how to put a Fallacy upon the *Iſraelites*, and by Craft and Cunning procure their Favour. See my Annotations on *Deut.* xx. 10, 11.

And went.] They choſe ſome from among them, who went in the Name of the reſt, towards the Camp of *Iſrael*.

And made as if they had been Embaſſadors.] Pretending that they were ſent upon an Embaſſy to them, from a far Country; as they affirmed, *Ver.* 6.

And took old Sacks upon their Aſſes.] Wherein was their Proviſion.

And Wine-Bottles, old, and rent, and bound up.] Where they were rent.

Ver. 5. *And old Shoes clouted upon their Feet.*] As if they had been worne out, and patched up, with long Travel.

And old Garments upon them, and all the Bread of their Proviſion was dry and mouldy.] It is obſerved by *Arias Montanus*, that nothing is ſaid of the Decay of their Wine: Which they pretended, it is likely, to have drank all up, in ſo long a Journey. For it was not ſo eaſy to procure ſour Wine, as mouldy Bread.

Ver. 6. *And they went to Joſhua, unto the Camp at Gilgal, and ſaid unto him, and to the Men of Iſrael.*] They addreſſed themſelves to him, as the Head of the People; and he had his Council about him: who, in all probability, are here called *the Men of Iſrael*. Though ſome conceive, that they had laid hold of every one they met withal, and beſeeched them to admit them to their Friendſhip.

We are come from a far Country.] To ſue to you for your Friendſhip.

Now therefore make ye a League with us.] As they might do with thoſe that accepted the Offers of Peace, which they ſent them, (*Deut.* xx. 11.) and therefore much more with thoſe who came to ſeek to be at Peace with them: And were not Inhabitants of the Land of *Canaan*, but came from a far Country: which they gave as a Reaſon, why they ſhould make a League with them. And indeed, they had been to blame, if they had denied their Petition: As the *Romans* were, who when they were grown great, refuſed to receive a remote Nation into their Protection (as *Appian* tells us) who by their Embaſſadors ſubmitted themſelves to their Power, becauſe they did not ſee they were likely to get any thing by them. Which *Bodinus* (in his Book againſt *Maleſtrettus de Caritate Rerum*) cenſures as a baſe Action, and injurious to Almighty GOD. *As if* (ſaith he) *the Majeſty of ruling and adminiſtring Juſtice, eſpecially to miſerable and ill inſtructed People, were not the greateſt Gift of* GOD; *and the higheſt Honour of which a Man is capable in this World.*

Ver. 7. *And the Men of Iſrael ſaid.*] This ſhews that *the Men of Iſrael* before-mentioned, were not ordinary Perſons, but ſuch as had Authority to treat with Embaſſadors.

Unto

Unto the Hivites.] Unto thoſe who came from *Gibeon*, who were really *Hivites*, as is expreſly ſaid, xi. 19.

Peradventure you dwell among us.] Are ſome of the People of this Land; which we are commanded to rout out.

And how ſhall we make a League with you?] Then it is utterly unlawful for us to do what you deſire: For God hath often forbidden it, *Exod.* xxiii. 32, 33.—xxxiv. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. *Deut.* vii. 2, 3, *&c.* and other Places.

Ver. 8. *And they ſaid unto Joſhua.*] With whom alone they had a Deſire to treat.

We are thy Servants.] This doth not ſignify that they were ready to yield themſelves to be Tributaries to the *Iſraelites*, or accept of any Terms that ſhould be impoſed on them: But are only Expreſſions of great Humility and Civility; acknowledge the *Iſraelites* to be ſuperior in Power and Strength, and therefore deſiring their Protection in their Liberties. Thus *Abraham* addreſſed himſelf to the Travellers, whom he entertained as greater Perſons than himſelf, *Gen.* xviii. 3, 4. And *Jacob* calls himſelf and his Houſhold the Servants of *Eſau*, *Gen.* xxx. 20. And thus *Batrirides* underſtood their Language here; who ſays the King of *Gibeon* wrote a Letter to *Joſhua*, wherein he deſired Security from him; and preſented him with great Gifts, as *Hottinger* obſerves in his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. p. 507.

And Joſhua ſaid unto them, Who are ye? And from whence come ye?] They being backward to name the Country from whence they were ſent; it begat a reaſonable Suſpicion in *Joſhua*, that they were ſome of the People of *Canaan*.

Ver. 9. *And they ſaid unto him, From a very far Country thy Servants are come.*] They ſtill avoid giving a particular Account of their Country, but anſwer in general Terms; in which commonly lies Deceit.

Becauſe of the Name of the LORD thy God.] To divert him from preſſing them to give a more ſatisfactory Anſwer, they pretend Religion had invited them to take this long Journey: Which they knew would procure them a favourable Audience.

For we have heard of the Fame of him, &c.] Of his miraculous Works, particularly thoſe which he did to deliver them from the *Egyptian* Slavery; which, as it is evident, were come to their Knowledge: So, it is very reaſonable to believe, ſuch wonderful Things were the Motives that made them ſeek for the *Iſraelites* Friendſhip; they being wrought upon, as *Rahab* was, to embrace their Religion.

Ver. 10. *And all that he did to the two Kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon King of Heſhbon, and to Og King of Baſhan, which was at Aſhtaroth.*] They ſay not a Word of the drying up of *Jordan*, and of the taking of *Jericho* and *Ai*: But prudently conceal their Knowledge of thoſe Things, becauſe they would have it ſuppoſed the Tidings of thoſe Wonders could not yet be arrived at a Country ſo far off, as they pretended theirs to be.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore our Elders.*] The principal Perſons in their Country: Who were the Rulers and Governors of it.

And all the Inhabitants of our Country.] With the unanimous Conſent of all the People.

Spake to us, ſaying, Take Victuals with you for the Journey.] Made choice of us for this Embaſſy; and ordered us to provide ourſelves with Neceſſaries for ſo long a Journey.

And go to meet them.] To prevent the *Iſraelites* from entertaining any hoſtile Intentions againſt them.

And ſay unto them, We are your Servants: Therefore now make ye a League with us.] The *Samaritan* Chronicle ſaith, they had Orders to tell *Joſhua* that they would embrace the *Jewiſh* Religion; and refuſe nothing, great or ſmall, that he ſhould deſire of them. And indeed, one would think, by what they ſaid before, that they had a Senſe of the God of *Iſrael*, as ſuperior to all other Gods: And conſequently, were diſpoſed to become Worſhippers of him. For which Reaſon, he was pleaſed to diſpoſe Things ſo, that, by their Wiles, they ſhould compaſs their End, and be entertained into the Friendſhip of the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 22. *This our Bread we took hot for our Proviſion out of our Houſes.*] When it was newly come out of the Oven.

On the Day we came forth to go unto you; but now behold, it is dry, and it is mouldy.] This they ſay to demonſtrate that they came from a Country far diſtant from *Canaan*. Which tho' it was not true, yet there are thoſe (particularly *Puffendorf*) who think it was not culpable, nor properly a Lye; being a Device to ſave their Lives. For who will reprehend a Perſon, ſaith he, who by a Fiction preſerves himſelf from being killed by an Enemy? Eſpecially in ſuch a Caſe as this, wherein the *Iſraelites* ſuffered no Damage by their Craft? For what Loſs doth he ſuſtain, who is hindered from ſhedding another Man's Blood, but hath it in his Power to deſpoil him of all he hath, and bring him into perpetual Servitude, ſo diſarmed and weakened that he can never riſe up againſt him? Thus he. Which is a Doctrine that ought not to be allowed.

Ver. 13. *And theſe Bottles of Wine, which we filled, were new, and behold, they be rent: And theſe Garments and our Shoes are become old, by reaſon of the very long Journey.*] They uſe thus many Words, to divert him from making any farther Enquiry, what the Name of their Country was (leſt ſome among the *Iſraelites*, who had many Strangers in their Camp, ſhould have been able to diſprove them) and mention only the long Time they had ſpent in their Journey, that he might be moved to be kind unto thoſe, who had taken ſo much Pains to beg the Favour of the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 14. *And the Men.*] That is, the Perſons mentioned, *Ver.* 7. who were the οἱ ἄρχοντες (as the LXX. here ſay) the *Princes* or *Rulers* of *Iſrael*.

Took of their Victuals.] Not to eat them, but to inſpect and examine them, whether their Proviſion was ſo dry and mouldy as they pretended. For the Word we tranſlate *Victuals*, is the very ſame with that we before tranſlate

Proviſion, ver. 5. Which ſhews he doth not ſpeak of Victuals now prepared, but which they brought along with them. Some indeed think the Meaning is, that they entered into a League with the *Gibeonites*, by taſting of their Victuals. But as this muſt ſuppoſe that they had made a Feaſt for the Entertainment of theſe Princes, and invited them to it, (which is altogether unlikely) ſo the making a League with them follows after this, in the next Verſe, and therefore was not made by taking of their Victuals.

And aſked not Counſel of the Mouth of the LORD.] Theſe words may ſeem to favour the Senſe now mentioned; that by eating with them (which was a Token of Friendſhip) they had performed Part of the Ceremony which belonged to the making of Leagues, without conſulting the Divine Majeſty about it, but haſtily believing an improbable Story. See. *Gen.* xxvi. 30, 31. — xxxi. 44, 45. But the Meaning of theſe Words may be no more than this; that they depended wholly upon their own Judgment, and that founded on ſuch ſlight Examination of the Truth, as only taking their Victuals into their Hands, and inſpecting them; when God was near at hand to give them Advice, if they would have conſulted him; and it is probable, would have allowed them to make a League with the *Gibeonites*, on ſuch Conditions as he directed.

Ver. 15. *And Joſhua made Peace with them.*] Following the Opinion of the Princes; who took them to be what they pretended.

And made a League with them, to let them live.] Not merely to ſpare their Lives (which, ſuppoſing them to belong to a far Country, they had no Warrant to take away) but to let them continue in the Enjoyment of all they had. For *to live* in Scripture, ſignifies to be happy; and therefore he promiſed not to hurt, but to protect them in their Rights and Liberties.

And the Prince of the Congregation ſware unto them.] Ratified the League by a ſolemn Oath; the Violation of which, in future Times, was ſeverely puniſhed, 2 *Sam.* xxii. 6.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs, at the End of three Days, after they had made a League with them, that they heard that they were their Neighbours, and that they dwelt among them.*] Speedy News being ſent by the pretended Embaſſadors to *Gibeon* of their good Succeſs, (as we may well think) there were great Rejoicings made there, as *Arias Montanus* ſuppoſes. The Report of which came to the *Iſraelites* three Days after the League was concluded.

Ver. 17. *And the Children of Iſrael journeyed.*] Not the whole Body of the People, but a party was ſent to underſtand the Truth.

And came unto their Cities on the third Day.] On the third Day after they began their March thither.

Now their Cities were Gibeon, and Chephirah, and Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim.] The Capital City was *Gibeon* (called a *Royal City*, x. 2.) upon which the other three were Dependents. The three firſt of which fell afterward to the Tribe of *Benjamin* (xviii. 25, 26.) as the laſt was in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 60.

Ver. 18. *And the Children of Iſrael ſmote them not.*] Tho' they were not ſuch, as they ſuppoſed, but *Canaanites*, who were under the Curſe of God; yet they did not deſtroy them, for the Reaſon following.

Becauſe the Princes of the Congregation had ſworn unto them by the LORD God of Iſrael.] Some think their Oath did not bind them, becauſe it was made upon a falſe Suppoſition, that the *Gibeonites* were no Part of the ſeven Nations of *Canaan*. But if this were true, as it is not, (ſee *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, L. 2. Cap. 13. Sect. 4.) the Princes judged right, that it had been very ſcandalous, and would have highly diſhonoured the Name of God, by whom they had ſworn, if they had broken their Oath. By the keeping of which, the Reverence which the *Gibeonites* had already to the Divine Majeſty, was very much increaſed; whereas it had been vile in all People's Eyes, if the *Iſraelites* had not expreſſed this great Regard unto it.

And all the Congregation murmured againſt the Princes.] Or, *But* all the Congregation murmured, *&c.* becauſe they were hereby deprived of the Spoil of thoſe Cities.

Ver. 19. *But all the Princes ſaid unto all the Congregation.*] Their Unanimity in this Opinion, was of great Moment to quiet the People's Diſcontent.

We have ſworn unto them by the LORD God of Iſrael.] Eſpecially ſince they had engaged themſelves, by a ſolemn Oath, to their great and glorious LORD; who fought for them, and gave them all their Victories, *ver.* 13, 14. For ſo the *Targum* here expounds theſe Words, *We have ſworn by the WORD of the LORD God of Iſrael.*

Now therefore we may not touch them.] That is, do them any hurt; which we cannot do without breaking our Oath, and forfeiting his Favour.

Ver. 20. *This we will do unto them, we will even let them live.*] As they had covenanted, *ver.* 15.

Leſt Wrath be upon us, becauſe of the Oath which we ſware unto them.] Leſt God be very angry with us for breaking our Oath. Which *Joſhua*, St. *Ambroſe* obſerves, religiouſly obſerved, *Ne, dum alienam perfidiam arguit, ſuam fidem ſolveret*, that he might not be guilty of ſo ſhameful a Thing, as to break his Faith, whilſt he reproved their Perfidiouſneſs. *Lib.* 3. *de Officiis, Cap.* 10

Ver. 21. *And the Princes ſaid unto them.*] But they added this.

Let them live.] Tho' we let them live, becauſe we muſt be as good as our Word, which is the Meaning of the laſt Words of this Verſe (which muſt be joined with theſe) *as the Princes had promiſed them.*

But let them be Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water.] Yet they ſhall not be equal to us in all Privileges, but we will make them in ſome ſort ſerviceable to us; in ſuch Employments, as will ſave us a great deal of Labour.

Unto all the Congregation.] They were not to be Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water for every private Perſon; but for the Benefit of the whole Congregation of *Iſrael*; who were bound

bound to find Wood and Water, for the Service of God at the Tabernacle. Which Burden it was now reſolved ſhould be laid upon the *Gibeonites*; and thereby the Children of *Iſrael* eaſed of it, *ver.* 23. where they are ſaid to be made *Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water for the Houſe of the* LORD. This was no Breach of their Oath, for they did not make them abſolutely Slaves, but only a Sacred kind of Servants (as *Joſephus* call them) being employed about the Houſe of God; which was in itſelf honourable, and not baſe and contemptible. Some think they were afterwards called *Nethinim*, which ſignifies Perſons given to God for his Service; of whom we read in 1 *Chron.* ix. 2. *Ezra* vii. 20. and other Places.

Ver. 22. *And Joſhua called for them.*] For the Embaſſadors, with whom he had made a League.

And he ſpake unto them ſaying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us? &c.] Impoſed upon our Belief by a falſe Story.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore ye are curſed.*] Notwithſtanding our Oath, you muſt not quite eſcape that Curſe of God, which hath long lain upon all the People of *Canaan*, Part of which you are. For a ſervile State of any ſort, to which they were reduced, was no ſmall Puniſhment (called here a *Curſe*) and ſo much the more grievous, becauſe it was to be perpetual.

And there ſhall none of you be freed from being Bondmen.] None of them were to continue Freemen, but have a Servitude impoſed upon them: Not indeed ſuch an one, as made them entire Slaves; but only condemned them to the laborious Employment which here follows.

And Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water for the Houſe of my God.] This is the Limitation of their Servitude; which did not extend to all things, but only to theſe and ſuch like (it is probable) to hew Stones, for inſtance, for the Reparation of the Temple after it was built; and to carry them to thoſe who were employed in that Work. *Grotius* hath well expreſſed their Condition, *Addicti ſunt perſonali cuidem ſervituti*, they were addicted to certain perſonal Servitude: whereas, if they had dealt plainly and openly with the *Iſraelites*, they might have been admitted only to pay a certain Tribute. *Lib.* 2. *de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap.* 13. Sect. 4. N. 3.

Ver. 24. *And they anſwered Joſhua and ſaid, Becauſe it was certainly told the Servants, how that the* LORD *thy God commanded his Servant Moſes to give you all the Land, and to deſtroy all its Inhabitants, therefore we were ſore afraid of our Lives becauſe of you, and have done this thing.*] They firſt give an Anſwer unto *Joſhua*'s Demand, *Wherefore have ye beguiled us?* Which was done to ſave themſelves, if they could, by any Shift, from that Deſtruction, which they believed God had decreed againſt all the Inhabitants of their Land; and they did not know how to evade it, but by this Artifice; which, ſince it aroſe from ſome Degree of Faith God ſuffered to take Effect, that they might remain for ever among the *Iſraelites*, as an unqueſtionable Witneſs of their miraculous Conqueſt of the Land of *Canaan*.

Ver. 25. *And now behold, we are in thy Hand; as it ſeemeth good and right unto thee to do unto us, do.*] Here they humbly ſubmit to the Doom he had paſſed upon them, or to any other Impoſition he ſhould think fit to load them withall.

Ver. 26. *And ſo he did unto them, and delivered them out of the Hand of the Children of Iſrael, that they ſlew them not.*] But *Joſhua* would take no farther Advantage of their Submiſſion, but contented himſelf with this Burden alone; which by a publick Decree he laid upon them. It appears by this, that ſome *Gentiles* had more Goodneſs in them than many of the Children of *Iſrael*; who would have deſtroyed theſe well-diſpoſed People (if *Joſhua* had not hindred) who were better Believers, being ſtruck with a greater Fear of God's Threatnings, than themſelves.

Ver. 27. *And Joſhua made them that Day Hewers of Wood and drawers of Water.*] He paſſed this Sentence into a Law; that from henceforth they ſhould be ſubject to this Servitude; in which they ſerved God faithfully even to the Times of *Nehemiah:* Who tells us great Numbers of the *Nethinims* (who many great Men make no doubt were of the Poſterity of theſe *Gibeonites*) returned from *Babylon* to rebuild *Jeruſalem* and the Temple, *Nehem.* vii. 46. *&c.* 73.

For the Congregation, and for the Altar of the LORD, *even unto this Day.*] They ſerved the Congregation (who otherwiſe muſt themſelves have done it) by ſerving the Altar with Wood and with Water. Which that they might do regularly, it is probable they were diſperſed throughout all the Coaſts of *Iſrael*, where the Prieſts and Levites were ſettled, and came and ſerved with them in their Courſes, and (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) were maintained out of the Publick Stock, and the Profits of the Altar. For they did not keep Poſſeſſion of their Cities, but ſurrendered them to the Tribe of *Benjamin* and *Judah*, to whoſe Lot they fell; as we read in the following Part of this Book.

Concerning theſe Words, *unto this Day*, ſee iv. 9.

At the Place which he ſhall chuſe.] Which was now at *Gilgal*; afterwards at *Shiloh*; and ſome time in *Gibeon* it fell; which was a City given to the Prieſts, *Joſh* xxi. 17. and, as *Maimonides* ſaith (in his Treatiſe of the *Building of the Temple*) after *Shiloh* was deſtroyed, the Tabernacle was placed in *Nob*, and then in *Gibeon*: in which two Places it continued fifty and ſeven Years.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs, when Adonizedek King of Jeruſalem.*] Who ſeems to have been the moſt potent Prince in *Canaan*, and carried in his Name an honourable Title which had been anciently given to the Kings of this Place; who had been famous for doing Juſtice. For it is probable, that ever ſince *Melchizedek*, who was King of *Salem* (the ſame with *Jeruſalem*) and truly King of Righteouſneſs,

teouſneſs, as his Name ſignified; they affected this Title, tho' they did not always anſwer their Character: For this *Adonizedek* (whoſe Name imports the *Lord of Righteouſneſs*) had none of the Virtues that were in *Melchizedek*.

King of Jeruſalem.] It is probably thought that this City held the Name of *Salem*, which it had in *Abraham*'s Time, till the *Iſraelites* came into the Land of *Canaan*; and then they called it *Jeruſalem*, when they firſt took Poſſeſſion of it. Which they did not ſo fully, but that ſtill the *Jebuſites* dwelt there with the Children of *Benjamin*, (ſee *Judg.* i. 8, 21.) who were ſo weak, that the *Jebuſites*, in time, recovered it wholly to themſelves, and expelled the *Benjamites*; ſee *Judg.* xix. 10. where it is called *Jebus*; tho' the other Name is alſo acknowledged; becauſe the *Iſraelites* called it *Jeruſalem*, while the *Jebuſites*, having prevailed, called it *Jebus*.

Heard how Joſhua had taken Ai.] By which Means, the *Iſraelites* were come nearer to him, than when they took *Jericho*.

And had utterly deſtroyed it, (as he had done to Jericho and her King, ſo he had done to Ai and her King).] And therefore it highly concerned him to provide, the beſt he could, for his own Safety.

And how the Inhabitants of Gibeon had made Peace with Iſrael.] Eſpecially ſince one of the prime Cities of the Country had ſubmitted to the *Iſraelites*.

And were among them.] Joined in Society with them, or come (as we now ſpeak) into their Intereſt.

Ver. 2. *Then they feared greatly.*] All his People thought themſelves in great danger; they as well as their King having heard of the terrible Execution *Joſhua* had made at *Jericho* and *Ai*.

Becauſe Gibeon was a great City.] Having others depending on it.

As one of the Royal Cities.] The *Vulgar Latin* takes no Notice of the Particle *Caph* (*as*) but ſaith, it was a Royal City. And indeed, that Particle doth not always denote *Likeneſs*, but only the Truth of the Thing ſpoken of; as in *Hoſea* iv. 4. and many other Places of the New Teſtament, as well as the Old, *Joh.* i. 14. *Phil.* ii. 7. But I think here it ſhould be expreſſed, as we do in our Tranſlation; becauſe *Gibeon* was not a Royal City, that is, had no King in it, that we read of; but was, notwithſtanding, equal to thoſe Cities that had Kings, being governed by Elders (ix. 11.) who were Perſons of very great Authority.

And becauſe it was greater than Ai.] More populous.

And all the Men thereof were mighty.] The Inhabitants were eſteemed Men of great Valour; which made their Revolt to the *Iſraelites* the more conſiderable.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore Adonizedek, King of Jeruſalem, ſent unto Hoham King of Hebron, and unto Piram King of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia King of Lachiſh, and unto Debir King of Eglon, ſaying.*] All theſe Cities afterwards belonged to the Tribe of *Judah*; as appears from the following Part of this Book.

Ver. 4. *Come unto me, and help me.*] He was the moſt active in the War, and ſeems to have been of greateſt Power; calling the other Kings, only as Auxiliaries to him.

That we may ſmite Gibeon.] He thought to diſcourage others from yielding, by making this City an Example of their Vengeance.

For it hath made Peace with Joſhua, and with the Children of Iſrael.] Forſaken the Intereſt of their Country, and gone over to our Enemies.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the five Kings of the Amorites, the King of Jeruſalem, &c.*] It is certain that *Hebron* belonged to the *Hittites*; as *Jeruſalem* did to the *Jebuſites*. But the *Amorites* being the moſt powerful People in *Canaan*, (as appears from *Gen.* xv. 16.) had, it ſeems, brought them under their Power, and ſet Kings of their own Nation over them. Whence it is, that the *Gibeonites*, who were originally *Hivites* (ix. 17.) are ſaid to be of the *Remnant of the Amorites*, (2 *Sam.* xxi. 2.) becauſe they were fallen under their Power, when *Joſhua* conquered the Country.

Gathered themſelves together. Had a general Meeting and ſent out Summons to all their People, who were fit for War, to rendezvous (as we ſpeak) at the Place they appointed.

And went up.] Tho' they lived in the high Country, yet *Jeruſalem* was ſtill higher; where they ſeem to have all met, according to *Adonizedek*'s Deſire; *Ver.* 4.

They and all their Hoſts, and encamped before Gibeon.] Laid Siege to it.

And made War againſt it.] Began to aſſault it.

Ver. 6. *And the Men of Gibeon ſent unto Joſhua to the Camp to Gilgal.*] Or, *had ſent*, as ſoon as they heard of their March towards them.

Saying, Slack not thy Hand from thy Servants.] They doubted not of his Succour, becauſe they were his Servants, who had put themſelves under his Protection; but begged it might be ſpeedy, for fear they ſhould be overpowered by ſuch numerous Forces as were coming againſt them.

Come up quickly, and ſave us and help us, for all the Kings of the Amorites that dwell in the Mountains, are gathered together againſt us.] They did not hope to be preſerved without his Help; not unleſs it arrived quickly.

Ver. 7. *So Joſhua aſcended from Gilgal, he and all the People of War with him, and all the mighty Men of Valour.*] Theſe laſt Words are the Explication of the former, as if he had ſaid, *All the People of War, even all the mighty Men of Valour.*] For it is not likely he took along with him all the fighting Men (ſome of which were neceſſary to guard the Camp at *Gilgal*) but only the choiceſt of them; on whoſe Valour he could moſt rely, and who could march moſt ſwiftly to the Relief of their Confederates.

Ver. 8. *And the LORD ſaid unto Joſhua.*] Before he ſtirr'd a Foot, he conſulted the Divine Majeſty about this Expedition; who encouraged him to undertake it.

Fear them not, for I have delivered them into thine Hand; there ſhall not a Man of them ſtand

before thee.] He promiſed him an entire Victory; which embolden'd him to fall upon them undauntedly.

Ver. 9. *Joſhua therefore came upon them ſuddenly, and went up from Gilgal all Night.*] Accordingly *Joſhua* made all the haſte he could towards them, marching all Night, that he might ſurprize them in their Quarters (as I ſuppoſe he did) before they could draw out their Army againſt him.

Ver. 10. *And the LORD diſcomfited them before Iſrael.*] The Suddenneſs of the Attack, no doubt, put them into great Confuſion. And beſides, God ſtruck a Terror into them, which made them ſeek for Safety by Flight, rather than Fighting.

And ſlew them with a great Slaughter at Gibeon.] Near to the City, as the Particle *Beth* ſignifies in many Places; particularly in the ſecond Chapter of this Book, where *Rahab*'s Houſe is ſaid to be upon the Wall, (we tranſlate it, near or adjoining to the Wall) and *V.* 13. where *Joſhua* is ſaid to be *Bejericho*, near to that City, for he was not in it when the Captain of the LORD's Hoſt appeared to him. See *Bochart* his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. L. 2. C. 50.

And chaſed them along the Way that goeth up to Beth-horon.] To the Place which was called by this Name, when this Book was written; for there was no ſuch Place now; it being built after they were ſettled in *Canaan* by *Sherah*, Daughter or Grandaughter of *Ephraim*; as we read in 1 *Chron.* vii. 24.

And ſmote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah.] Two Cities afterward in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 35, 41. For in the great Confuſion wherein they were, by the Hailſtones falling upon them, (as it here follows) they fled backward and forward, as we ſpeak, ſometimes this way, ſometimes the quite contrary, (for *Beth-horon* lay Northerly, and theſe other Towns in the South) according as the Hailſtones, by the ſhifting of the Wind, flew in their Faces.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs, as they fled from before Iſrael, and were in the going down to Beth-horon.*] Which was ſeated on the Side of a Hill; and ſeems to have taken its Name from this wonderful Storm here-mentioned: For *Beth-horon* ſignifies as much, as the Houſe or Place of Fury or Anger.

That the LORD caſt down great Stones from Heaven upon them.] The LXX. call them λίθας χαλάζης Hailſtones of a vaſt Bigneſs; which ſome think were accompanied with Thunder and Lightning. And thus the ancient Heathen ſay, that *Hercules* was aſſiſted in his War againſt *Albion*, &c. See *Voſſius*, Lib. 1. *de Orig. & Progreſſu Idol.* Cap. 26. And that Raining of Stones is not a Fable, but a real Truth, ſee him alſo, Lib. 3. Cap. 12. *Plutarch* alſo, in the Life of *Timoleon*, relates how a terrible Storm in the Face of the *Carthaginian* Army, gave him a great Victory over them, with a very few Forces which he had to encounter them. They that deſire to ſee more to this purpoſe, may look into *Huetius* his *Quæſtiones Alnetanæ*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. Sect. 12.

Unto Azekah.] The Storm meeting them at *Beth-horon*, drove them back to *Azekah*, as obſerved on the foregoing Verſe.

And they died.] They upon whom the Hailſtones fell, were killed by them.

They were more that died with the Hailſtones, than they whom the Children of Iſrael ſlew with the Sword.] For they could not flee from the Stones, which came from Heaven; as they did from the Sword of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 12. *Then ſpake Joſhua unto the LORD.*] This Song, as the *Hebrews* call it, ſee *Maſius*.

In the Day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the Children of Iſrael.] It is not certain at what Time of the Day he ſpake what follows. Many think, when the Sun was declining; others, rather in the Morning. For he marched all Night to ſurprize them, and in all Probability fell upon them by break of Day; and having routed and chaſed them for ſome Hours, and killed great Numbers of them, and ſeen others fall by the Hailſtones, concluded he ſhould deſtroy them all, if he had but Time enough before Night came to favour their Eſcape. Which made him pray that he might have Light to continue his Purſuit, and gain a complete Victory over them.

And he ſaid in the Sight of Iſrael.] It is a frivolous Obſervation of *Maimonides*, that becauſe it is not ſaid *in the Sight of ALL Iſrael* (before whom *Moſes* did his Miracles) *Joſhua* was inferior to him, even when God wrought this ſtupendious Miracle at his Requeſt: For all *Iſrael* did not hear him ſpeak theſe Words, but only ſome few; as many perhaps as were with *Elijah* at Mount *Carmel*, when he brought Fire down from Heaven to conſume his Sacrifice. But there is no queſtion that *Iſrael* ſignifies all the Army; who heard, or were told what he ſaid.

Sun, ſtand thou ſtill upon Gibeon.] He deſired it might ſtand immoveable, in that Part of the Heavens, where he ſaw it now ſhining upon *Gibeon*.

And thou Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon.] There were more *Ajalons* than one; and it is not certain which it is he means: But it is moſt likely, that in the Tribe of *Dan*, (xix. 42. *Judg.* i. 35.) which was fartheſt from *Gibeon*; for we muſt ſuppoſe theſe two Places to have been at ſome Diſtance, otherwiſe *Joſhua* could not have ſeen the Sun and the Moon both appear at the ſame Time; as it is probable they were both now in his Eye, when he ſpake theſe Words. It is not fit to enter into ſuch Queſtions as theſe; in what Sign the Sun now was, and whether the Moon was in her Increaſe or Decreaſe, *&c.* They that can make, and are diſpoſed to ſuch Enquiries, may conſult *Bonfrerius*.

Ver. 13. *And the Sun ſtood ſtill, and the Moon ſtayed.*] Thus *Callimachus* repreſents the Sun as ſtopping the Wheels of his Chariot, to behold a *Chorus* of *Nymphs*; which ſo highly pleaſed him, that it made him prolong the Day, *ver.* 181, 182. of his Hymn to *Diana*.

Ἦλθε παρ' Ἠελίῳ καλὸν χόρον ἀλλὰ θεῆται
Δίφρον ὑπεὶς ἀνάσσας, τὰ δὲ φάεα μηκύνοιεν.

Where *Ezek. Spanhemius* excellently notes, that what the Poets only fancied might be, was really

done in the Days of *Joshua*; and wishes *Grotius* had not followed some of the *Jews*, who make this only a poetical Phrase to express a long Summer's Day: For the Prophet *Habakkuk* represents it otherwise, and so do many of the *Talmudick* Doctors. They that can consult *Huetius* also, in his *Alnetanæ Quæstiones* (Lib. 2. Cap. 12. Sect. 27.) will find enough to shame those who disbelieve this History: When they read a great Number of Stories among the Heathen, which shew they thought it within the Power of their Gods, to do such Things. And, among other memorable Things, he doth not forget the ancient Tradition of the *Egyptians*, related by *Herodotus* (in his *Euterpe*, Cap. 142.) concerning the stupendious Alteration of the Course of the Sun. And our Dr. *Jackson* hath observed, that the Heathen People of those Times did note this miraculous Event and deliver the Tradition of it to their Posterity; who, as Men are wont to do, endeavour to assign some Cause of it. And the Poets in Ages following ascribe it (with some Additions) unto that unnatural Murder which *Atreus* committed: At which the Heavens blushed, and the Sun stood still. For this bloody Fact, if *Statius* mistakes not, was in the Time of the *Theban* War; and that is placed, by good Chronologers, about the Time of *Joshua*'s Conquest of *Canaan*. See Book 1. upon the *Creed*, Chap. 15. But in this he was deceived, for *Atreus* lived in the Days of the *Judges*.

Until the People had avenged themselves upon their Enemies.] Till they had gained a complete Victory, and utterly destroyed their Enemies.

Is not this written in the Book of Jasher?] The *Targum* expounds it, *in the Book of the Law:* As if the meaning was, that their God had foretold, what Wonders he would do for his People. But from the marginal Translation, (which is, *the Book of the Upright*, or *of righteous Men*) others take it for a Book, where was recorded the wonderful Things done by, or for, the religious Heroes. And there are some probable Arguments, that it was written in Verse, to fix these things in the Memory of the People. *Grotius* is of this Opinion: For we find mention of it no where else, but only in 2 *Sam.* i. 18. and there it is mentioned upon account of a Song, made upon the Death of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, by King *David*; who caused it to be recorded in this Book. Which was not accounted sacred (being written by several Hands, and in several Ages) and so not preserved with such Care, as this and the other Canonical Books were. As for their Opinion, who think this Book contained the ancient Annals of the *Jews* more largely than they are recorded in this and the following Books, it hath no Ground at all; but is invented merely to frame an Argument from thence, that *Joshua* was not the Author of this Book; but that it was collected in After-times, out of this great *Chronicle*, by somebody who made an Abridgment of it. But *Du Pin* hath well observed, that it is not said here the Wars of *Joshua* were related in the Book of *Jasher*; but only that Mention is made therein of the Miracle by which the Moon stood still.

So the Sun stood still.] There is no more Mention of the Moon; for it was the Light of the Sun that made the Day.

In the midst of Heaven.] This doth not necessarily signify, that it stood still precisely in the Meridian Point; but that it appear'd, visible to every body, fixed in the same Place where it was, when *Joshua* spake the foregoing Words, to which he was moved, no doubt, by a Divine Inspiration.

And hastened not to go down about a whole Day.] It may be simply translated *a whole Day:* The Particle *Caph*, as I observed before, signifying oft-times nothing of Similitude, but the very thing itself. Therefore I look upon *Maimonides*'s Explication as ungrounded; who by *Kajom Thamim* (*as a whole Day*) understands only, as the longest Day in Summer, *More Nevochim*, P. 11. Cap. xxxv. Which was a poor Business, it being now Summer-Time, when this Miracle was wrought: And, as *Lyra* thinks, in the Month of *June*.

Ver. 14. *And there was no Day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened to the Voice of a Man.*] That is, did, at his Desire (or rather Command) such a stupendous Thing as this. Whereby he gave an evident Demonstration, that he who did such Wonders in *Egypt*, and at the *Red Sea*, and the River *Jordan*, had an absolute Power not only over the *Elements* (as we call them) and all inferior Creatures, but over the Heavenly Bodies, the Sun, Moon and Stars, whom the Heathen worshipped. They have strange Love to Cavilling, who would hence have it thought, this Book was not written by *Joshua:* When, if he wrote it in his old Age, there were many Days passed since this Prodigy, as *Huetius* well observes in his *Demonstr. Evangelica.* P. 186. See various Opinions about the Length of this Day in *Sixtinus Amama* his *Antibarbarus Biblicus*, Lib. III. P. 381, *&c.*

For the LORD fought for Israel.] By throwing Stones from Heaven upon their Enemies; and giving the *Israelites* Strength to pursue them; and stopping the Sun's Course, that they might not want Light for their Pursuit; and preserving them from the Stones which fell upon their Enemies, and not upon them, though mingled with them in the Fight.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua returned, and all Israel with him, unto the Camp to Gilgal.*] The LXX. in the common Copies wholly omit this Verse; because *Joshua* did not return to *Gilgal*, till he had done what follows: And then he speaks of his Return, in the same Words and Syllables, *Ver.* 43. but 'tis in the Edition of *Hervasius*, 1540. as my most learned Friend Dr. *Alix* informs me; and the Meaning of it here therefore is no more than this; that he was about to return, till he heard where the five Kings were; and that many of the Enemies were still remaining.

Ver. 16. *But these five Kings.*] Mentioned, *v.* 3.

Fled.] Escaped the Sword of the *Israelites* by Flight; being provided perhaps with swift

Beasts

Beasts for that Purpose; and taking some By-ways, separate from their scattered Forces, so that the Hail-stones did not fall upon them.

And hid themselves in a Cave.] Which they knew to have secret lurking Places in it; where they could not be easily discovered.

At Makkedah.] In the Confines of that City. Which not being yet taken, *Joshua* could not command great Stones to be rolled upon the Mouth of the Cave, if it had been in the City itself.

Ver. 17. *And it was told Joshua, saying, That the five Kings were hid in a Cave at Makkedah.*] It is likely *Joshua* had given a particular Charge about them; and they made no Enquiry what was become of them, till it was discovered, that they were in this Place.

Ver. 18. *And Joshua said, Roll great Stones upon the Mouth of the Cave.*] To hinder their coming out.

And set Men by it for to keep them.] He ordered a Guard also, to see that none removed the Stones.

Ver. 19. *And stay you not, but pursue after your Enemies.*] They that brought this Intelligence, were, it is likely, some Officers in the Army; whom he would not have to stop their Pursuit of the scatter'd *Canaanites*, by looking after these Kings; but leave it to others to take Care to keep them safe shut up in the Cave.

And smite the hindermost of them.] He means, all that they could overtake in their Flight.

Suffer them not to enter into their Cities.] And hinder the rest from retreating into their own Cities; by which means they would not remain in a Body together; but dispersed here and there, where they could save themselves.

For the LORD your God hath delivered them into your Hand.] Given you an Opportunity to complete their Destruction.

Ver. 20. *And it came to pass, when Joshua, and the Children of Israel.*] *i. e.* The Children of *Israel*, by the Command and Direction of *Joshua*; who sent out strong Parties to pursue them; but he himself seems to have gone to lay Siege to *Makkedah*.

Had made an End of slaying them with a very great Slaughter, till they were consumed.] Till there was none of them to be seen in a Body together.

That the rest which remained of them, entered into fenced Cities.] Those few that escaped, got into such fortified Cities as they could reach.

Ver. 21. *And all the People.*] Who had been sent out, and engaged in Pursuit of the Enemy.

Returned to the Camp to Joshua at Makkedah.] Where, no doubt, he had order'd a general Rendezvous, as we now speak, of the whole Army that had been employed in this War.

In Peace.] The LXX. translate it ὑγιεῖς, sound and safe; and the *Vulgar*, *sani & integro numero*; sound and without the Loss of a Man. Which is to be understood of that Detachment sent to pursue them (*Ver.* 19.) who came all safe to the Camp, and not a Man of them lost, or so much as wounded.

None moved his Tongue against any of the Children of Israel.] There was not so much as a Dog that barked at them. For that Word *Dog* is to be supplied (as *Bochartus* thinks) according to what we read, *Exod.* xi. 7. See *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 55. It is an Expression of the great Tranquillity wherein they were, and of an entire Victory; there being not so much as a Dog left to disturb them.

Ver. 22. *Then said Joshua, Open the Mouth of the Cave, and bring out those five Kings unto me out of the Cave.*] The Wisdom of *Joshua* is here observed by *Arias Montanus*; who would not do this Execution till all the People were returned to the Camp, to be Witnesses of it. And he might have added, that he executed them, before he assaulted *Makkedah*, that the Inhabitants of that City might see there was no Hope of any Succour from those Kings; who had been very powerful.

Ver. 23. *And they did so, and brought forth those five Kings unto him out of the Cave, the King of Jerusalem, the King of Hebron,* &c.] They are named in the same Order as in *Ver.* 3. according to their Rank and Quality; for next to the King of *Jerusalem*, who was the chief, the King of *Hebron* seems to have been of greater Note; and so of the rest. The same *Montanus* thinks it probable, that as they brought them forth, and set them before *Joshua*, they said, This is the King of *Jerusalem*; and then, This is the King of *Hebron*, &c.

Ver. 24. *And it came to pass, when they brought out those Kings to Joshua, that Joshua called for all the Men of Israel.*] That is, all the Men of War.

And said unto the Captains of the Men of War, which were with him.] That is, the great Officers of the Army.

Come near, put your Feet upon the Necks of these Kings.] Who lay bound, I suppose, prostrate upon the Ground.

And they came near, and put their Feet upon the Necks of them.] Not out of Insolence and Pride; but in token that these Kings and their Countries were brought in absolute Subjection to them; and that God had fulfilled his Promise, *Deut.* xxxiii. *ult.*

Ver. 25. *And Joshua said, Fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong, and of good Courage.*] The same that *Moses* had said to them all long ago, *Deut.* i. 21, 29. and God had lately said to *Joshua*, i. 6, 7, 9. and might be said with greater Reason now, when they saw their greatest Enemies lie prostrate under their Feet.

For thus shall the LORD do to all your Enemies, against whom you fight.] To all the Inhabitants of *Canaan*.

Ver. 26. *And afterward Joshua smote them, and slew them.*] After they had trampled upon them, he ordered them to be killed.

And hanged them on five Trees.] As a Mark of Infamy, whereby a Terror was struck into all others.

And they were hanging on the Trees till the Evening.] Exposed to this Contempt, all that long Day; which God made on purpose that they might do all the great Things before mentioned,

tioned, and what follows, before the night came upon them. Then their Bodies were taken down, not in Honour to them, but in Honour to the Land of *Iſrael*, were God now dwelt. So *Aben Ezra*.

Ver. 27. *And it came to paſs, at the Time of the going down of the Sun, that Joſhua commanded, and they took them down off the Trees, and caſt them into the Cave, wherein they had been hid*, &c.] He had given this Order as ſoon as they were hanged, according to the Law of *Moſes*, by which he acted before at *Ai*, viii. 29. And with their Bodies he caſt all the Inſtruments of their Puniſhment (the Trees, and what ſoever faſtned them unto them) into the Cave, as *Maimonides* ſaith, and the *Samaritan* Chronicle here particularly obſerves.

Ver. 28. *And that day Joſhua took Makkedah.*] The ſame Day the King of it was hanged; and it ſeems to me probable it was on that long Day (as I ſaid before) which God made that they might compleat their Conqueſt of theſe Kings; and when they had done, take this City alſo. Our great Primate of *Ireland* indeed, by *that Day*, underſtands the ſame Day that he ſat down before the City; which he thinks was ſome time after what is before related.

And ſmote it with the Edge of the Sword, and the King thereof he utterly deſtroyed.] He was ſlain among the reſt, and not taken alive as the King of *Ai* was.

Them, and all the Souls that were therein.] All the fighting Men, together with the Women and Children; becauſe they had refuſed the Offers of Peace, ſent them from *Joſhua*, before he invaded their Land.

He let none remain.] But ſaved the Cattle, which they took, with their Goods, for a Prey.

And he did to the King of Makkedah, as he did to the King of Jericho.] What he did to the King of *Jericho*, is not recorded; but by what is ſaid of other Kings, it is probable that he hanged him up, after he was found dead.

Ver. 29. *Then Joſhua paſſed from Makkedah.*] This only ſignifies what was their next Expedition; for it is likely they refreſhed themſelves a while, before they left this Place.

All Iſrael with him.] All that he brought along with him, to the Relief of *Gibeon*. See *ver.* 7.

Unto Libnah.] A city which fell to the Share of the Tribe of *Judah*, in the Diviſion of the Land, xv. 42. and was one of the Cities given to the Prieſts, xxi. 13. 1 *Chron.* vi. 57.

And fought againſt Libnah.] Laid Siege to it, and planted their Batteries againſt it.

Ver. 30. *And the* LORD *delivered it alſo, and the King thereof, into the Hand of Iſrael.*] They made an eaſy Conqueſt of it, becauſe God gave it up into their Hand.

And he ſmote it with the Edge of the Sword, and all the Souls that were therein, &c.] The ſame Words whereby the Deſtruction of *Makkedah* is deſcribed, *ver.* 28. For both theſe Cities favoured the five Kings before mentioned, and therefore (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) were deſtroyed utterly, not only by the Command of God, but by the Right of War. But the Command of God was the only Ground, as it is expreſſed, *ver.* 40.

Ver. 31. *And Joſhua paſſed from Libnah, and all Iſrael with him, unto Lachiſh.*] Another City which fell to the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 39. and was not far from *Libnah*.

And encamped againſt it, and fought againſt it.] This, it ſeems, was a ſtronger City than either of the former; for there is no mention of an Encampment againſt them before they began their Aſſault.

Ver. 32. *And the* LORD *delivered Lachiſh into the Hand of Iſrael.*] He doth not add, *and the King thereof*, as he doth of *Makkedah* and *Libnah*, (*ver.* 28, 30.) becauſe he was one of the five Kings, which he had lately hang'd; and they had not, it's likely, ſet a new one on his Throne, *ver.* 23.

Which took it on the ſecond Day.] After they began the Siege; or, the ſecond day after the taking of *Makkedah* and *Libnah*. The former is moſt likely, becauſe their Encampment againſt it, ſignifies they ſpent ſome time before it.

And ſmote it with the Edge of the Sword, &c.] Theſe Words, and the following, are the very ſame with what he ſaid before of the two fore-named Cities; only he doth not add, *he let none remain*; which is to be ſuppoſed.

Ver. 33. *Then Horam King of Gezer came up to help Lachiſh.*] This was a City afterwards in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, xvi. 10. belonging to the *Levites*, xxi. 21. and not far from *Gibeon*, as may be gueſſed from 1 *Chron.* xiv. 16.

And Joſhua ſmote him and his People, until he had left him none remaining.] If he deſtroyed his City at this time, he returned to *Lachiſh*. And it is probable, he ſent forth a Detachment to fight *Horam* and his Army; who having routed them, deſtroyed alſo their City; and then went on with the Siege of *Lachiſh*.

Ver. 24. *And from Lachiſh Joſhua paſſed unto Eglon.*] Which alſo belonged afterward to *Judah*, xv. 39. and ſeems to have been as conſiderable as *Lachiſh*; for it follows, that *they encamped againſt it, and fought againſt it*, as they had done againſt the other. Their King was one of the five, who was killed and hanged before, *ver.* 23.

Ver. 35. *And they took it on that Day.*] The ſame Day they ſat down before it; for none came to their Relief, as *Horam* did to help *Lachiſh*; which may be one Reaſon that City was not taken till the ſecond Day, *ver.* 32.

And ſmote it with the Edge of the Sword, &c.] The ſame he had ſaid of the fore-named Cities; only he ſaith, he *utterly deſtroyed all* that were therein on the ſame Day; which is the ſame with thoſe Words, *he let none remain.*

Ver. 36. *And Joſhua went up from Eglon, and all Iſrael with him, unto Hebron, and they fought againſt it.*] This was alſo a City of *Judah* (as every one knows) xv. 54. and was ſeated in the mountainous Country, as the former were in the Plain; which is the Reaſon he is ſaid *to go up* to it from *Eglon*.

Ver. 37. *And they took it, and ſmote it with the Edge of the Sword, and the King thereof.*] Their King was one of the five, whom *Joſhua* had

had lately killed and hanged. But, it ſeems, they had ſet up a new one, being a City of great Note, which had other Cities depending on it, as it follows in the next Words.

And all the Cities thereof.] It was not only one of the Royal Cities, which had other Cities ſubject to it, (as *Gibeon* had, which was a kind of Royal City) but of very great Power. For theſe Words import, as if there were many Cities under its Juriſdiction.

And all the Souls that were therein, he left none remaining, &c.] In this Conqueſt, *Caleb* was very inſtrumental, and ſignalized himſelf (as we now ſpeak) by driving out the three Sons of *Anak* (xv. 13, 14.) who were ſlain there, *Judg.* i. 10. Thus we muſt underſtand this Hiſtory; or elſe ſay, as ſome do, either that *Joſhua* only took the City and deſtroyed it, but could not take the Citadel, or ſtrong Fort on the Top of the Mountain, (which doth not ſeem to be exactly true, for we read in the next Chapter, *Ver.* 21, 22. that he cut off the *Anakims* from the Mountains, *&c.*) or that, after he had deſtroyed it, as is here related, the *Anakims* came from *Gaza* and other Cities of the *Philiſtines*, whither they now fled, and peopled it again; but were expelled again by *Caleb*, as ſome underſtand, xiv. 12. See *Judg.* i. 10.

Ver. 38. *And Joſhua returned, and all Iſrael with him, to Debir, and fought againſt it.*] He had not been there before, but having gone as far South and Weſt as he thought fit, (even as far as *Gaza*, which was in the Weſtern Coaſt, *ver.* 41.) he turned his Courſe toward the Camp at *Gilgal*, which was now North-Eaſt from him, and in his Way thither took *Debir*, which alſo was a City of *Judah*, xv. 49. and one of the Cities of the Prieſts, xxi. 15. 1 *Chron* vi. 58. called alſo *Kiriath-Sepher*, and *Kiriath-Sanna.*

Ver. 39. *And he took it, and the King thereof and all the Cities thereof*, &c.] It was a great City (we may gather from hence, like to *Hebron*) in the Conqueſt of which *Othniel* the Brother of *Caleb* did great Service; and therefore it was given to him; as we read, xv. 15, 16, 17, and *Judg.* i. 11.

Ver. 40. *So Joſhua ſmote all the Country of the Hills, and of the South, and of the Vale, and of the Springs, and all their Kings.*] He forbears to name all the Cities he took, and, in ſhort, ſaith he ſubdued the whole Country that lay South and Weſt (as it is explained in the next Verſe) of whatſoever ſort it was; both the Hilly and the Low Country: For they that deſcribe Countries, are wont to have reſpect to two Things; the Condition and Quality of the Soil, and then the Situation: The firſt of theſe he expreſſes in this Verſe; and the other in the next. For here he deſcribes it as partly hilly and dry; and partly plain and full of Springs.

He left none remaining, but utterly deſtroyed all that breathed.] Which muſt be reſtrained to Mankind; for they kept their Cattle as a Prey to themſelves.

As the LORD *God of Iſrael commanded.*] This is added as a Juſtification of the *Iſraelites*, from all Imputation of Cruelty or Severity; for they only executed a Divine Sentence againſt this People for their abominable Wickedneſs, (*Levit.* xviii. 24, 25, *&c.*) wherewith the *Iſraelites* would have been in danger to be infected, if they had not been extirpated.

Ver. 41. *And Joſhua ſmote them from Kadeſh-Barnea.*] Which was in the South of *Canaan*, as appears from *Numb.* xxxiv. 4. and Chap. xv. of this Book, ver. 3. where it is mentioned as belonging to the Tribe of *Judah.*

Even unto Gaza.] A city of the *Philiſtines*, in the Weſt Part of *Canaan*, towards the South.

And all the Country of Goſhen.] There was a City in the Tribe of *Judah* of this Name, which lay in the Mountains, as *Hebron* did, in the Southern Part of the Country, xv. 51. From which City, the Region thereabouts was called the *Country of Goſhen*: Which had excellent Paſture-Ground in it, and was well watered, (like that Country in *Egypt* of the ſame Name) and thence was called *Goſhen*, as *Conradus Pellicanus* conjectures; becauſe the *Hebrew* Word *Goſhen* ſignifies large Showers, which make the Earth fruitful.

Even unto Gibeon.] Which was in the more Northerly Part of the Country. And therefore as before he gave an Account of his Conqueſt from the South to the Weſt; ſo here of his Conqueſt from the South to the North.

Ver 42. *All theſe Kings, and their Land did Joſhua take at one Time.*] In one Expedition.

Becauſe the LORD *God of Iſrael fought for Iſrael.*] Which made their Conqueſt eaſy and ſpeedy. The *Targum* hath it, *The* LORD *God of Iſrael, by his Word, fought for Iſrael.* That is by him who appeared to *Joſhua* as the Captain of the Lord's Hoſts, *ver.* 13, 14.

Ver. 43. *And Joſhua returned, and Iſreal with him, unto the Camp to Gilgal.*] To refreſh themſelves with the Company of their Wives and Children; and to make thoſe who were left to defend them Partakers of their Booty; but eſpecially to return ſolemn Thanks to God for their Victories, at his Houſe, which was now ſettled at *Gilgal.*

Our great Primate of *Ireland* thinks, that this War with the five Kings, that came againſt *Gibeon*, &c. concludes this famous Year. In the firſt Part of which, *Moſes* took the Kingdoms of *Sihon* and *Og* on the other Side *Jordan*; and in the latter Part of it *Joſhua* conquered a great Part of the Land of *Canaan*; and in the middle of it the Manna ceaſed, and they eat of the Fruit of the Country. So that in the *Autumn* of this Year they began to ſow, and conſequently, from this Time, they began to number their *Sabbatical* Years. See him in his *Annales*, A. M. 2554. But another great Man (Dr. *Alix*) admoniſhes me, that this is againſt the Opinion of the antient *Jews*, who ſuppoſe that the firſt Year of the *Semitah* was the fourteenth after their Entrance into *Canaan:* For the Land muſt have been divided, before it was cultivated; and ſo the *Sabbath* of the Land muſt be ſeven Years after the Diviſion.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, that when Jabin King of Hazor.*] This City was the Metropolis of the Northerly Part of *Canaan*, *ver.* 10. and fell to the Share of the Tribe of *Naphtali* in the Division of the Land, xix. 36. *Jabin* was the Name of the King of the *Canaanites* in this Part of the Country in future Times; and reigned in this very City, *Judg.* iv. 2.

Heard of these Things.] Of the Conquest *Joshua* had made of so many Kings, and their Kingdoms, in the South and the West Part of the Land.

That he sent to Jobab King of Madon.] This is the Name of a Place we read of no where else; but was subject, no doubt, unto *Hazor* as the rest where.

And the King of Shimron.] A Place afterward in the Tribe of *Zebulon*, near to the Country of *Naphtali*, xix. 15.

And to the King of Achshaph.] In the Tribe of *Asher*, xix. 25. These two last Places *Arias Montanus* thinks were more remote from *Hazor*, than *Madon*; and lay toward the South near Mount *Tabor*; being the only Southern People that remained, after the five Kings were destroyed. But toward the North, and the East, and the West, there were many still left; whom *Jabin* now gathered together.

Ver. 2. *And to the Kings that were in the North of the Mountains.*] Or, mountainous Country, near *Lebanon*; for that was in the North Part of *Canaan*.

And in the Plains, South of Cinneroth.] In the flat Country, which lay South of the Lake called afterward *Genesaret*, now *Cinneroth*. See *Numb.* xxxiv. 11.

And in the Valley.] Some conjecture he means that pleasant Valley between Mount *Hermon*, and Mount *Gilboa*; called the Valley of *Jezreel*.

And the Borders of Dor.] A City, with a Country belonging to it, in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, xvii. 11.

On the West.] Upon the Midland Sea. Where *Josephus* mentions (in his second Book against *Appion*) a City called *Dora*, near Mount *Carmel*. See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 41. P. 752.

Ver. 3. *And to the Canaanites.*] The People peculiarly so called.

On the East, and on the West.] It hath been noted before, that some of this People lived in the East near *Jordan*; and other of them in the West near the Midland Sea. See *Numb.* xiii. 29.

And to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite.] There were other *Amorites* scattered up and down the Country, besides those who were subject to the five Kings mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 5. who were all now assembled together by *Jabin*; with the rest of the *Hittites* and *Perizzites*, (who were in several Parts of the Country) that they might make as powerful an Army as could be raised.

And the Jebusite, in the Mountains.] About *Jerusalem* where they kept a strong Hold, till the Time of *David*; as the *Perizzites* lived in other mountainous and woody Countries as *Bochartus* observes.

And to the Hivite under Hermon.] This was a Mountain in the North-East Part of the Country, where some *Hivites* were settled, as others were about *Gibeon*. That *Hermon* was Easterly appears from *Psal.* lxxxix. 12. Whence it is that the *Hivites* are called *Kadmonites*, that is, *Easterlings*, *Gen.* xv. 19. as *Bochart* hath observed in his *Phaleg.* Lib. 4. Cap. 36. and in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 19.

In the Land of Mizpeh.] There were several Cities of this Name; one in the Tribe of *Judah* xv. 38. another belonging to *Benjamin*, xviii. 26. and two more beyond *Jordan* in the Land of *Gilead*; one in the Tribe of *Gad*, the other in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, or very near it; which gave Name to the Country about it and seems to be here intended.

Ver. 4. *And they went out.*] The Kings of all these People.

They and all their Host with them, much People even as the Sand that is upon the Sea shore in Multitude.] A vast Army, which could not easily be numbered; or, which covered the Place where they were encamped, as Sand doth the Sea-shore; so that nothing could be seen but armed Men, Horses, and Chariots, *&c.* It is a proverbial Speech in Scripture, for vast Numbers of Men or great Quantities of Corn; or exceeding much Knowledge and Wisdom, as every one knows.

With Horses and Chariots, very many.] This made them the more formidable, because the *Israelites* were all Footmen; who might easily be beaten by a strong Body of Horse; especially when they had Chariots also, which carried Men in them (see upon *Deut.* xx. 1.) and they had great Numbers also of them, as these Words intimate. *Josephus* makes their Chariots alone to have been twenty Thousand. The Land of *Canaan* indeed did not breed Horses (as I have often observed) but they might easily procure them out of *Egypt*, and they trusted much to this kind of Forces, wherein the *Egyptians* excelled most People. See *Deut.* xvii. 16.

Ver. 5. *And when all these Kings were met together.*] In some Place which the King of *Hazor* appointed for a general Rendezvous. For tho' this Multitude were of different Nations, yet they all now combined against the *Israelites* But it was a great Providence of *God*, that as all this Country was not united under one Head, but divided into several petty Kingdoms; so they did not all enter into a Confederacy at the first against *Joshua*, but fought severally; only five of their Kings joining together. Tho' now they seem to have seen their Error; and therefore, all that remained, joined, as one Man, to oppose *Joshua*'s further Proceeding.

They came, and pitched together at the Waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.] They marched to these Waters, and there formed a Camp, to prepare, and set themselves in Order, to give *Israel* Battle. These Waters, all agree, were that Lake which *Josephus* calls Σάμα χωνίτιδα,

from the Abundance of Fiſhes that were in it: For *Samachon*, or *Semechon*, in the *Arabick* Language, ſignifies a Fiſh (as *Bochart* obſerves in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 1. Cap. 6.) and *Joſhua* here calls the Waters of *Merom*, that is, the *upper Waters*; for this Lake was near the Fountain of *Jordan*, which ran thro' the Lake of *Tiberias*, and fell into the Lake *Aſphaltites*, or the Dead Sea. With reſpect to which Waters, theſe were called the *upper*, they being *lower*. And here they pitched rather than any other Place; being under the Juriſdiction of *Jabin*, who had called them together: For *Hazor*, where he reigned, was ſituate upon this Lake, as *Joſephus* tells us, Lib. 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 6.

Ver. 6. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Joſhua.*] Who went, it is probable, (as he had done formerly, x. 8.) to conſult the Divine Majeſty, how he ſhould manage himſelf upon this great Occaſion.

Be not afraid of them.] Some collect from hence (even *Joſephus* himſelf) that *Joſhua* was poſſeſſed with ſome Fear, when he heard of ſuch a numerous Army, and ſo well appointed, coming againſt him. But I do not think it at all probable, that after ſo many late Aſſurances and ſignal Demonſtrations, as God had given him of his Preſence with him in this War, he ſhould be capable of this Paſſion. See the firſt Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, iii. 7, 9, 10. v. 13, 14, 15. x. 8. Therefore theſe Words were ſpoken to him, that he might animate the People, whoſe Hearts were apt to fail them, when they ſaw ſuch terrible Enemies.

For to-morrow about this time.] It is not certain what this time was; but it is likely in the Morning, after he had marched all Night (as he did againſt the five Kings, x. 9.) that he might fall upon them unexpectedly.

I will deliver them up all ſlain before Iſrael.] The LXX tranſlate it τέτροπωμένους, *put to flight*. Which agrees with what follows; for it is certain they were not all *ſlain*, but many of them fled, and the *Iſraelites* purſued them: And therefore other Copies of the LXX have it τέτρωμένους, *wounded*; ſo broken and ſhattered, that they were all in effect dead Men.

Thou ſhalt hough their Horſes.] Cut their Hamſtrings, and thereby render them unfit for future Service.

And burn their Chariots with Fire.] That they might be no more uſed; no not by the *Iſraelites* themſelves.

Ver. 7. *And Joſhua came, and all the People of War with him, againſt them, to the Waters of Merom.*] He did not wait for their Motion; but attacked them as they lay in their Quarters; for that is ſignified by the next Word.

Suddenly.] When they thought not of an Enemy near them; but were conſulting, perhaps, how to manage the War againſt the *Iſraelites*.

And they fell upon them.] When they were unprovided to make ſuch Reſiſtance as they would have done, if they had been ready to receive them.

Ver. 8. *And the* LORD *delivered them into the Hand of Iſrael, who ſmote them.*] Routed and killed a great many of them.

And chaſed them to Great Zidon.] This, it ſeems, was a large City, and of great Note in thoſe Days, (for there was no *Zidon* the Leſs) built by the eldeſt Son of *Canaan* (as *Joſephus* thinks) from whom it had its Name. See *Gen.* x. 15. It lay in the North-Weſt Part of *Canaan*, upon the Sea.

And unto Miſraphothmaim.] It is thought by ſome that this was a Place where there were *hot Waters*; which I ſhall not examine; but only note, it is a probable Conjecture, from xiii. 6. that it was a Place in the Country of *Zidon*, where they made Salt.

Unto the Valley of Mizpeh Eaſtward.] (See *ver.* 3.) This ſignifies, that in their Confuſion, ſome of them fled Weſtward to *Zidon* and *Miſraphothmaim*, and others Eaſtward, towards *Miſpeh*.

And they ſmote them till they left them none remaining.] As they divided themſelves, and fled ſeveral ways; ſo did the *Iſraelites* ſend out ſeveral Parties, both to the Weſt, and to the Eaſt; who purſued them ſo cloſe, that they let not a Man of them eſcape.

Ver. 9. *And Joſhua did unto them as the* LORD *bad him; he houghed their Horſes, and burnt their Chariots with Fire.*] We do not read, as *Kimchi* notes upon this Place, of any Horſes or Chariots which the five Kings mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, brought into the Field; becauſe they went only to beſiege *Gibeon*, and hoped to take it preſently by an Aſſault; in which there was no Uſe of Horſes and Chariots; which they did not want, no more than theſe Kings, who abounded in them, and placed their principal Confidence in their Horſemen and Chariots. Which was the Reaſon God commanded them to hough their Horſes; that is, to cut their Nerves and Sinews in their Hams; which *Joſephus* tranſlates ἀχρήσους ποιεῖν, to make them uſeleſs and unprofitable: For God would not have his People place their Safety and Security in this, but in himſelf alone, as good People always did, *Pſal.* xx. 7. Accordingly, when *David* had conquered *Hadedezar*, and taken from him a great Number of Horſes and Chariots, he diſabled all the Horſes, after this Example of *Joſhua*, (as if God intended by him to teach all future Rulers of his People what to do) reſerving only as many as would ſerve for an Hundred Chariots, 2 *Sam.* viii. 4. And *Schickardus* obſerves out of the *Jewiſh* Authors, that they were wont thus to enervate all the Horſes they found in the King's Stables after his Death, that they might not be of uſe to his Succeſſor. See his *Miſhphat Hammeleck*, Cap. 6. Theorm. 19. and *Bochart*'s *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 11.

Ver. 10. *And Joſhua at that time.*] Before he thought of returning to his Camp at *Gilgal*.

Turned back.] From purſuing thoſe that fled toward the Weſtern Coaſt.

And took Hazor.] Which was in the Eaſtern Part of the Country; upon the Lake before mentioned.

And ſmote the King thereof with the Sword.] This was one Reaſon, it is likely, why he made haſte to inveſt *Hazor*; becauſe the King thereof,

who was the chief Author of this War, had escaped out of the Battle, and thought to defend himself there.

For Hazon before-time was the Head of all those Kingdoms.] Not of all the Kingdoms of *Canaan*; but of all those mentioned in the beginning of this Chapter. Which was another Reason why he fell upon it *at this Time*; that by taking the most considerable City of this Part of *Canaan*, all the rest might be disheartenʼd to hold out against him.

Ver. 11. *And they smote all the Souls that were therein with the Edge of the Sword, utterly destroying them; there was not any left to breathe.*] See x. 40.

And he burnt Hazor with Fire.] Which the *Canaanites* afterwards rebuilt, and possessed it for some time; another King of the same Name reigning in it, *Judg.* iv. 2. For the Kings of this City were called *Jabin* in many Successions, as the *Egyptian* Kings were called *Pharaoh*, and the Kings of the *Philistines*, *Abimelech*, &c.

Ver. 12. *And all the Cities of those Kings, and all the Kings of them, did Joshua take.*] *Viz.* Those mentioned *Ver.* 2, 3. whom *Jabin* drew into Confederacy with him; and perhaps were his Dependants.

And smote them with the Edge of the Sword, and he utterly destroyed them.] That is, all their Inhabitants.

As Moses the Servant of the LORD commanded.] *Deut.* vii. 2. and many other Places.

Ver. 13. *But as for the Cities that stood still in their Strength.*] The *Hebrew* Words *all thillam* (which we translate *in their Strength*) literally signify *on their Heap*, as it is noted in the Margin of our Bibles; that is, were seated in an eminent Place, and therefore of greater Strength than those that stood in the Plain. Thus *Bochart* interprets it in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 29. from whence he thinks came the Names of *Thelassar*, 2 Kings xix. 12. and of *Thelabib*, *Ezek.* iii. 15. And thus I observe the Prophet *Jeremiah* speaks, xxx. 18. *Jerusalem* shall be built on her *own Heap*, or high Hill. But the Meaning may be, according to our Translation, the Cities whose Walls were not battered down in the taking of them.

Israel burnt none of them.] Because they intended to dwell in them; and would not be at the Charge and Pains of building new Walls for their Safety.

But Hazor only, that did Joshua burn.] Because it was the capital City, and began this War against them; which being laid desolate by the *Israelites*, without Inhabitant, the *Canaanites* took their Opportunity to rebuild it, and settle themselves there again.

Ver. 14. *And all the Spoil of these Cities, and the Cattle, the Children of Israel took for a Prey unto themselves.*] As the LORD allowed them to do at *Ai*, viii. 2.

But every Man they smote with the Edge of the Sword, until they had destroyed them, &c.] Because God had often commanded these Nations should be rooted out for their abominable Wickedness; lest the *Israelites* should be drawn in to imitate them in their filthy Lewdness, as I observed from *Lev.* xviii. 24, 25, 26, *&c.* See also xx. 22, 23, *&c.*

Ver. 15. *As the LORD commanded Moses his Servant.*] *Exod.* xxxiv. 11, 12, *&c.*

So did Moses command Joshua.] *Numb.* xxvi. 19. *Deut.* xxxi. 7.

And so did Joshua, he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.] Which is a Demonstration that *Moses* left in Writing what we read the LORD commanded in the foregoing Books, and that they were not written (as some pretend) in later Times: For then it would have been impossible for *Joshua* to have executed every thing that he commanded, unless he had had the Book of the Law before him for his Direction. But so desirous are some Men to weaken the Authority of these holy Books, that from hence they argue this Book of *Joshua* could not be written by himself, but some other; because he gives himself this high Commendation. So the Author of *Theolog. Polit.* who by the same Reason might have rejected S. *Paul*'s Epistles as none of his, and *Cæsar*'s Commentaries; for both of them relate their own Vertues, and the noble Things they did.

Ver. 16. *And Joshua took all that Land.*] Belonging to the Kings before mentioned.

The Hills, and all the South Country, and all the Land of Goshen, and the Valley, and the Plain.] This is a Description of his whole Conquest, as appears from x. 40.

The Mountain of Israel.] It is very uncertain what Place this was; but many think it probable to be *Beth-el*: Where God appeared to *Jacob* as he went to *Padan Aram*, and promised to give him this Land, *Gen.* xxviii. 12, 13. and where he dwelt, by God's Direction, after he came from *Padan Aram*, and God appeared again to him there, and made him the same Promise, and changed his Name from *Jacob* to *Israel*, *Gen.* xxxv. 1, 9, 10, *&c.*

And the same of the Valley.] Belonging to the same Mountain. But *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks the Singular Number is put for the Plural; and thus explains the whole Verse. The Land of *Israel* was partly in the Hill-Country, partly in the South towards *Egypt*, partly in the Plain near the Great Sea, and the Sea of *Sodom*, and the Spring of *Jordan*, near *Tabor* in *Galilee*. And moreover, the *Mountains of Israel* were the two *Carmels*, *Hermon*, *Gilead*, *Lebanus*, those about *Jerusalem*, and many other.

Ver. 17. *Even from the Mount Halach.*] Or the *Stony Mountain*, as *Bochart* interprets it, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 5.

That goeth up to Mount Seir.] Which was the Bounds of the Country of *Edom*.

Even unto Baal-Gad, in the Valley of Lebanon, under Mount Hermon.] As in the foregoing Words he expresses the Bounds of *Joshua*'s Conquest Southward; so hither they reached Northward. And this seems to be a Description of the Length of the Country which he took from the King of *Hazor*, and all those that joined with him, as Archbishop *Usher* understands it.

And all their Kings he took, and ſmote them and ſlew them.] So that none appeared to make head againſt him.

Ver. 18. *Joſhua made War a long Time with all thoſe Kings.*] But thoſe Kings were ſo many, and made ſuch great Oppoſition, that he ſpent *Six* Years (as the fore-named great Perſon computes) in this War, before he could finiſh it.

Ver. 19. *There was not a City that made Peace with the Children of Iſrael.*] This is the Reaſon the War continued ſo long; becauſe there was but one City that ſurrendered on ſuch Terms as had been offered them; but all the reſt obſtinately refuſed to yield unto *Joſhua*.

Save only the Hivites, the Inhabitants of Gibeon.] viii. 3. Who, if they had truly diſcovered who they were, (which out of Fear they concealed) and begged Peace, they might have obtained it on ſuch Conditions as were propoſed to all.

All other they took in Battle.] By Force of Arms.

Ver. 20. *For it was of the LORD to harden their Hearts, that they ſhould come againſt Iſrael in Battle.*] Being a People obſtinately wicked, GOD ordered Things ſo in his Providence, that they were emboldened (notwithſtanding the Wonders they had certainly heard were done for *Iſrael*) to fight with them. By which it appears the *Gibeonites* were a better ſort of People, who conſidered what GOD had done in Favour of the *Iſraelites*.

That he might deſtroy them utterly, and that they might have no Favour.] Which they might have found, if they had not been ſo fool-hardy (as we ſpeak) as to imagine they could withſtand thoſe, before whom the River *Jordan* fled, and the Walls of *Jericho* fell down flat.

But that he might deſtroy them as the LORD commanded Moſes.] In many Places; particularly in *Deut.* vii. 2. xx. 16, 17.

Ver. 21. *And at that Time.*] That is, in the War before-mentioned, and perhaps in the Concluſion of it; after he had left none to oppoſe him in other Places, but only in thoſe mountainous Countries, which were of difficult Acceſs.

Came Joſhua.] Either from the Camp at *Gilgal*, or from deſtroying the Kings and their Countries, of which he had been ſpeaking in this Chapter.

And cut off the Anakims.] Who were a diſtinct People (*Arias Montanus* thinks) from the *Canaanites*; of a fierce, cruel, and tyrannical Diſpoſition, who oppreſſed all their Neighbours.

From the Mountains.] Where they had ſettled, and, it is likely, ſtrongly fortified themſelves: Which moved *Joſhua* to let them alone till he had finiſhed his other Conqueſts. Concerning theſe *Anakims*, ſee *Numb.* xiii. 22, 23.

From Hebron.] Called alſo *Kiriath-Arba*, the City of *Arba*, who was a great Man among the *Anakims*. See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 1. P. 363.

And Debir.] Called alſo *Kiriath-Sepher*, as I noted before.

And Anab.] This, as well as the two fore-named Cities, fell to the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 50.

And from all the Mountains of Judah.] All the mountainous Country which afterward fell by Lot to that Tribe.

And from all the Mountains of Iſrael.] All the mountainous Country, which was in the reſt of the Tribes of *Iſrael*, where theſe People, it is likely, fled for Safety.

Joſhua deſtroyed them utterly, with their Cities.] Which it ſeems they had in thoſe mountainous Countries of *Iſrael*; beſides *Hebron*, *Debir*, and *Anab* in the Tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 22. *There were none of the Anakims left in the Land of the Children of Iſrael.*] He rooted them out of the whole Country which the *Iſraelites* conquered.

Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Aſhdod, there remained.] Three Cities of the *Philiſtines*; unto which either ſome of them eſcaped, and there took Shelter, or they had been there from antient time, and the *Iſraelites* could not yet expel them. For they did not poſſeſs themſelves of the Country of the *Philiſtines* till the Time of *David*; when we find ſome of theſe Giants ſtill there; particularly in *Gath*. But that there were any of them at *Aſcalon*, the famous *Bochart* ſhews to be an Error in the Place above-mentioned. Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 1.

Ver. 23. *So Joſhua took the whole Land.*] Which either the *Canaanites*, or the *Anakims* poſſeſſed; that is, ſubdued it ſo, that none roſe up againſt him, though many Places were not yet in the Poſſeſſion of the *Iſraelites*. See xiii. 1, 2, *&c.* For which were many Reaſons; one of which was, becauſe the *Iſraelites* were not yet ſo many as to be able to people the whole Country, and keep the Beaſts of the Field from multiplying upon them, *Exod.* xxiii. 29. And two more Reaſons are added, *Judg.* iii. 1, 4.

According to all that the LORD ſaid unto Moſes.] *Deut.* xxxi. 7, 8.

And Joſhua gave it for an Inheritance unto Iſrael.] *Deut.* iii. 28.

According to their Diviſions by their Tribes.] *Numb.* xxvi. 53. *Numb.* xxxiii. 54.

And the Land reſted from War.] None of the Lords of the *Philiſtines*, or any other, adventured to give any Diſturbance to the *Iſraelites* in their Poſſeſſions; but they enjoyed them quietly. And thereby had Liberty to make a Diviſion of the Country; which GOD ordered them to go about, Chap. xiii.

Now began the *ſeventh* Year from the time the *Iſraelites* firſt ploughed and ſowed in the Land. And therefore was the firſt *Sabbatical* Year that they obſerved after *Joſhua* had brought them to their Reſt in the Land of *Promiſe*. An Emblem (as our great Primate of *Ireland* obſerves) of that eternal *Sabbatiſm*, or Reſt, unto which the true *Jeſus* will bring his People, *Hebr.* iv. 8, 9. And from this time they were to reckon, unto their *Jubilee* mentioned, *Levit.* xxv. 8, 13. But that was not from their Entrance into *Canaan*, but from the ſeventh Year after the Diviſion of the Land, as I obſerved before, upon the laſt Verſe of the *tenth* Chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Verſe 1. NOW *theſe are the Kings of the Land, which the Children of Iſrael ſmote, and poſſeſſed their Land.*] Before he gives an Account of the Diviſion of the Land, he thinks fit to lay before every one's Eyes, as in a Table, the Land they had conquered; which was to be divided.

On the other Side Jordan towards the Riſing of the Sun.] There they began their Conqueſts, before they paſſed over *Jordan*.

From the River Arnon, unto Mount Hermon.] So the Bounds of this Conqueſt are deſcribed by *Moſes*, *Deut.* iii. 8. iv. 48. See there.

And all the Plain on the Eaſt.] That is, on the Eaſt of *Jordan*, *Deut.* i. 1. called the Plain of *Moab*, *Deut.* xxxiv. 1.

Ver. 2. *Sihon King of the Amorites, who dwelt at Heſhbon.*] He was the firſt King whoſe Land they conquered and poſſeſſed. See *Numb.* xxi.

And ruled from Aroer, which is upon the Banks of the River Arnon.] See *Numb.* xxi. 24.

And from the Middle of the River.] In which ſtood the City called *Aroer*. For *Ar* never was in the Hands of *Sihon*; but his Kingdom was bounded by it, on that Side. See *Deut.* ii. 36. iii. 16.

And from half Gilead,] In the *Hebrew*, *and half of Gilead*; there being nothing to anſwer to the Word *from*: Which being left out, the Senſe is plain, that half of the Country of *Gilead* belonged to *Sihon*, as the other half did to *Og*, *Ver.* 5.

To the River Jabbok, which is the Border of the Children of Ammon.] Thus his Country is conſtantly deſcribed; particularly in *Numb.* xxi. 24. *Deut.* iii. 16.

Ver. 3. *And from the Plain*, &c.] There is nothing anſwering to the Word *from* in the *Hebrew*; which may moſt clearly be tranſlated, *and the Plain*: And ſo the LXX. only retaining the Word *Araba*, which we tranſlate *Plain*. This was another Part of *Sihon*'s Country, a great Plain, which lay Eaſtward of the Sea of *Cinneroth*, and the *Salt Sea*; by which it was bounded on the Weſt.

The Way to Beth-Jeſhimoth.] Which, by the next Words, is thought to have lain towards the South.

And from the South under Aſhdod-Piſgah.] The Meaning ſeems to be, that on the South it was bounded by *Aſhdod-Piſgah*. See *Deut.* iii. 17. I do but touch theſe Things, leaving them to a very learned Friend and Brother of mine, who hath moſt accurately conſidered every Part and Place of this Country.

Ver. 4. *And the Coaſt of Og King of Baſhan.*] The next Conqueſt they made was of the Kingdom of *Og*, who was of the Remnant of the Giants. See *Deut.* iii. 11.

That dwelt at Aſhtaroth and Edrei.] See *Deut.* i. 4. Some would gather from this Place, and from xiii. 12. that he had two Royal Seats, one at *Aſhtaroth*, another at *Edrei*; and that he lived ſometimes in the one, and ſometimes in the other.

Ver. 5. *And reigned in Mount Hermon.*] At the bottom of which ſome other People lived, who were conquered by *Joſhua*, xi. 17.

And in Salcah.] This was one of his Cities, in that Part of his Kingdom, which was next to *Hermon*, as ſome conjecture from xiii. 12. But others think it was in the Southern Part of this Country, poſſeſſed afterwards by the *Gadites*; which they gather from 1 *Chron.* v. 11, 12, 16.

And all Baſhan, unto the Border, &c.] See an Account of this, and of all that follows in this Verſe, *Deut.* iii. 13, 14.

Ver. 6. *Them did Moſes the Servant of the LORD, and the Children of Iſrael, ſmite.*] Theſe two Kings were conquered by *Moſes*, before they came into *Canaan*, *Numb.* xxi.

And Moſes the Servant of the LORD gave it for a Poſſeſſion to the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half Tribe of Manaſſeh.] See *Numb.* xxxii. and *Deut.* iii. 12. xiii. 8. He gives *Moſes* the Title of *the Servant of the LORD* twice in this Verſe, to make them ſenſible that this War againſt the two Kings before-named, was made by Divine Authority; and that their Land was afterward given to the *Reubenites*, &c. by the ſame Authority.

Ver. 7. *And theſe are the Kings.*] They that follow in the reſt of the Chapter.

Of the Country, which Joſhua and the Children of Iſrael ſmote on this Side Jordan.] In the late Wars, before mentioned in this Book.

On the Weſt.] Weſtward of *Jordan*.

From Baal-Gad in the Valley of Lebanon, even unto the Mount Halak, which goeth up to Seir.] This was the Northern and Southern Bounds of the Country of theſe Kings. See xi. 17.

Which Joſhua gave unto the Tribes of Iſrael for a Poſſeſſion, according to their Diviſions.] Unto the reſt of the Tribes who had not their Share on the other Side *Jordan*, xi. 33.

Ver. 8. *In the Mountains, and in the Valleys, and in the Plains.*] This is a Deſcription of the Condition of the Country; in which *Valleys* and *Plains* differ only in this, that the former were ſuch as lay between Mountains, and the latter, the flat Country, which was remote from Mountains.

And in the Springs.] Which commonly were at the Foot of Mountains.

And in the Wilderneſs, and in the South Country.] Theſe are joined together, becauſe their Wilderneſſes were Southerly, in the hotteſt and drieſt Part of the Land: Whereby we are not to underſtand Countries without People; but that were thinly peopled, in Compariſon with other Parts of the Land. For we read of Houſes and Towns in the Wilderneſs, 1 *Kings* xi. 34. ix. 18.

The Hivites, the Amorites, and the Canaanites, &c.] This may relate either to the Kings, or the Countries fore-mentioned.

Ver. 9. *The King of Jericho* one.] He is firſt mentioned, becauſe firſt conquered.

The King of Ai.] He was the next.

Which is beſide Beth-el, one.] The People of which Place came to aſſiſt the King of *Ai*; and were conquered at the ſame time, viii. 17.

Ver.

Ver. 10. *The King of Jeruſalem, one.*] Who was the next that oppoſed *Joſhua*, and therefore next mentioned, x. 1.

The King of Hebron, one.] He, and the three next, the Kings of *Jarmuth*, *Lachiſh*, and *Eglon* (*Ver.* 11, 12.) joined with the King of *Jeruſalem*, and were vanquiſhed at the ſame time.

Ver. 12. *The King of Gezer, one.*] He came out to help *Lachiſh*, and was ſmitten at the ſame time, x. 33.

Ver. 13. *The King of Debir, one.*] Mentioned x. 38.

The King of Geder, one.] We read not of him before; but we find ſeveral Towns in the Tribe of *Judah*, of the ſame or neighbouring Name, *viz.* *Gederah*, and *Gederoth*, and *Gederothaim*, and *Geder*, xv. 36, 41, 56. 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 18. All which, as *Bochartus* obſerves, have their Name *à Sepimento*, from the Fence that was about them, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 36.

Ver. 14. *The King of Hormah, one; the King of Arad, one.*] We have no Mention of theſe Kings before; but we know that *Hormah* was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 30. *Judg.* i. 17. 1 *Sam.* xxx. 30. and afterwards given to *Simeon*, *Joſh.* xix. 4. *Arad* alſo was a Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, as appears by the Story in *Judg.* i. 16.

Ver. 15. *The King of Libnah, one.*] Mentioned before, x. 29.

The King of Adullum, one.] This was a City in the ſame Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 35. 1 *Sam.* xxii. 1.

Ver. 16. *The King Makkedah, one.*] See x. 26.

The King of Beth-el, one.] We read not of any King here before; but it ſeems there was one, depending upon *Ai*, viii. 17.

Ver. 17. *And the King of Tappuah, one.*] There were two Cities of this Name; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 34. the other in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, xvii. 8. It is probable the latter is here meant; becauſe the King of it is mentioned next to the King of *Beth-el*, which was in the Confines of *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*. And immediately follows the King of *Hepher*; which was a Place not far off, in the Tribe of *Zebulon*.

The King of Hepher, one.] We read of the *Land of Hepher*, in 1 *Kings* iv. 10. Which St. *Hierom* ſaith was in the Tribe of *Zebulon*, near *Sephorim*, or *Diocæſarea*.

Ver. 18. *The King of Aphek.*] There were two *Apheks* in this Country which *Joſhua* conquered; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, xiii. 53. 1 *Sam*, ix. 1. xxix. 1. another in the Tribe of *Aſher*, *Joſh.* xix. 53. Which of them is here intended, cannot certainly be determined.

The King of Laſſaron, one.] This Place is never named any where elſe in Scripture. But I take it for *Saron* (as the *Vulgar Latin* here doth, leaving out the firſt Syllable) which was a City near *Lydda*, as we learn from *Acts* ix. 35. And the Country about it was very pleaſant and fruitful, *Iſai.* xxxiii. 9 xxxv. 2. There was another *Saron* alſo on the other Side of *Jordan* in the Eaſt, in the Country of the *Gadites*, 1 *Chron.* v. 16. of which ſome think the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks, lxv. 10.

Ver. 19. *The King of Madon one; the King of Hazor, one.*] Both theſe are mentioned before, as conquered by *Joſhua*, xi. 1.

Ver. 20. *The King of Shimron-Meron, one; the King of Achſhaph, one.*] Theſe two are mentioned in the ſame Place, xi. 1. And *Shimron* was in the Tribe of *Zebulon*; and *Achſhaph* in the Tribe of *Aſher*, xix. 15, 25. The former hath the Addition of *Meron* to it in this Place, to diſtinguiſh it from ſome other *Shimron*; which ſome think was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, called *Shomeron*, or *Samaria*.

Ver. 21. *The King of Tanaach, one.*] A Citd given to the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, xvii. 11. any in the Confines of *Zebulon*. It belonged to the *Levites*, xxi. 25. But the old Inhabitants were not expelled out of it, *Judg.* i. 27.

The King of Megiddo, one.] This City fell to the ſame Tribe, as we read in the ſame Place; and was near the River *Kiſhon*; as may be gathered from *Judg.* v. 19. The *Canaanites* were not driven out of this City, *Judg.* i. 27.

Ver. 22. *The King of Kedeſh, one.*] There were two Cities called *Kedeſh* or *Kadiſh*; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 23. the other in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, xix. 37. The latter is here meant; for it was a fenced City, as we read there; but the other was of no Note.

The King of Jokneam of Carmel, one.] A City in the Tribe of *Zebulon*, at the Bottom of Mount *Carmel*, near the River *Belus*, xix. 11. and one of the Cities of the *Levites*, xxi. 34. It had its Name from its delightful Situation, as *Bochart* conjectures, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 28.

Ver. 23. *The King of Dor, in the Coaſt of Dor, one.*] A City in the Lot of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, xvii. 11. which had a large Territory belonging to it, called after its Name: For it was a Royal City, and one of the moſt ancient in *Phœnicia*, as *Bochart* obſerves. So ſtrong alſo, that the *Iſraelites* could not get Poſſeſſion of it (or could not keep out the ancient Inhabitants) when it fell to the Portion of *Manaſſeh*, *Judg.* i. 27. Nor could *Antiochus Sidetes*, in future Times, take it, tho' he laid Siege to it with a very great Army, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 41.

The King of the Nations of Gilgal, one.] This *Gilgal* is not the Place where *Joſhua* encamped when he came over *Jordan*; for there was no City there, nor any King of that Country, but the King of *Jericho*. That Place alſo had its Name from the Circumciſion of the *Iſraelites* there, *Ver.* 9. We have no Mention indeed of any other *Gilgal* in *Scripture*; but St. *Hierom* ſays, in his Time, there was a Place called *Gilgel*, about ſix Miles from *Antipatris*, which was near the Sea, not far from *Joppa*. Hither, it is likely, Merchants from ſeveral Countries reſorted; and thence the chief Ruler there was called *the King of the Nations of Gilgal*. Some finding Mention of *Galilee of the Nations*, fancy that it is the Place here meant. But that Name for ſome Part of *Galilee*, was not known in the Days of *Joſhua*; being occaſioned by *Solomon*'s giving *Hiram* twenty Towns in this Country, 1 *Kings* ix. 11. So the ſame St. *Hierom*.

Ver.

Ver. 24. *The King of Tirzah, one.*] It is not certain in what Part of the Country this City was; but it is very probable, in the Lot of the Tribe of *Ephraim*. For *Jeroboam* (who was of this Tribe) and his Succeſſors, made it the Royal Seat, until the Building of *Samaria*, 1 *Kings* xiv. 17. xvi. 23, 24.

All the Kings thirty and one.] Some cannot believe, that in ſo ſmall a Country, there were ſo many Kings. But they ſhould conſider, that theſe Kings were only petty Princes, or Lords of Cities; which had a few Villages depending on them, the Inhabitants of which were their Tenants. This appears by *ver.* 9. where we read of the King of *Beth-el*; which was ſo ſmall a Place, that he and the King of *Ai*, joined together, had but twelve thouſand Subjects, viii. 25. For Kingdoms, like all other Things, were antiently very ſmall in their Beginning. See upon *Gen.* xiv. 1. and *Grotius* upon the *firſt* Verſe of this Chapter; and *Maſius* upon the *ſeventh*. Unto which may be added that *Cæſar* in his *fifth* Book of his Commentaries ſpeaks of four *Kings* here in the County of *Kent* alone: How many then was there in all *Britain?* For it appears by *Tacitus*, that the *Silures* and the *Brigantes* had their own Kings alſo. And *Cæſar* informs us, that in *France* there were as many Kings as Princes; and ſo it was in *Spain*, as *Livy* writes. And *Vopiſcus*, in the Life of the Emperor *Probus*, relates, that when he was in *Germany*, *Reguli novem ex diverſis gentibus*, &c. nine petty Kings came from divers Nations, and threw themſelves at his Feet; as he himſelf wrote to the *Senate* of *Rome*, in a Letter which is there recorded. In which he calls them *Novem Reges*, Nine Kings.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW Joſhua was old and ſtricken in Years.*] To what Age he was advanced, we cannot certainly know; becauſe we do not know how old he was when they came out of *Egypt*. Some think *three and forty*; and then he was fourſcore and three when they came into *Canaan:* And now, it may be gathered by probable Conjectures, wanted not much of an hundred.

And the LORD *ſaid unto him, Thou art old and ſtricken in Years, and there remaineth yet very much Land to be poſſeſſed.*] Which, in his declining Age, he could not hope to live to conquer; and therefore, he would have him go about another Buſineſs, *ver.* 7.

Ver. 2. *This is the Land that yet remains.*] To be ſubdued hereafter.

All the Borders of the Philiſtines.] Who lay in the South-Weſt Part of *Canaan*, near the Sea.

And all Geſhuri.] Which was a City, and a Country, in the North-Eaſt, not far from *Hermon*; belonging to the Lot of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*. See *Deut.* iii. 14.

Ver. 3. *From Sihor, which is before Egypt.*] He deſcribes more largely the Borders of the *Philiſtines*; whoſe Country extended along the Sea Coaſt, South and North; from *Sihor*, which was a little Stream from one of the Branches of *Nile*; whereby *Paleſtine* was bounded on that Side. See *Gen.* xv. 18. and *Voſſius de Orig. & Progr. Idolol.* Lib. 2. Cap. 74.

Even unto the Borders of Ekron Northward.] A famous City among the *Philiſtines*, where *Baal-zebub* was worſhipped, called in the New Teſtament *the Prince of the Devils* (or *Dæmons*) becauſe he was the principal God of the People of *Paleſtine*. This City was given to the Tribe of *Judah* at firſt, xv. 45. afterwards to the Tribe of *Dan*, xix. tho' neither of them could get the Poſſeſſion of it.

Which is counted to the Canaanite.] For the *Philiſtines* were not original Inhabitants of this Country, which belonged to the Off-ſpring of *Canaan*, the youngeſt Son of *Ham*; whereas the *Philiſtines* were deſcended from *Miſraim*, his ſecond Son; who expelled the *Avites* out of this Country; as we read *Deut.* ii. 23. And ſee my Annotations on *Gen.* x. 14, 19.

Five Lords of the Philiſtines.] Which Country was under the Government of five *Lords*, as they are conſtantly called in Scripture; in the *Hebrew*, *Seraim*, or *Seranaim*; which ſeems to be an antient *Phœnician* Word (the ſame with *Sarim*) for a Ruler of a Province, or City. The LXX call them Σατραπαι, and the Vulgar *Latin*, *Reguli*, petty Princes. But they are never called *Melakim*, *i. e.* Kings, in Scripture, as the reſt of the Princes of *Canaan* are. Which inclines me to think, that their Government was not ſo abſolute, as that of the reſt of the Kings of *Canaan*. Only we read in future Times, that *Achiſh* was King of *Gath*; having it ſeems, in *David*'s Days, made himſelf more abſolute than the former Lords of that Place.

The Gazathites, and the Aſhdothites, the Eſhkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites.] Theſe People had their Names from the five principal Cities in this Country, where they inhabited; which are commonly known.

Alſo the Avites.] Theſe were a People mixed with them, being a Remnant (as I ſaid before) of the ancient Inhabitants of this Country. But there was no diſtinct Lord of them, there being but five in all; and ſo many without one over theſe. Some have confounded them with the *Hivites*; but their Name is quite different in the *Hebrew*, and ſo is their Country. For the *Hivites* lived in *Hermon* in the North; and theſe here in the Weſt. From whence tho' they were driven by the *Caphtorites* (*Deut.* ii. 23.) yet ſome of them, it ſeems, remained; as ſeveral of the *Canaanites* did, when the *Iſraelites* diſpoſſeſſed them of their Country. See *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*, Lib. 4. Cap. 36. who thinks they were not the Off-ſpring of *Canaan*; but it is manifeſt they inhabited Part of the Country belonging to him: For *Sidon* was the Firſt-born of *Canaan*, who was ſettled on that Coaſt; and the Border of the *Canaanites* is ſaid to be from thence unto *Gaza*, *Gen.* x. 19.

Ver. 4. *From the South.*] Of the *Philiſtines* Country.

All the Land of the Canaanites.] All that Tract of Land which belonged to the People properly called *Canaanites*; who lived upon the Sea-Coaſt.

And

And Merah.] We find no mention of this Place elſewhere: Some tranſlate it, *a Cave.*

That is beſides the Sidonians.] Who were in the Northern Point of that Sea-Coaſt.

Unto Aphek.] See xii. 18. Where I obſerved there were two Cities of this Name; but it is moſt reaſonable here to underſtand that in the Tribe of *Aſher*; whoſe King tho' *Joſhua* had ſlain, he had not taken his Country.

To the Borders of the Amorites.] Who were in theſe Parts: For they being a mighty People, had diſperſed themſelves, not only in the Eaſt, and in the South; but in theſe Northern Regions.

Ver. 5. *And the Land of the Giblites.*] A People inhabiting a City called *Gebal*, and the Country about it, near to *Tyre* and *Sidon*; as appears from *Ezek.* xxvii. 9. and in 1 *Kings* v. 18. they are mentioned as Stone-Cutters ſent by *Hiram* King of *Tyre* to King *Solomon*. See alſo *Pſal.* lxxxiii. 7.

And all Lebanon toward the Sun-riſing.] They extended their Conqueſts thus far, xi. 17. but could not ſubdue the Eaſtern Part of this Country.

From Baal-Gad under Mount Hermon, unto the entring into Hamath.] concerning *Baal-Gad*, ſee xi. 17. and concerning *the entering into Hamath*, *Numb.* xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 6. *All the Inhabitants of the Hill Country.*] In the Northern Parts of the Land.

From Lebanon.] This ſhews what hilly Country he ſpeaks of.

Unto Miſrephath-maim.] A Place before-mentioned, xi. 8. where, as I obſerved, ſome render it *Hot Waters*, or *Baths*: For *Sharaph* ſignifies to burn, and *Maim* is Waters. And I may add, there are thoſe that think they were *Lime Kilns*, others *Glaſs-Furnaces*; but moſt likely *Salt-Pits*.

And all the Sidonians.] Who were near to the Inhabitants of *Libanus*, Weſtward upon the Sea.

Them will I drive out before the Children of Iſrael.] If they perſiſted conſtant in his Worſhip and Service. Which they did not; and therefore we never read that the *Sidonians* were conquered by the *Iſraelites*; and the People of *Lebanon* were only made Tributaries in the Days of *David* and *Solomon*.

Only.] Or rather *therefore*, as the Word *Rak* ſometimes ſignifies. See *ch.* i. *ver. ult.*

Divide thou it by Lot unto the Children of Iſrael for an Inheritance.] Tho' they be not yet driven out, yet, ſince I have promiſed to expel them, aſſign all the fore-mentioned Countries to the Children of *Iſrael* by Lot, as the Inheritance I have beſtowed upon them. Which gave them a ſtrong Aſſurance they ſhould have all this Land; both becauſe God had given it to them for an *Inheritance*, and ordered it to be divided by *Lot*.

As I have commanded them.] Or, as I now command thee, and give thee Authority to do.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore divide this Land for an Inheritance, unto the Nine Tribes, and the Half Tribe of Manaſſeh.*] Both that which was conquered, and that which remained unconquered, was to be divided, that every Tribe might know what belonged to them, by God's Gift; and be encouraged to attempt the Conqueſt of it, when they were able; and be preſerved from entring into any Covenant or Society with thoſe, who kept their Inheritance from them; and likewiſe hinder the Unconquered People from joining their Forces together to recover their Country, the *Iſraelites* inhabiting the Cities and Fields that lay between them.

Ver. 8. *With whom.*] That is with the other half of the Tribe before-mentioned.

The Reubenites and Gadites have received their Inheritance, which Moſes gave them beyond Jordan Eaſtward.] *Numb.* xxxii. 33, &c.

Even as Moſes the Servant of the Lord gave them.] Which he did by Order from God; and therefore they were not to be diſturbed in their Poſſeſſion, *Deut.* iii. 18.

Here the Words of God to *Joſhua* (*ver.* 1.) end; and in the next Verſe the Writer of this Book begins to deſcribe the Country which God ordered to be given to the forenamed two Tribes and an half, that there might be no future Diſpute about this Diviſion; but it might be held as good, as that which was made by Lot among the reſt of the Tribes.

Ver. 9. *From Aroer that is upon the Brink of the River Arnon, and the City that is in the midſt of the River.*] See xii. 2. and *Deut.* iii. 16.

And all the Plain of Medeba unto Dibon.] Theſe are two Cities which the *Amorites* took from the *Moabites* (as we read *Numb.* xxi. 30.) and the *Iſraelites* took from them when they conquered *Sihon* their King. The former of them was in the Portion of the *Reubenites*; the other of the *Gadites*: And when the Ten Tribes were carried Captive, they returned into the Poſſeſſion of the *Moabites* again. For *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of them as belonging to *Moab*, xv. 2. and ſo doth *Jeremiah*, xlviii. 22. The Plain of *Medeba* ſeems to be the ſame with the Plain of *Moab*.

Ver 10. *And all the Cities of Sihon King of the Amorites, which reigned in Heſhbon, unto the Border of the Children of Ammon.*] See *Numb.* xxi. 24, 25, *&c.*

Ver. 11. *And Gilead, and the Border of the Geſhurites, and Maachathites.*] *Geſhur* and *Maacha* were two Cities near Mount *Hermon*, in the extreme Bounds of this Country Northward; whoſe Inhabitants the *Iſraelites* could not drive out (*ver.* 13.) and yet their Land was divided among them.

And all Mount Hermon, and all Baſhan, unto Salcah.] See all this Verſe explained, xii. 5. I ſhall only add, that *Maacah* was in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, and is the City which *Ptolomy* calls *Epicæos*. Which Name the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt uſes both here and xii. 4, 5. and *Deut.* iii. 14. inſtead of *Maacha*; as *Bochart* obſerves, L. 2. *Phaleg.* Cap. 6.

Ver. 12. *All the Kingdom of Og in Baſhan, which reigned in Aſhtaroth and in Edrei, who remained of the Remnant of the Giants.* See xii. 4. and *Deut.* iii. 11.

For these did Moses smite, and cast them out.] These *Rephaim* (which we translate *Giants*) were perfectly conquered, and rooted out by *Moses*. They were smitten in *Abraham*'s Time, by *Chedarlaomer*, *Gen.* xiv. 5. but recovered Strength so much, that their Country, when *Moses* conquered it, was called the *Land of Giants*, *Deut.* iii. 13.

Ver. 13. *Nevertheless, the Children of Israel expelled not the Geshurites and Maachathites.*] See *Ver.* 2.

But the Geshurites and the Maachathites dwelt among the Israelites unto this Day.] For *Joshua* growing old (*Ver.* 1.) made no further Conquest, but left this People unsubdued, as *Moses* also had done.

Ver. 14. *Only unto the Tribe of Levi he gave no Inheritance.*] For the Tythes of the whole Country were instead of their Portion in Land, *Deut.* xviii. 2. And this is set down here by *Joshua*, as formerly by *Moses*, to shew that they had as indisputable a Right to the Tythes, as their Brethren had to the Land.

The Sacrifices of the LORD God of Israel, made by Fire, are their Inheritance.] That is, the Inheritance of the Priests; for the whole Tribe of *Levi* had nothing to do with them. See *Numb.* xviii. where the Portion of the *Priests* and of the *Levites* is exactly set down. And see *Ver.* 33. of this Chapter, and xiv. 3. xviii. 7.

As he said unto them.] See *Numb.* xviii. 20, 21. where this is distinctly said, both with respect to the *Priests* and to the *Levites*.

Ver. 15. *And Moses gave unto the Tribe of the Children of Reuben, Inheritance, according to their Families.*] Having said in general what *Moses* gave to the two Tribes and an half, he proceeds to set down in particular, what Share each of them had in this Country: That so, they might no more quarrel among themselves about their Portion, than the nine Tribes and half quarrel with them all. And first, he mentions what Part of the Land was given to *Reuben*; which was divided into as many Portions, as they had Families.

Ver. 16. *Their Coast was from Aroer, that is on the Bank of Arnon*, &c.] See *ver.* 9. *Aroer* itself was in the Tribe of *Gad*, *Numb.* xxxii. 34. unto which the Portion of the *Reubenites* reached.

Ver. 17. *Heshbon, and all the Cities that are in the Plain.*] He means the Plain before mentioned, *ver.* 9.

Dibon.] It is said plainly in *Numb.* xxxii. 34. that it belonged to the *Gadites*; for it was, as *Masius* well judges, in the Confines of both Tribes; and so was inhabited by both. Which is to be said also of *Heshbon*, here ascribed to the *Reubenites*; but in xxi. 39. is said to be a City of the *Levites* in the Tribe of *Gad*. And so we read also in 1 *Chron.* vi. *ult.* And this is still more evident; for *Heshbon*, which in this Verse is reckoned to the *Reubenites*, in the 26th Verse of this very Chapter, is said to be given to the Tribe of *Gad*; which is a Demonstration they had it between them.

Bamoth-baal, and Beth-baal-meon.] We read of *Bamoth* not far from this Country, *Numb.* xxi. 19. but no where else of *Bamoth-baal*; which, it is probable, was some high Place where *Baal* was worshipped; for we read of *high Places* in this Country, *Numb.* xxi. 28. We find mention of *Baal-meon* in many Places, particularly *Numb.* xxxii. 38. where it is said to be given to this Tribe. And the Addition of *Beth* to it, signifies there was some House, that is, Temple of *Baal* in this Place.

Ver. 18. *And Jahaza.*] Here they fought with *Sihon*. See *Numb.* xxi. 23.

And Kedemoth.] From whence *Moses* sent friendly Messengers to *Sihon*, to desire a peaceable Passage thro' his Country, *Deut.* iii. 26.

And Mephaath.] This, with the two foregoing, were *Levitical* Cities in the Tribe of *Reuben*, xxi. 36, 37. 1 *Chron.* vi. 78, 79.

Ver. 19. *And Kirjathaim and Sibmah.*] These two are mentioned in *Numb.* xxxii. 37, 38. as given to the *Reubenites*.

And Zareth-shahar.] We do not read of this City any where else.

In the Mount of the Valley.] In the Mount which overlooked the great Plain before-mentioned; which may be supposed to be one of the Mountains of *Abarim*, where this City, and perhaps the two former, were seated.

Ver. 20. *And Baal-Peor.*] It seems to have had its Name from the filthy Idol which was there worshipped by the *Moabites*, *Numb.* xxv. 3, 5. See *Deut.* xxxiv. 6.

And Ashdod-Pisgah and Beth-Jeshimoth.] See xii. 3.

Ver. 21. *And all the Cities of the Plain.*] As well as those mentioned in the Mountain which overlooked it, *Ver.* 19.

And all the Kingdom of Sihon King of the Amorites.] That is, all the fore-mentioned Places belonged to the Kingdom of *Sihon*. But they had not all his Kingdom given them; for it was shared between them and the *Gadites*, as appears from *Ver.* 27.

Whom Moses smote with the Princes of Midian.] Not in the War with *Sihon*, mentioned *Numb.* xxi. but in another War after that, undertaken by a particular Command of God, *Numb.* xxxi.

Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba.] Who are mentioned as killed in that War, *Numb.* xxxi. 8.

Which were Dukes of Sihon.] This is the Reason why they are here mentioned, because, tho' they lived in *Midian*, yet they were Tributaries to *Sihon*; and, it is likely, assisted him in his War with *Israel*, in which tho' they then escaped, yet afterward they were slain by them.

Dwelling in the Country.] It is uncertain whether he meant that *Sihon* had given them some Place in his Country to dwell in, (that they might be ready on all Occasions to assist him with their Forces) or, that they were settled in the Country of *Midian*; whereas some of that People were unsettled, and moved from Place to Place, like to the ancient *Nomades*. However it was, they were such great Men in *Midian*, that they are called *Kings*, *Numb.* xxxi. 8. as here they are called *Princes*; but much inferior to *Sihon*, whom they served only as great Com-

manders under him. So our Tranſlators, I ſuppoſe, underſtood it, which made them render the *Hebrew* Word *Neſichi* by the *Engliſh* Word *Dukes*; which we elſewhere tranſlate *Nobles*, in *Pſal.* lxxxiii. 13.

Ver. 22. *Balaam alſo the Son of Beor the Sooth-ſayer.*] He had been a Prophet, but degenerated into a Sooth-ſayer, or Diviner, (ſee *Numb.* xxii. 5, 6, 7, 8.) and became a Prophet again for the ſake of *Iſrael.*

Did the Children of Iſrael ſlay with a Sword, among them that were ſlain by them.] It is hard to give an Account why he is here mentioned; unleſs we ſuppoſe him to have been an Adviſer of *Sihon*, and thoſe *Dukes* that joined with him to undertake the War; as it is certain he was of the *Midianites* to draw in the *Iſraelites* to commit Idolatry, *Numb.* xxv. 17.

Ver. 23. *And the Border of the Children of Reuben, was Jordan, and the Border thereof*, &c.] This River was the Bounds of their Country Weſtward.

Ver. 24. *And Moſes gave Inheritance unto the Tribe of Gad*, &c.] As he had done to the *Reubenites*, *Ver.* 15. See there.

Ver. 25. *And their Coaſt was Jazer.*] See *Numb.* xxi. 32. and xxxii. 35.

And all the Cities of Gilead.] That lay next to *Jazer:* For half of *Gilead* was given to the Children of *Manaſſeh*, *Ver.* 31.

And half of the Land of the Children of Ammon.] The Children of *Iſrael* took nothing from them, but were expreſly forbidden to meddle with their Country, *Deut.* ii. 19. He ſpeaks therefore of that Part of their Country which *Sihon* had taken from them (as he did Part of the *Moabites* Country, *Numb.* xxi. 26.) and the *Iſraelites*, having vanquiſhed *Sihon*, juſtly poſſeſſed from *Arnon* to *Jabbok*; as *Jepthah* repreſents to the *Ammonites*, when they demanded this Land as belonging to them; when the *Iſraelites* had enjoyed it near three hundred Years, *Judg.* xi. 13, 22, *&c.*

Unto Aroer.] This was the Bounds of that Country taken from the *Ammonites* by *Sihon*, from *Aroer* unto *Jabbok*; for *Aroer* was ſeated upon *Arnon* before-mentioned, *Judg.* xi. 13.

That is before Rabbah.] Over againſt *Rabbah*, the chief City of the *Ammonites* Country; which was in the North Part of it, as *Aroer* in the South.

Ver. 26. *And from Heſhbon.*] See *Ver.* 17.

Unto Ramath-mizpeh.] The ſame with *Ramath-Gilead*, of which we read xx. 8. and many other Places. It ſeems to be the ſame Place which is called *Mizaeh of Gilead*, where *Jephthah* the *Gileadite* lived, *Judg.* xi. 29, 34.

And Betonim.] We know no more of this Place, than that it was, in all likelihood, a City in the North Part of this Tribe, as *Ramath-Gilead* was; and *Heſhbon* in the South.

And from Mahanaim.] This was a City built in that Place where *Jacob* ſaw the Camps of Angels, *Gen.* xxxii. 1, 2. It was not far from the River *Jabbok*, as appears from that Chapter, *Ver.* 22. This City was very conſiderable in After-times; *Iſhboſheth*, who reigned over *Iſrael* after *Saul*, having his Reſidence here; and *David* making ſome Stay here when he fled from *Abſalom*, 2 *Sam.* ii. 8, 12. xvii. 27. It was one of the *Levitical* Cities, xxi. 37.

Unto Debir.] There was another City of this Name in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 15, 49. But this was (as S. *Hierom* and *Euſebius* tell us) a City of the *Ammonites* upon *Jordan.*

Ver. 27. *And in the Valley Beth-aram, and Beth-nimrah.*] Having mentioned the Frontier Places, he comes to ſpeak of thoſe Cities which were in the midſt of the Country. And theſe two are mentioned, *Numb.* xxxii. 36. The latter of which, here called *Beth-nimrah* (*Domus Pardorum*, as *Bochart* interprets it) is ſimply called *Nimra* in the *third* Verſe of that Chapter. And the Waters of *Nimrim* (*Iſa.* xv. 6.) ſeem to have been in the ſame Place; which *Moſes* and *Joſhua* ſay belonged to the *Gadites*; but *Iſaiah* and *Jeremiah* call it a City of the *Moabites.* Who in the Days of thoſe Prophets, after the Ten Tribes were carried captive, recovered thoſe Places. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 7.

And Succoth.] Which was the Place where *Jacob* fixed, after he had paſſed over *Jabbok*, in his Return from *Padan-Aram*, *Gen.* xxxiii. 17.

And Zaphon.] A Place which S. *Hierom* ſaith lay upon the River *Jordan.*

The reſt of the Kingdon of Sihon King of Heſhbon.] That is, all but that which was given to the *Reubenites.*

Jordan and his Border.] For Inſtance, the Country bordering upon *Jordan.*

Even unto the Edge of the Sea of Cinneroth, on the other Side Jordan Eaſtward.] To the extreme Part of the Lake, in After-times called *Geneſareth*; where the River *Jordan* came out of it on the South-Eaſt.

Ver. 28. *This is the Inheritance of the Children of Gad, after their Families, the Cities, and their Villages.*] Which are not all named, but they were in the Region here deſcribed.

Ver. 29. *And Moſes gave Inheritance unto the Half Tribe of Manaſſeh*, &c.] The Country which they conquered on the other Side *Jordan*, being too large for the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* alone, *Moſes* beſtowed what follows upon the Half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*; who did not deſire it, as far as I can find, (ſee *Numb.* xxxii. 1, 2.) but were thought fit to be joined with the other two Tribes, becauſe they were very numerous, (*Numb.* xxvi. 34.) and, it is likely, had great Store of Cattle, as the other had.

Ver. 30. *And their Coaſt was from Mahanaim.*] Mentioned before, *Ver.* 26.

All Baſhan, all the Kingdom of Og King of Baſhan.] This Kingdom conſiſted of three Parts, (*Deut.* iii. 13.) half of *Gilead*, *Baſhan*, and the Region of *Argob:* All which ſometimes are comprehended under the Name of *Baſhan*, becauſe it was the principal Part of this Kingdom.

And all the Towns of Jair, which are in Baſhan.] This is an Explication of what went before; for theſe Towns were in the fore-named Kingdon of *Baſhan*, and not diſtinct from it. Why they are called *the Towns of Jair*, *Moſes* gives an Account, *Numb* xxxii. 41.

Threeſcore Cities.] Which were in the Region of *Argob*, as we read *Deut.* iii. 4, 14.

Ver. 13. *And half Gilead.*] The other half, that was not given to the *Gadites*, *ver.* 25. This alſo is but an Explication of what he ſaid at the firſt; for *Gilead* was not diſtinct from the Kingdom of *Og* King of *Baſhan*; but a Part of it.

And Aſtaroth and Edrei, Cities of the Kingdom of Og in Baſhan.] Royal Cities, as is commonly thought, from xii. 4.

Were pertaining unto the Children of Machir, the Son of Manaſſeh.] All the Poſterity of *Manaſſeh* came from *Machir*; for he had no other Son beſide him, *Numb.* xxxii. 29. unto whoſe Children, that is, to one half of them, (as it is explained in the following Words) he gave this Part of that Kingdom, *Deut.* iii. 15.

Even to the one half of the Children of Machir, by their Families.] Among whom *Jair* and his Poſterity had the Honour to be reckoned, tho' he was of the Tribe of *Judah*; becauſe he was his Grandchild by his Daughter, and ſo inſtrumental in conquering this Country, that he had his Inheritance given him here, 1 *Chron.* ii. 21. *&c. Numb.* xxxiv. 41, 42.

Ver. 32. *Theſe are the Countries which Moſes did diſtribute for Inheritance in the Plains of Moab, on the other Side Jordan by Jericho Eaſtward.*] Which Countries, with their Bounds and Limits, are thus particularly deſcribed, that every Tribe might reſt ſatisfied with God's Appointment, and not invade their Brethrens Territories.

Ver. 33. *But unto the Tribe of Levi, Moſes gave not any Inheritance: The LORD God of Iſrael was their Inheritance, as he ſaid unto them.*] This had been noted before in this very Chapter, *ver*, 14. and is again noted, xiv. 3, 4. and again xviii. 7. Which frequent Repetition was for the Honour of this Tribe; and that the People might have the greater Regard to them, and Care of them.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND theſe are the Countries.*] *Viz.* Thoſe mentioned in the fifteenth, ſixteenth, and following Chapters; for this Chapter is but a kind of Preface to the Diviſion of the Land.

Which the Children of Iſrael inherited in the Land of Canaan.] Which was now conquered by *Joſhua*; as that of *Sihon* and *Og* had been by *Moſes*.

Which Eleazar the Prieſt, and Joſhua the Son of Nun, and the Heads of the Fathers of the Tribes of the Children of Iſrael diſtributed for Inheritance unto them.] According to the Command given by God to *Moſes*, *Numb.* xxxiv. 17, 18. Where the Names of the twelve *Heads* of the Tribes, or the *Princes* (as they are there called) are ſet down, *ver*, 19, 20, *&c.*

Ver. 2. *By Lot was their Inheritance.*] To take away all Occaſion of Controverſy, the Matter being determined by God.

As the LORD commanded by the Hand of Moſes.] *Numb.* xxvi. 55, 56. xxxiii. 54.

For the Nine Tribes, and for the Half Tribe.] Who were to be provided for in the Land of *Canaan*, as the other, it here follows, had been on the other Side *Jordan*.

Ver. 3. *For Moſes had given the Inheritance of two Tribes and an Half, on the other Side Jordan.*] This ſeems to argue a ſtrong Faith, which the nine Tribes and Half had in the Promiſe of God; that they were contented to ſee their Brethren put in actual Poſſeſſion of their Inheritance; when they were only in Hope of their Portion.

But unto the Levites gave he no Inheritance among them.] Neither on this Side *Jordan*, nor on the other; as was ſaid before, xiii. 33. and mentioned here again for the Reaſon following.

Ver. 4. *For the Children of Joſeph were two Tribes, Maneſſeh and Ephraim.*] The Privilege of the Firſt-born, was transferred from *Reuben*'s to *Joſeph* (1 *Chron.* v. 1, 2.) from whoſe two Sons ſprung two Tribes: So that there were ſtill twelve Tribes, without reckoning *Levi* for one, *Gen.* xlviii. 5, 6.

Therefore they gave no Part to the Levites in the Land.] Becauſe the Children of *Joſeph* ſucceeded in their room as the Vulgar *Latin* tranſlates the foregoing Words; that is, to make up the Number of *Twelve* Tribes.

Save Cities to dwell in.] Not for a Poſſeſſion, as *Conrad Pellicanus* obſerves, but only for an Habitation: For they could not ſell them, as their Brethren might their Poſſeſſions.

With their Suburbs for their Cattle, and for their Subſtance.] See *Numb.* xxxv. 2, 3, *&c.*

Ver. 5. *As the LORD commanded Moſes, ſo the Children of Iſrael did.*] That is aſſigned them Cities and Suburbs, xxi. 1, 2, *&c.*

And they divided the Land.] That is, when *Eleazar*, *Joſhua*, and the Princes had divided it.

Ver. 6. *Then the Children of Judah.*] Before they went to caſt Lots for the Diviſion of the Land, ſome of the Children of *Judah* interpoſed in the behalf of *Caleb*; coming along with him, I ſuppoſe, as Witneſſes to the Truth of what he alledged.

Came unto Joſhua in Gilgal.] Where the Tabernacle as yet was; for *Joſhua* had not removed his Camp from thence; and accordingly, here the Diviſion of the Land began to be made; tho' it was finiſhed at *Shiloh*, as we read *ch.* xviii.

And Caleb, the Son of Jephunneh the Kenezite, ſaid unto him.] This ſhews that he was the principal Perſon concerned in this Addreſs to *Joſhua*; tho' the reſt perhaps, who came along with him, were not only Witneſſes to the Truth of his Pretenſions, but came to deſire *Joſhua* to begin the Diviſion of the Land; the Tribe of *Judah*, now that the *Reubenites* were provided for, being the eldeſt of thoſe that wanted their Portion. Among whom, *Caleb* was not only a conſiderable Perſon, but one of thoſe Princes who were appointed by God to aſſiſt in the Diviſion of the Land, *Numb.* xxxiv. 19. and therefore would not be a Judge in his own Caſe, but have it ſettled before by *Joſhua*, the ſupreme Governour of God's People. Why he is called the *Kenezite*, is not eaſy to reſolve; nor is it certain, whether *Caleb* or *Jephunneh*

be called the *Kenezite*. But it comes to the ſame, whether the one or the other be ſo called, and the *Hebrew* Words will be either Conſtruction; yet St. *Hierom* and the LXX. take it to belong to *Caleb*, ſome of whoſe Anceſtors were called *Kenez*; which was certainly a Name very common in their Family. See xv. 17. and *Judg.* i. 13. And there is no Improbability in it, that *Kenez* was the Family of *Jephunneh*, from whence both he and his Son were called *Kenezites*.

Thou knoweſt the Thing that the LORD ſaid unto Moſes, the Man of God.] He gives him this Title, that what he order'd might be thought of greater Authority, *i. e.* a Divine Command.

Concerning me and thee, in Kadeſh-Barnea.] Which he was confident *Joſhua* could not but remember, being concerned at it as well as himſelf. See *Numb.* xiv. 24, 30, 38.

Ver. 7. *Forty Years old was I when Moſes the Servant of the LORD ſent me from Kadeſh-Barnea, to ſpy out the Land.*] He mentions this, partly to ſhew that *Moſes* took care to ſend Perſons of ſome Experience, able to make Obſervations, and judge aright; as well as in their full Strength of Body, able to travel and take Pains. Such, it is probable, were all the reſt, as well as he; Men grown up every way to Maturity, both of Judgment and bodily Vigour.

And I brought him Word again, as it was in my Heart.] Delivered my true Opinion freely and ſincerely, without either Fear or Flattery, *Numb.* xiii. 30.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheleſs, my Brethren that went with me, made the Heart of the People melt.*] *Numb.* xiii. 31, 32. xiv. 1, *&c.* which did not diſcourage him at all from ſpeaking the Truth.

But I wholly followed the LORD my God.] This Teſtimony GOD himſelf gave him, *Numb.* xiv. 24. which he might therefore mention without any Breach of Modeſty, it being the Ground of his preſent Petition.

Ver. 9. *And Moſes ſware on that Day, ſaying, Surely the Land whereon thy Feet have trodden, ſhall be thine Inheritance, and thy Childrens for ever, becauſe thou haſt wholly followed the LORD my God.*] See *Deut.* i. 34, 35, 36. This was firſt pronounced by GOD himſelf, and that with an Oath, *Numb.* xiv. 21, 24. See my Notes there. Some think *his treading on it with his Feet*, was his taking Poſſeſſion, and being admitted the Owner of that Land; according to the preſent Notion of Civil Lawyers, who will have *poſſeſſio* to be as much as *pedis poſitio*. But this is only a modern Conceit.

Ver. 10. *And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he ſaid, theſe forty and five Years.*] Thus far had he fulfilled his Words, in preſerving him alive till the Country was conquer'd, wherein he promis'd him a certain Portion; ſo that he wanted only actual Poſſeſſion of it.

Even ſince the LORD ſpake this Word unto Moſes while the Children of Iſrael wandered in the Wilderneſs.] Which was thirty and eight Years.

And now, lo, I am this Day fourſcore and five Years old.] It ſeems then that ſeven Years were paſs'd ſince they came into *Canaan*, before they began to divide the Land; which was not till a Year after the War was ended. See xi. 18. As for the Time that followed between the complete Diviſion of the Land, and the Death of *Joſhua*, it is not ſet down in this Book; nor have we Words in it, from whence to make a probable Conjecture about it, but only thoſe xxiii. 1. where it is ſaid, *A long time after God had given them Reſt, Joſhua waxed old*, &c. Which ſhews it is not to be reſtrain'd to ſo ſhort a Time as *ſeven*, or *ten* Years, but may rather be thought *twenty*, as *Du Pin* computes it.

Ver. 11. *As yet I am as ſtrong this Day, as I was in the Day that Moſes ſent me.*] As able, both in Body and Mind, to undertake, and to diſpatch any Buſineſs, as he was forty and five Years ago: Which was a wonderful Bleſſing of God; and an Argument his Petition ſhould be granted; becauſe he wanted neither Courage nor Strength, to aſſault and take the Place he deſired, if it were ſtill in the *Canaanites* Hands; or to defend and preſerve it, if it were already conquer'd.

As my Strength was then, even ſo is my Strength now, for War, both to go out and to come in.] This is a Repetition of what he affirm'd; as is uſual, when a Thing is certain and undoubted. Concerning this Phraſe, *go out and come in*, ſee *Numb.* xxvii. 17. And this ſhews the Force and Efficacy of GOD's Promiſe, confirm'd by an Oath; which (as Dr. *Jackſon* well obſerves) was as remarkable in preſerving his Life and Strength, as in bringing Mortality on others, who he ſware ſhould not enter into *Canaan*.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore give me this Mountain, whereof the LORD ſpake in that Day.*] The mountainous Country where *Hebron* lay, xi. 21. which was the Place promis'd to him, as I obſerv'd upon *Numb.* xiv. 24.

For thou heareſt in that Day.] The LXX. and the *Vulgar Latin* refer this to what goes before, and make the Senſe to be, as if he had ſaid, *in thy Hearing*, GOD promiſed this Country to me.

How the Anakims were there, and that the Cities were great and ſtrong.] The *Vulgar* makes the Senſe to be, *where the Anakims are*, &c. See *Numb.* xiii. 28, 32, 33. He mentions *Cities* in the Plural Number; for we read of two other, beſide *Hebron*, which they poſſeſs'd. xi. 21.

If ſo be the LORD will be with me.] Theſe are not Words of doubting; but a pious Acknowledgment that nothing could be ſucceſsfully enterprized, without GOD's gracious Aſſiſtance; of which, no queſtion, he was very confident. The *Targum* hath it, *If ſo be the Word of the LORD will be my Helper:* Which is the conſtant Language of that Paraphraſt in all this Book, upon ſuch Occaſions. See i. 9, 17. vi. 27. x. 42. xxiii. 3, 10.

Then I ſhall be able to drive them out, as the LORD ſaid.] Which whether it was done now, or before, when *Joſhua* conquer'd the Country, is a Diſpute. See x. 37.

Ver. 13. *And Joshua bleſſed him.*] Acknowledg'd his Deſerts, and beſeech'd God to proſper him in his Undertaking, and gave his Conſent that he ſhould have this Country: For then God is ſaid *to bleſs* a Man, when he beſtows his Benefits upon him; and we do not *bleſs* others to purpoſe, unleſs we do what they deſire. Accordingly it here follows:

And gave unto Caleb the Son of Jephunneh, Hebron for an Inheritance.] That is, the Country about it: For *Hebron* itſelf was a City of the Prieſts, xxi. 11, 13. where it is expreſly ſaid *ver.* 12. the Fields and the Villages of it were given to *Caleb.*

Ver. 14 *Hebron therefore became the Inheritance of Caleb unto this Day, becauſe he wholly followed the* LORD *God of Iſrael.*] God rewarded his Fidelity by this ſingular Gift, which he beſtowed upon him before the Land was divided by Lot.

Ver. 15. *And the Name of Hebron before was Kirjath- Arba.*] See upon *Gen.* xxiii. 2.

Which Arba was a great Man among the Anakims.] Of great Authority, as well as Strength. So the Word *Gadol* is uſed, *Gen.* xxiv. 35. and ſo we call Men at this Day, who are of great Power, by the Name of *Magnates.* He was the Father of *Anak*, xv. 13. and xxi. 11. who either built this City, or fortify'd it, or made it his Royal Seat (being a kind of Prince among them) and perhaps was here bury'd; which made it be call'd his City. See upon *Numb.* xiii. 33.

And the Land had Reſt from War.] Which gave them Liberty to divide the Land. This was ſaid before, xi. *ult.* and now repeated, perhaps to ſhew that what is here reported concerning *Caleb*, was done ſome time ago, at the End of the War; and now mention'd to ſhew that he held this Portion of Land by a Divine Donation, before the Country was divided by Lot.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. THIS *then was the Lot of the Tribe of the Children of Judah.*] The firſt Lot that came up was for the Tribe of *Judah*; in Honour of it, and that the Prophecy of *Jacob* might be fulfill'd concerning his Pre-eminence among his Brethren. The Manner of drawing theſe Lots, ſee upon *Numb.* xxvi. 55, 56. Which it is apparent could not be done, without a precedent Survey of the whole Country. A Deſcription of which being laid before *Joſhua*, he, and *Eleazer*, and the Princes, divided it into nine Shares and a half, as equal as they could; conſidering not merely the Quantity of Ground, but the Quality alſo, and Goodneſs of the Soil. This Survey is not mention'd here; but it is afterward, xviii. 4. and therefore is to be ſuppoſed when they began to divide the Land.

By their Families.] The Lot was only of ſo much Land (bound as follows) for the whole Tribe. Unto every Family of which a Portion was aſſign'd by *Joſhua*, and the reſt, who were appointed to ſee that none were neglected, and that they had every one a juſt Proportion. Therefore the Lot for each Tribe was not ſo unalterably fix'd and determin'd, but that it might be enlarged or diminiſh'd; by taking from that Tribe which had too much, and giving it to that which had too little. See xix. 9.

Even to the Border of Edom, the Wilderneſs of Zin, Southward, was the uttermoſt Part of the South Coaſt.] See *Numb.* xxxiv. 2. *Edom* lay upon the Wilderneſs of *Zin*; and the Lot of *Judah* extended as far as that; which was the South Part of the Land. And indeed the Tribe of *Judah* (as *Conr. Pellicanus* obſerves) had half of the South Part of the whole Land of *Canaan* for their Portion; as the Tribes of *Joſeph* (*Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*) had the North Part; with whom the reſt of the Tribes were intermix'd, *viz. Simeon*, *Benjamin*, and *Dan*, with the Tribe of *Judah*; and *Iſſachar*, *Zabulon*, *Aſher*, and *Naphtali* with the Portion of *Joſeph.*

Ver. 2. *And their South Border was from the Shore of the Salt Sea.*] The foregoing Verſe was a ſhort Deſcription of the Length of *Judah*'s Country: Now he deſcribes the Bounds of it on all Quarters: And here ſaith, that the *Salt*, or *Dead Sea* was the Bounds of it on the South-Eaſt. For ſo it was, as here follows:

From the Bay that looketh Southward] In the *Hebrew* from *the Tongue*; which ſignifies either a *Creek* or a *Promontory*, as ſome underſtand it, pointing to the South-Eaſt. See *Numb.* xxxiv. 3.

Ver. 3. *And it went out to the South-ſide of Maalehacrabbim.*] There was a Mountain ſo call'd, from the Multitude of *Scorpions* that were there. It lay at the End of this Lake, *Numb.* xxxiv. 4. From whence the Country of *Acrabatene* had its name, as *Bochart* thinks, (ſee *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 5. Cap. 29.) which lay near the Country of *Edom*, 1 *Maccab.* v. 3.

And paſſed along to Zin, and aſcended upon the South Side unto Kadeſh-barnea.] This is the very Deſcription of the Southern Bounds of the promis'd Land, *Numb.* xxxiv. 4.

And paſſed along to Hezron.] There is nothing ſaid of this Place in the Book of *Numbers*; but it appears to have been a City from the 25th Verſe of this Chapter.

And went up to Adar.] This Place is mention'd in the forenamed *Numb.* xxxiv. 4. and call'd *Hazaradar.* So that *Hezron* lay between *Kadeſh barnea* and this Town.

And fetch'd a Compaſs to Karkaa.] This Place is not mention'd in *Numbers*, or any where elſe; but lay beyond *Adar*, not in a right Line, but bending towards the Weſt.

Ver. 4. *And from thence it paſſed towards Azmon.*] This is mention'd in the fore-named Place, *Numb.* xxxiv. 4.

And went out unto the River of Egypt; and the going out of that Coaſt was at the Sea.] That is, the Mediterranean Sea. See *Numb.* xxxiv. 5.

This ſhall be your South Coaſt.] From the Tongue of the Salt Sea to the Mediterranean.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *And the East Border was the Salt Sea, even unto the End of Jordan.*] Having described the Southern Limits, he sets down the Eastern; which beginning where the Southern did, at the Tongue of the Salt Sea, reached to the other End of it, where *Jordan* falls into this Sea. So that the whole Length of this Sea, from one End of it to the other, was the Eastern Bounds of *Judah*'s Country.

And their Border at the North Quarter, was from the Bay of the Sea, at the uppermost Part of Jordan.] It had its Beginning where the Eastern Border ended, *viz.* at the Mouth of *Jordan*, where it runs into the Salt Sea.

Ver. 6. *And the Border went up to Beth-hoglah.*] A City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, xviii. 21.

And passed along by the North of Beth-arabah.] Another City in the same Tribe, xviii. 21. though there was one in this Tribe of the same Name, (*ver.* 61. of this Chapter) which some take to be the same City, which lay in the Frontier of both Tribes.

And the Border.] That is, this Northern Border.

Went up to the Stone of Bohan, the Son of Reuben.] We find mention made of this Stone again in xviii. 17. where he speaks of the Bounds of the Tribe of *Benjamin* It was but lately laid here, since the *Israelites* came into this Country; but by whom, or of what it was a Monument, is not known. It is certain *Bohan* did not dwell here; for the *Reubenites* had their Portion on the other Side of *Jordan*; but perhaps he performed some famous Exploit in this Place, or died and was buried here; being one of those that came over *Jordan* to assist their Brethren in the Conquest of *Canaan*.

Ver. 7. *And the Border went up towards Debir.*] Which is mentioned in no other Place: For it is not the same with that *Debir* in *ver.* 15. which was in the South near *Hebron*; but this in the Northern Parts.

From the Valley of Achor.] Mentioned, vii. 24, 26.

And so Northward looking towards Gilgal.] Having *Gilgal* on the North of it. Which is to be understood, not of that *Gilgal* near *Jericho*, but of that Place called *Geliloth*, xviii. 17. which was distant from thence, as appears by what follows.

That is before the going up to Adummim.] A Place which stood upon a rising Ground; which some think was in the Tribe of *Judah*, others of *Benjamin*.

Which was on the South Side of the River.] Or of the Brook; which some take to be the Brook *Cedron*.

And the Border passed toward the Waters of En-shemesh, and the Goings-out thereof were at En-rogel.] This Place, it is evident (1 *Kings* i. 9.) was near *Jerusalem*; which shews that *Gilgal* before mentioned, was not the Place where they were now encamped.

Ver. 8. *And the Border went up.*] For it was an Ascent from the Salt Sea to this Country; especially when they came nigh to this Place.

By the Valley of the Son of Hinnom.] A famous Place on the East Side of *Jerusalem*; and so delightfully shady, that it invited them to idolatrous Worship in this Valley, whereby it became infamous, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 10. *Jerem.* vii. 32. *Hinnom*, in all Probability, was some eminent Person, in ancient Times, who was the Owner of this Valley: For it is sometimes called the Valley *of the Children of Hinnom*; which shews his Posterity were planted here. After it was polluted by Idolatry, it became a Place where they threw all their Filth, and Excrements, and dead Carcasses; and where there was a continual Fire, the *Jews* say, to burn Bones, and such sordid Things, as were thrown here; from whence, they think, it became the Name for *Hell-Fire*.

Unto the South Side of the Jebusite.] *i. e.* The City of the *Jebusites*.

The same is Jerusalem.] Which is called *Jebusi*, in the last Verse of the eighteenth Chapter, and *Jebus Judg.* xix. 10. Especially that Part of it fortified by the *Jebusites*, which was called Mount *Sion*, and lay on the South of *Jerusalem*.

And the Border went up to the Top of the Mountain.] Which is thought to be Mount *Moriah*.

That lieth before the Valley of Hinnom Westward.] It was Westward to the Valley of *Hinnom*; and so had that Valley on the East of it.

Which is at the End of the Valley of the Giants Northward.] Which Mountain had on the North-part the Valley of *Rephaim* (as the Word is in the *Hebrew*) which was in the Tribe of *Judah*, extending itself from Mount *Moriah*, as far as *Bethlehem*, as *Josephus* tells us.

Ver. 9. *And the Border was drawn from the Top of the Hill to the Fountain of the Water Nephtoah.*] Where this Fountain, or Well of Water was, cannot be known; for it is no where mentioned but here, and in xviii. 15

And went out to the Cities of Mount Ephron.] This Place also is unknown; for it cannot be that in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, mentioned 1 *Chron* xiii. 19.

And the Border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjath-jearim.] Called *ver.* 60. and xviii. 14. *Kirjath-baal*; there being, it is likely, a Temple of *Baal* in this Place, whose Name the *Israelites* changed into *Kirjath-jearim*; which signifies, *urbs sylvarum*, because of the goodly Trees hereabouts, which made it the fitter for idolatrous Uses.

Ver. 10. *And the Border compassed from Baalah Westward.*] Not in a direct Line, but bending toward the West.

Unto Mount Seir.] Not that Mount belonging to the *Edomites*, but another of that Name.

And passed along unto the Side of Mount Jearim, which is Chesalon on the North Side.] This was a woody Country, as appears from the Name of this Mountain, and from Mount *Seir* also; which signifies as much as *hairy*.

And went down to Beth-shemesh.] A known Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, and a City of the Priests, xxi. 16.

And passed on to Timnah.] Another City in the same Tribe, *ver.* 17. but afterward given to the Tribe of *Dan*, xix. 43.

Ver. 11. *And the Border went out to the Side of Ekron Northward.*] This City belonged to the *Philiſtines*; but fell to the Lot of *Judah*, as did alſo *Aſhdod* and *Gaza*, *Ver.* 45, 46, 47. But afterward *Ekron* was given to the *Danites*, as the forenamed Place tells us, xix. 43.

And the Border was drawn to Shicron, and paſſed along to Mount Baalah, and went out unto Jabneel.] It cannot now be known where theſe three Places were; only it appears by what follows, that they were not far from the Coaſt of the *Philiſtines*.

And the Goings-out of the Border were at the Sea.] That is, the Northern Border ended at the *Mediterranean* Sea; where there was a City called *Jamnia*; which ſome think the ſame with *Jabneel*.

Ver. 12. *And the Weſt Border was to the great Sea, and the Coaſt thereof.*] All along that Coaſt of the *Mediterranean*, unto the River of *Egypt*; where the Weſt Border met with the Southern, *Ver.* 4.

This is the Coaſt of the Children of Judah round about, according to their Families.] That is, thus their Lot was bounded on all Sides, in the firſt Draught of it. Which being afterward found too large, it was contracted into a narrower Compaſs, that more Room might be made for the Tribe of *Simeon*, who had Part of this Lot given them; as ſome other Places were added out of it, to the Tribes of *Benjamin* and *Dan*; as will appear afterwards.

Ver. 13. *And unto Caleb the Son of Jephunneh, he gave a Part among the Children of Judah.*] Or rather, he (that is, *Joſhua*) *had given* him a Part in this Country, which by Lot fell to the Tribe of *Judah*. See the foregoing Chapter, xiv. 6, 7, *&c.* where we read how *Caleb* petitioned for it, and founded his Petition upon a Grant made to him of it, long ago, by GOD himſelf.

According to the Commandment of the LORD to Joſhua.] GOD promiſed it by *Moſes*; and it appears from theſe Words, that *Joſhua* had an Order from GOD to make it good.

Even the City of Arba the Father of Anak, which is Hebron.] See xiv. 15. This is here again particularly remembred, and an Addition made to it, for this Reaſon; that *Joſhua* having deſcribed the Bounds of the Country of *Judah*, and intending to ſet down the particular Cities which were included in it, and diſtributed among them (as he had juſt before ſaid, *Ver.* 12.) *according to their Families*; it might be remembred, that there were two Cities, or rather the Territories about them, given to two Families, antecedent to this Diſtribution made by him, *Eleazar* and the Princes. Which being a Matter fit to remain for ever upon Record, and to be known to all Poſterity, he inſerts it here at large, in this Deſcription of the Portion of *Judah*; of which, it is likely, every Family of that Tribe had a Map in their Houſes; that they knowing their Limits, might both preſerve them, and keep within them.

Ver. 14. *And Caleb drove thence.*] Not by his own Power alone, but by the Confederate Army of the Tribe of *Judah* and *Simeon*, (*Judg.* i. 3, 9, *&c.*) in which, it is probable, he had a principal Command; and led on that Party, which aſſaulted this City. See x. 36, 37. xi. 21.

The three Sons of Anak, Sheſhai, and Ahiman, and Talmai, the Children of Anak.] Whom he had ſeen five and forty Years ago, and was not at all affrighted at them. See *Numb.* xiii. 22. and *Judg.* i. 10, *&c.*

Ver. 15. *And he went up thence to the Inhabitants of Debir.*] See x. 38, 39.

And the Name of Debir before was Kirjath-Sepher.] See *Judg.* i. 11, 12. It is called alſo *Kirjath-Sanna*, *Ver.* 49. of this Chapter; which hath the ſame Signification: For *Sunna* (as *Bochart* obſerves, Lib. 2. *Canaan*, Cap. 17.) in the *Arabick* Language, is *Learning*, or *the Law*. The *Chaldee* there calls it *Kirjath-arche*; which he tranſlates *urbs archivorum*, the City where the ancient Records of theſe Nations were kept. All which ſhews the Conjecture of ſome very learned Men is not improbable, who think this City in thoſe Times was the Seat of Learning, as *Athens* was among the *Greeks* in future Ages: Inſomuch, that *Grotius* takes this City to be the ſame with that which *Xenophon* calls Φοινίκων γυμνάσιον, *the School of the* Phœnicians. But, as the Word γυμνάσιον in *Xenophon*'s Days did not ſignify a School of Learning, but a Place deſigned for Exerciſes of the Body; ſo we do not read of any famous Place in that Country, to which Men reſorted in his Time for Study.

Ver. 16. *And Caleb ſaid.*] Made Proclamation, I ſuppoſe, throughout the Army, which he led againſt *Debir*.

He that ſmiteth Kirjath-Sepher, and taketh it.] Aſſaults this Fortreſs, and poſſeſſeth himſelf of it.

To him will I give Achſah my Daughter to Wife.] With this Place, I ſuppoſe, for her Dowry.

Ver. 17. *And Othniel the Son of Kenaz, the Brother of Caleb, took it.*] He was ſtirred up by the Spirit of GOD, it is probable, (as he was when he was made Judge of *Iſrael*, *Judg.* iii. 9, 10.) to attack this Place with an extraordinary Courage; in which the Providence of GOD appeared (as *Caleb* hoped it would) in beſtowing his Daughter upon a worthy Perſon, and keeping the Inheritance in his own Tribe.

And he gave him Achſah his Daughter to Wife.] Some think this was not lawful, becauſe he was her Uncle: But this is a Miſtake, for *Othniel* was not *Caleb*'s Brother, but *Kenaz*, who was *Othniel*'s Father. For *Caleb* is conſtantly called the Son of *Jephunneh*, and *Othniel* the Son of *Kenaz*. Therefore they had not the ſame Father, but were very near of Kin; which is all the Word Brother ſignifies in many Places.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs, as ſhe came unto him.*] As ſhe was brought from her Father's Houſe to her Huſband's; according to the accuſtomed manner. See *Selden*, in his *Uxor. Hebr.* L. 2. Cap. 11.

That ſhe moved him to aſk of her Father a Field.] Deſired her Huſband, unto whom ſhe thought her Father at this time would deny nothing,

nothing, to beſtow a Field upon her. Or, perhaps, ſhe moved him to give her Leave to aſk it of her Father; as ſhe did, either by his Permiſſion, or by his Deſire; who might tell her, it was more proper for her to aſk it, than himſelf.

And ſhe lighted off her Aſs.] Upon Which they rode then in thoſe Countries; having no Horſes, nor Mules, till After-times. And her lighting down, was in Reverence to her Father; unto whom ſhe addreſſed herſelf in an humble Poſture.

And Caleb ſaid to her, What wouldeſt thou?] He ſeems to have prevented her Requeſt; knowing, by her Poſture, ſhe had ſomething to deſire of him. But *Ludov. de Dieu* takes it quite otherwiſe; that when ſhe came to her Huſband's Houſe, ſhe did not alight from her Aſs, but continued ſtill ſitting upon it. Which her Father obſerving, and aſking her the Reaſon, why ſhe did not come down and go to her Huſband; ſhe told him, ſhe had firſt a thing to beg of him. And thus both the LXX. and the Vulgar tranſlate it, as if ſhe did not alight, but ſighed and cried, ἐκ τῦ ὄνυ, from the Aſs on which ſhe ſat.

Ver. 19. *Who anſwered, Give me a Bleſſing.*] Beſtow a Gift upon me, as the Word *Bleſſing* is uſed, *Gen.* xxxiii. 11. or, make my Happineſs compleat.

For thou haſt given me a South Land.] A dry Country; being both mountainous, and towards the South; that is, towards the Deſarts of *Arabia*, from whence very hot and ſcorching Winds were wont to blow.

Give me alſo Springs of Water.] A Field hard by, wherein were Springs of Water: For it was not merely the Springs ſhe begged, but the Ground in which they were; as appears from the foregoing Verſe, where ſhe moved her Huſband to aſk *a Field.*

And he gave her the upper Springs, and the nether Springs.] Whereby that dry Ground might be watered, and made fruitful. He ſeems to have given her more than ſhe deſired; not only thoſe Springs that were in the Mountain, but thoſe which were below alſo. That ſo neither the riſing Ground, nor the Plain, might want Water; as *Arias Montanus* expounds it.

Ver. 20. *This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Judah, according to their Families.*] Now follows an Account of the Cities within the Lot of this Tribe; which were aſſigned to their ſeveral Families, after *Hebron*, which was the principal of them (for here *David* reigned over the Tribe of *Judah* alone, ſeven Years) was given to *Caleb.* Which the *Jews* generally think he did not get into his Poſſeſſion till after the Death of *Joſhua*; as is related in the Book of *Judges.* See there, i. 11, 12, 13, *&c.*

Ver. 21. *And the uttermoſt Cities of the Tribe of the Children of Judah.*] Thoſe that were in the Confines: for he doth not ſeem to number all that were in the Heart of the Country. So the *Jews* think; tho' the Truth is, as will appear in the following Part of the Chapter, he only begins with the outmoſt Cities, but afterwards proceeds to thoſe that were in the midſt of the Country.

Towards the Coaſt of Edom Southward.] He begins with thoſe that lay on the South Side of the Country; which was the Border he firſt deſcribed, *Ver.* 1, 2.

Kabzeel.] Where that valiant Perſon *Benajah* was born, who ſmote two Lion-like Men of *Moab*, 1 *Chron.* xi. 22.

And Eder.] Which *Euſebius* calls Ἐδραί. But he hath no more to ſay of it; nor of *Jagur*, and the reſt that follow, but that they were in the Tribe of *Judah:* Nor ſhall I go about to enquire further after every particular City mentioned; the Number of which is ſummed up, *Ver.* 32.

Ver. 32. *All the Cities are twenty and nine, with their Villages.*] If the foregoing Places be told, there are no leſs than thirty and eight of them. But there were only twenty and nine of them (as ſome ſolve the Difficulty) that could be called Cities; the other being only Villages. Or, the Meaning is (as the *Jews* generally think) that twenty and nine only belonged to the Tribe of *Judah*; the reſt being afterward given to the Tribe of *Simeon*, as we find in the nineteenth Chapter. Where nine of theſe very Cities here mentioned, are ſaid to be in that Tribe, *viz. Beer-ſheba*, *Moladah*, *Hazar-ſhual*, *Baalah*, *Azem*, *Hormah*, *Zigleg*, *Ain*, and *Rimmon.* Which *nine*, with the twenty and nine here ſet down as the Sum Total, make juſt thirty and eight. And this ſeems to be the truer Account, becauſe the Villages of other Cities are mentioned, *Ver.* 36. and 41. and yet none of them ſet down by Name, as is ſuppoſed in the firſt Interpretation of theſe Words.

Ver. 33. *And in their Valley.*] Or in the Plain, below the Mountains: But which way, I ſhall not examine; becauſe the Geography of this Country will be done, I hope, by a better Hand.

Ver. 36. *Fourteen Cities, with the Villages.*] There are fifteen in all, if we take the two laſt for diſtinct Cities. But, in all Probability, there might be one, called indifferently *Gedera*, or (as we tranſlate it in the Margin) *Gederothaim.* Perhaps there might be a double City, the Old and the New: Or, *Gederothaim* was an Appendix to *Gederah*, as the Borough of *Southwark* is to the City of *London.*

Ver. 37. *Zenan, and Hadaſhah*, &c.] I ſuppoſe theſe Cities, and all that follow to the forty-firſt Verſe, lay alſo in the Valley, or Plain.

Ver. 41. *Sixteen Cities with their Villages.*] There are exactly that Number, among which *Mizpeth*, *Lachiſh*, *Beth-dagon*, *Eglon*, and *Makkedah*, were the chief. They ſeem to have been in the Weſtern Part of this Country, near the Tribe of *Dan*; for the two firſt in the former Diviſion (*Eſhtaol* and *Zoreah*, *Ver.* 33.) were afterwards given to the *Danites*, xix. 41.

Ver. 42. *Libnah and Ether*, &c.] Theſe two Cities, and thoſe that follow unto *Ver.* 45. were in another Diviſion of the plain Country: Among which, *Lebnah*, *Keilah*, *Achzib*, and *Mareſhah*, were the moſt noble.

Ver. 44. *Nine Cities, with their Villages.*] But *Ether* and *Aſhan* were afterwards given to the Tribe of *Simeon*, xix. 7. which may ſeem a Prejudice to the Interpretation which the *Jews* give of *ver.* 32. Unleſs we ſuppoſe theſe two Places to be different from them, tho' called by the ſame Name: As here is Mention made of *Aſhnah* (*ver.* 43) and there is one of the ſame Name in the former Diviſion, *ver.* 33.

Ver. 45. *Ekron, with her Towns, and her Villages.*] The *Hebrew* Word for *Towns* ſignifies *Daughters*; by which ſeem to be meant leſſer Cities, depending on *Ekron*, with their Villages belonging to them. *Gath* and *Askalon*, perhaps, were ſuch at this Time; tho', in future Times, they grew up to be of more Conſideration; which may be the Reaſon they are not here mentioned. For this, and the two following Verſes, deſcribe the Lot of *Judah* in the Weſt, upon the *Mediterranean Sea*; which comprehended all from *Ekron* to the River of *Egypt*.

Ver. 48. *And in the Mountains.*] From the Plain he goes to the Mountains; and diſtributes the Cities there into five Diviſions.

Shamir and Jattir, &c.] In this Diviſion there were eleven Cities; among which was *Kirjath-Sanna* (*ver.* 49.) which had three Names. See *ver.* 15.

Ver. 52. *Arab and Dumah*, &c.] In this Diviſion there were nine Cities, *ver.* 54 Which were in the Mountainous Country, in the Middle of *Judæa*; as thoſe mentioned before and thoſe that follow were. And therefore, it is not true which the *Jews* ſay, that he reckons up only the Cities in the Skirts of the Country; with which indeed he began. See *ver.* 21.

Ver. 55. *Maon Carmel*, &c.] This, and the two following Verſes, contain an Account of Ten Cities and their Villages, in another Diviſion, two of which were near together; for *Nabal* dwelt in *Maon*, and had great Poſſeſſions in *Carmel*, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 2. There was another *Maon* in the Deſarts of *Jeſhimon*, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 1. as there was another among the *Moabites*, called *Beth-Maon*, the Houſe or Dwelling of *Maon*. The People of which, called *Maonites* and, as ſome think, *Mehunims* (*Judg.* x. 10, 12. 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 7.) were very powerful, and ſome time oppreſſed the *Iſraelites*. And there was likewiſe another *Carmel*; for this is not the Place where *Elijah* built an Altar and offered Sacrifices, when he ſlew the Prophets of *Baal* (1 *Kings* xviii.) but a Place far diſtant from it; where *Saul* made himſelf a Place when he returned from the Conqueſt of the *Amalekites*, (1 *Sam.* xv. 12.) that is, encamped, as ſome will have it, and divided the Spoil, or built a triumphant Arch, as St. *Hierom* interprets: And where *Nabal* kept ſo many Sheep, as are mentioned in the Place fore-named; and is the Place the Prophets mean (as *Bochart* conjectures) when they ſpeak of the Paſtures of *Carmel Jer.* l. 19. *Amos* i. 2. *Mic.* vii. 14. See *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 48.

Ver. 57. *Cain, Gibeah, and Timnah*, &c.] The firſt of theſe Cities, *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks, hath the ſame Name with that called *Kinah*, *ver.* 22. tho' it be in a different Place. And indeed, in this Diviſion, conſiſting of Ten Cities, there are two whoſe Names we had before, when he ſpeaks of thoſe in the Skirts of the Country, *viz. Ziph* and *Zanoah*. See *ver.* 24, 34. Which ſhews there were many Cities in the ſame Country of the ſame Name.

Gibeah and Timnah.] Are known Places. See *Gen.* xxxviii. 12.

Ver. 58. *Halhul, Beth-zur*, &c.] In this and in the following Verſe, are contained a ſmall Diviſion of ſix Cities; the moſt eminent of which was *Beth-zur* which lay in the Road from *Hieruſalem* to *Hebron*, about twenty Miles from it, as St *Hierom* tells us.

Ver. 60. *Kirjath-baal*, &c.] Here are only two Cities in this Diviſion, the firſt of which was called *Kirjath-jearim*, as we read xviii. 14. and *Baala*, and *Baal-Judah*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 2. 1 *Chron.* xiii. 6.

Ver. 61. *In the Wilderneſs.*] So the *Hebrews* call thoſe Parts of the Country, which were but thinly inhabited; as this was, wherein there were but ſix Cities. Of this Wilderneſs of *Judah*, we read frequently in the following Books of Scripture; ſeveral Parts of which are mentioned in the Hiſtory of *David*, when he fled for fear of *Saul*, and lurked in this Country: Particularly in the Wilderneſs of *Ziph*, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 14. and of *Maon*, *ver.* 24, 25. and of *Engeddi*, one of the Places here mentioned, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 1. and there was a Part of the Wilderneſs not far from *Carmel*, before-mentioned, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 14.

Ver. 62. *The City of Salt.*] Some take this to be *Zoar*, the little City unto which *Lot* was permitted to flee, at the Deſtruction of *Sodom*: Which is called the City of *Salt*; either becauſe it ſtood near the Salt-Sea, or becauſe *Lot's* Wife was hereabouts turned into a Pillar of Salt.

Ver. 63. *As for the Jebuſites, the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, the Children of Judah could not drive them out.*] This ſuppoſes that *Jeruſalem* belonged to the Children of *Judah*; and ſo it did in part, tho' not the whole; for ſome of it was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, as ſhall be obſerved in its proper Place. The King of this City *Joſhua* had vanquiſhed, together with other four Kings of the *Amorites* who joined in Battle with him, *Joſh.* x. 5, 23. and in the Concluſion of that Chapter, he is ſaid (*ver.* 42.) to have *taken all theſe Kings and their Land at one time.* But if *Jeruſalem* was then taken, as well as the Land about it, the Strong-hold of *Zion* remained ſtill in the Hands of the *Jebuſites*. And the *Iſraelites* not being able preſently to people all the Cities they had taken, the *Jebuſites* recovered the City of *Jeruſalem*, and got Poſſeſſion of it again; from whence the Children of *Judah* expelled them after the Death of *Joſhua*, *Judg.* i. 8. But ſtill Mount *Zion* continued in their Hands, until the Reign of *David*.

But the Jebuſites dwelt with the Children of Judah, at Jeruſalem, unto this Day.] That is in the Fort of *Zion*, which was a Part of it; where they were ſo conſiderable, that the City was called the City of the *Jebuſites*, and its Name *Jebus*, *Judg.* xix. 10, 11. There can be no doubt, I think, that theſe *Jebuſites* were of the

the Seed of *Canaan*, they being conſtantly numbered among the ſeven Nations devoted to Deſtruction. Yet ſome of the *Jews* have a Conceit that the People here mentioned were derived from *Abimelech*, King of the *Philiſtines*; with whom their Forefather *Iſaac* made a ſolemn League; and therefore the Children of *Judah* did not expel them. So *Kimchi*. But this, it is evident, is a fooliſh Imagination: For why did they expel them at the laſt, as they did, if they were to be kind to them upon this Account?

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *THE Lot of the Children of Joſeph.*] That is, of *Ephraim*, and that half of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, which was not yet provided for. See *ver.* 4. One cannot but obſerve the Providence of God, in bringing up their Lot next to *Judah*'s. For as he had the Prerogative of being made the Chief of all *Jacob*'s Children, *Gen.* xlix. 10. ſo *Joſeph* had the Privilege of the Firſt-born transferred to his Family. And therefore they are conſidered before any of the other Tribes, except *Judah*.

Fell from Jordan by Jericho.] In the *Hebrew*, *went forth* from *Jordan*, by the City of *Jericho*. Which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*; which Tribe lay between the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

Unto the Water of Jericho, on the Eaſt.] This is juſtly thought to be the Water mentioned 2 *Kings* ii. 19, 20, 21. whoſe Spring *Eliſha* healed, by which the Plain of *Jericho* was watered. See *Joſephus*, Lib. 5. *de Bello Jud.* Cap. 4.

To the Wilderneſs that goeth up from Jericho throughout Mount Beth-el.] It appears from xviii. 12, 13. that this was the Wilderneſs of *Beth-aven*.

Ver. 2. *And goeth up from Beth-el to Luz.*] *Beth-el* was a Place ſo called, becauſe *Jacob* there had the famous Divine Viſion, mentioned *Gen.* xvii. It was nigh to the City *Luz*, as appears from the 19th Verſe of that Chapter; but was diſtinct from the City itſelf, being in the neighbouring Fields, where *Jacob* lay all Night; tho' being ſo near, it is likely afterward they became one City. But they who would hence infer, that this Book could not be written by *Joſhua*, becauſe *Luz* was built after his Death in the Land of the *Hittites* (*Judg.* i. 26.) do merely trifle: For it is plain he doth not ſpeak here of that *Luz*, but of the old one: For the Country of the *Hittites* belonged to *Hebron* and *Beerſheba*, and the neighbouring Places in the Land of *Judah*; unto which the Author of this Book could have no Reſpect here in the Deſcription of the Land of *Ephraim*. Therefore, when *Luz* and *Beth-el* are ſaid to be the ſame, (xviii. 13. and *Judg.* i. 23.) the Meaning can be no more, but that in Length of Time they were united; the Inhabitants of *Luz* going into *Beth-el*. And of ſuch Coalitions of two Cities into one, there are ſix hundred Examples, as *Huetius* ſpeaks in his *Demonſtr. Evang. Propoſ.* 4. and therefore, I think *Dupin* well tranſlates this whole Verſe in this manner, *From Beth-el-Luz the Border paſſeth along to Archi-ataroth.*

And paſſeth along unto the Borders of Archi to Ataroth.] Or rather, *the Borders of Archi-ataroth*, as both the LXX and the Vulgar tranſlate it; and as the Words are in the *Hebrew*; this being the ſame City which is afterward called *Ataroth*, *ver.* 7. it being uſual to cut off the former Part of the Names of Cities; as *Bochartus* obſerves in abundance of Inſtances; and gives this for one, in his *Phaleg.* Lib. 2. Cap. 24.

Ver. 3. *And goeth down Weſtward to the Coaſt of Japhtali.*] It is not known where this Place was, being no where elſe mentioned; but it was in the Weſtern Part of the Land, toward the *Mediterranean*.

Unto the Coaſt of Beth-horon the nether.] See x. 10.

And to Gezer.] This was one of the *Levitical* Cities in this Tribe of *Ephraim*, *Joſh.* xxi. 21. And, as *Iſ. Caſaubon* hath proved at large, it was, in all probability, the City which *Joſephus* and the Author of the Book of the *Maccabees* call *Gazara*; and is mentioned as a neighbouring City to *Joppa*, *Azotus*, and *Jamnia*. See his *Annot.* upon Lib. 16. *Strabonis.* P. 261, 262.

And the Goings-out thereof are at the Sea.] The Vulgar hath it, *at the Great Sea*: Which is certainly here meant; this being a ſhort Deſcription of the Lot of this Tribe from *Jordan* on the Eaſt, to the *Mediterranean* on the Weſt.

Ver. 4. *So the Children of Joſeph, Manaſſeh, and Ephraim, took their Inheritance.*] According to the following Meaſures. Which give a more particular Account of what is before ſaid in general.

Ver. 5. *And the Border of the Children of Ephraim, according to their Families*] And firſt, he ſhews what was given to *Ephraim*; reſerving the Deſcription of *Manaſſeh*'s Portion to the next Chapter.

Even the Border of their Inheritance on the Eaſt Side.] The North-Eaſt. For he deſcribes, tho' groſly, only the Breadth of this Lot from South to North.

Was Ataroth-Addar, unto Beth-horon the upper.] The firſt of thoſe was in the South, and the latter in the North.

Ver. 6. *And the Border went out toward the Sea.*] From *Beth-horon* the upper, this Northern Border went on one Side Weſtward, toward the *Mediterranean*.

To Michmethah on the North Side.] And on the other Side Eaſtward, towards *Jordan*. This is very obſcurely expreſſed; but it appears, from what follows, it muſt be thus interpreted.

And the Border went about Eaſtward unto Tannah-Shiloh.] Still proceeded further Eaſtward, unto this Place; the Name of which only is now known.

And paſſed by it on the Eaſt to Janohah.] Another Place Eaſterly, of which we are now ignorant. For there are no Records left to make us underſtand whereabouts in the Eaſt it was ſituated; which was perfectly underſtood when this Country was inhabited by the *Ephraimites*.

Ver. 7. *And it went down from Janohah to Ataroth, and Naarath, and came to Jericho.*] Not to the very City, for that belonged to *Benjamin*; but to the Country adjoining.

And went out at Jordan.] Which was the Eastern Bounds of this Country.

Ver. 8. *And the Border went out from Tappuah Westward, unto the River Kanah.*] He returns to describe the Length of it from East to West; if the River or Brook *Kanah*, be the same with the Brook *Cerith*, mentioned 1 *Kings* xvii. 3. And so not only *Adricomius* understands it, but that great Man *Bochartus*; who observes it was called the Brook *Cherith*, from the *Hebrew* Word *Cara*, which signifies to *eat* or *feed*, because here GOD commanded the Ravens to feed *Elijah*; and it was called *Kana*, from the Multitude of Reeds which grew there (and so the Vulgar here translate it, *the Valley of Reeds*) in which it may be supposed *Elijah* lay hid. *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. L. 2. C. 14. But there is so much to be objected against this Situation of the Brook *Kana*, that I must leave it in Suspense whether it were in the East, or in the West; and confess, with *Conradus Pellicanus*, that as none of the *Hebrews* or *Latins* have given a satisfactory Account of these four last Verses, so I do not pretend to it.

And the Goings-out thereof were at the Sea.] Where *Sea* alone is mentioned, it is commonly understood to signify the *Mediterranean*; which quite overthrows the Opinion, which makes *Kana* the same with *Cherith*. But the Vulgar here took it for the *Salt-Sea*, (adding the Word *Salsissimum*) which favours the fore-named Opinion.

This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of Ephraim by their Families.] A gross Description of it.

Ver. 9. *And the separate Cities for the Children of Ephraim, were among the Inheritance of the Children of Manasseh*, &c.] What these separate Cities were, cannot now be known, because we have not a particular Account given of all the Cities of this Tribe (as we had of *Judah*) but only of those, which were the Limits of their Country. But they seem to have been some Cities in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, which were inhabited by the Children of *Ephraim*, tho' the Territories about them belonged to the *Manassites*, and were occupied by them. See xvii. 8, 9.

Ver. 10. *And they drave not out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer, but the Canaanites dwell among the Ephraimites unto this Day.*] The Inhabitants of *Gezer* were properly *Canaanites*; who dwelt unto the Sea-Coast, where *Gezer* was situated. See *Ver.* 3. This is mentioned also *Judg.* i. 29.

And serve under Tribute.] They so far subdued them, as to make them Tributaries; and, some fancy, imposed on them the Precepts of the Sons of *Noah*. But they ought to have destroyed them, and were forbidden to make Peace with them upon any Conditions. See *Judg.* ii. 1, 2, 3. Unless *Grotius* his Conjecture be true, that the Inhabitants of *Gezer* submitted and accepted the Terms of Peace, which *Joshua* was bound to offer them, before he began the War; as the *Gergasites*, he thinks, also did; who remained even in our Saviour's Time: For they delivered up themselves at the first Summons to surrender; which is the Reason, he imagines, that they are omitted in the Enumeration of their Enemies, both in xi. 1. and in *Deut.* xx. 17. See his *Annot.* on his 13th Chapter of the second Book *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Sect. 4.

This City, and the People of it, were destroyed in *Solomon*'s Time by *Pharoah* King of *Egypt*; who made a Present of it to his Daughter, *Solomon*'s Wife; who thereupon rebuilt it, 1 *Kings* ix. 16, 17. Till then the *Canaanites* lived in it; from whence *Spinoza* would have it concluded, that this Book was not written by *Joshua*, because we find the same thing recorded in the Book of *Judges*, (i. 29.) which is of a later Date. But this is a very frivolous Cavil; for, as *Huetius* well observes, if an Historian should have said in the Life of *Tiberius*, the *Germans* were not destroyed, the same might in like manner have been said in the Life of *Vespasian*; and just so, when *Joshua* saith the *Gazerites* were not cut off by the *Ephraimites*, it did not hinder him that wrote in the following Age from saying the same; because they still remained in the Possession of their antient Habitation.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *There was also a Lot for the Tribe of Manasseh.*] That half of it, which had no Portion on the other side *Jordan*.

(For he was the First-born of Joseph.)] I cannot make any Sense of this; and therefore think the Particle *ki* should be translated *tho'*, not *for*. And then the Meaning is plain enough, that the Lot of *Manasseh* came up after that of *Ephraim* (not before it) tho' he was the First-born of *Joseph*; for *Jacob* had preferred *Ephraim* before him, *Gen.* xlviii. 19, 20.

For Machir, the First-born of Manasseh.] And his only Son, from whom sprung such a Multitude, that there was no Room for them all, on the other side *Jordan*; but Part of them were to be disposed of here.

The Father of Gilead.] *Numb.* xxvi. 29.

Because he was a Man of War.] This is generally thought to relate to *Machir*; who had done some famous Exploits in the Skirmishes they had with some neighbouring People, while they were in *Egypt*, (see 1 *Chron.* vii. 21, 22.) for he was not alive to fight when they came to *Canaan*.

Therefore he had Gilead and Bashan.] A Share in this Country; for some of it was given to the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*, xiii. 25. but the *Gileadites* were also planted here, (*Ver.* 31.) for inheriting the Valour of their Progenitor, they were fit to defend this Frontier-Country.

Ver. 2. *And there was also a Lot for the rest of the Children of Manasseh, by their Families.*] A great Part of the *Manassites* being disposed of before they passed over *Jordan*, now follows the Lot which fell to the rest, whose several Families he names.

For the Children of Abiezer, and for the Children of Helek, and for the Children of Asriel,

and for the Children of Shechem, and for the Children of Hepher, and for the Children of Shemidah.] These six Families descended from *Gilead*, as we read *Numb.* xxvi. 30, &c. Where the first of them, who is here called *Abiezer*, is there called *Jeazer*.

These are the Male Children of Manasseh, the Son of Joseph, by their Families.] He uses the Expression of *Male Children*, to introduce what follows concerning the Females. And they are called *the Children of Manasseh*, because they inherited in his Right; being Families descended from him. See *Selden de Successionibus*, Cap. 22.

Ver. 3. *But Zelophehad the Son of Hepher, the Son of Gilead, the Son of Machir, the Son of Manasseh.*] Here he recites their Pedigreee from the Son of *Joseph*.

Had no Sons, but Daughters.] And so could not make a Family in *Manasseh*; and consequently have no Share in the Land.

And these are the Names of his Daughters, Mahlah, and Noah, &c.] See *Numb.* xxvi. 33.

Ver. 4. *And they came near before Eleazar the Priest, and before Joshua the Son of Nun, and before the Princes.*] To whom God had committed the Care of dividing the several Lots, xiv. 1. *Numb.* xxxiv. 17, 18.

Saying, the LORD commanded Moses to give us an Inheritance among our Brethren.] See *Numb.* xxvii. 6, 7.

Therefore, according to the Commandment of the LORD, he gave them an Inheritance among the Brethren of their Father.] Or, an Inheritance was given them, according to this Commandment of God to *Moses*, by *Eleazar* and *Joshua*, and the rest who were appointed to divide the Land. For after the Lot had determined what Land every Tribe should have, *Eleazar*, *Joshua*, and the *Princes*, considered how many Families there were in the Tribe, and how large they were; and accordingly, divided it among them. So *Numb.* xxvi. 55, 56. imports.

Ver. 5. *And there fell ten Portions to Manasseh.*] For there were six Portions given to six Sons: But the Portion of *Hepher*, the last of them, being divided into five Parts among his five Daughters, there were ten Portions in all. See *Selden de Succession.* Cap. 23. Which ten Portions being assigned to so many Families, *Eleazar*, *Joshua*, and the *Princes*, were not concerned any further in dividing these ten Portions into lesser, among several Households; but that, I suppose, they agreed among themselves.

Beside the Land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan.] Mentioned before, *Ver.* 1.

Ver. 6. *Because the Daughters of Manasseh.*] That is, of *Zelophehad*, descended from *Manasseh*.

Had an Inheritance among his Sons.] Being considered as Heirs to their Father.

And the rest of Manasseh's Sons.] Which were not of the six Families before-mentioned.

Had the Land of Gilead.] On the other side *Jordan*, as hath been often said; and is again repeated, to prevent all Contentions that might arise about their Portions.

Ver. 7. *And the Coast of Manasseh was from Asher to Michmethah, that lived before Shechem.*] This was the South Border, which went from a City called *Asher*, to another called *Michmethah*; which was over-against a City in the Tribe of *Ephraim* called *Shechem*.

And the Border went along on the Right Hand unto the Inhabitants of Entappuah.] And so to those that lived in the Land of *Tappuah*, leaving *Tappuah* itself on the Right Hand.

Ver. 8. *Now Manasseh had the Land of Tappuah.*] All the Territory adjoining to this City, belonged to the Tribe of *Manasseh*.

But Tappuah on the Border of Manasseh belonged to the Children of Ephraim.] But the City itself, which lay on the Confines of their Country, was one of those separated Cities spoken of in the foregoing Chapter, (*Ver.* 9.) in which the Children of *Ephraim* dwelt.

Ver. 9. *And the Coast descended unto the River Kanah, Southward of the River.*] Concerning this Place, see *Ver.* 8. of the foregoing Chapter.

These Cities of Ephraim are among the Cities of Manasseh.] That is, the Cities on the Coast before-mentioned were inhabited by the *Ephraimites*, as well as *Tappuah*; tho' they were in the Tribe of *Manasseh*. For these two Tribes were nearer of Kin than any other; and so greater Friendship was intended to be established between them.

The Coast also of Manasseh was on the North Side of the River.] By the *Coast of Manasseh*, is meant the Cities inhabited by the *Manassites*; which were all on the North Side of this River. As all those on the South Side of it, tho' belonging to the *Manassites*, were inhabited by the Children of *Ephraim*.

And the Goings-out of it were at the Sea.] The Coast mentioned in the Beginning of the Verse, ended at the *Mediterranean* Sea.

Ver. 10. *Southward it was Ephraim's, and Northward it was Manasseh's, and the Sea is his Border.*] These Words express how these two Tribes lay, with respect to each other: *Ephraim* on the South, and *Manasseh* on the North; and both bounded on the West by the *Mediterranean*.

And they met together in Asher on the North, and in Issachar on the East.] Tho' on the South the Tribe of *Manasseh* was wholly joined to the Tribe of *Ephraim*, yet on the North-West, towards the great Sea, it had the Tribe of *Asher* on the Confines of it; and on the East, (towards *Jordan* and the Sea of *Tiberias*) the Tribe of *Issachar*. So *Conradus Pellicanus* rightly explains these Words. For both the Tribes of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* could not touch these other Tribes.

Ver. 11. *And Manasseh had in Issachar and in Asher.*] As *Ephraim* had some Towns in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, so *Manasseh* had some in the Tribes of *Issachar* and *Asher*, unto whom, in the North-West, and the East, they were near Neighbours.

Beth-shean and her Towns.] This was a Place not far from the Sea of *Tiberias* before-mentioned, and near *Jordan*.

And Ibleam and her Towns.] It appears by 2 *Kings* ix. 27. that it was not far from *Megiddo*, mentioned in the latter End of this Verse.

The Inhabitants of Dor and her Towns.] Concerning *Dor*, see xi. 2. whose Inhabitants (as also those of the other Cities following) are here mentioned; because, it seems, they possessed the People (whom they ought to have destroyed) as well as their Cities and Towns, making them their Slaves.

And the Inhabitants of Endor, and her Towns.] The City whither *Saul* went to consult with the Witch. It was not far from Mount *Tabor*; which was in the Confines of the Tribe of *Issachar*.

And the Inhabitants of Tanach, and her Towns.] This City lay not far from the other; and was one of those given to the *Levites*, xxi. 25.

And the Inhabitants of Megiddo, and her Towns.] This was near the former; not far from the Brook *Kishon*, *Judg.* v. 19.

Even three Countries.] Or rather, three Parts of those Countries before-mentioned.

Ver. 12. *Yet the Children of Manasseh could not drive out the Inhabitants of those Cities.*] Thro' Want of Faith in God, and of Zeal to perform his Commands; which made them slack in their Attempts to expel the Inhabitants of this Country.

But the Canaanites would dwell in that Land.] Finding themselves strong enough to maintain it, against such feeble Endeavours, as they used to conquer it.

Ver. 13. *Yet it came to pass, when the Children of Israel were waxen strong, that they put the Canaanites to Tribute.*] When they were more numerous and expert in War, not only the *Manassites*, but they of other Tribes also brought the *Canaanites* to be Tributaries to them.

But did not utterly drive them out.] In which they grievously offended against God's Command, *Deut.* xx. 16, 17, 18.

Ver. 14. *And the Children of Joseph spake unto Joshua.*] Both they of *Ephraim*, and they of *Manasseh*, *Ver.* 17.

Saying, Why hast thou given me but one Lot and one Portion to inherit, seeing I am a great People.] They were discontented with their Lot, which they thought too strait for them; because they were so very numerous, that the Country which was assigned them, was little enough for one of them.

Forasmuch as the LORD hath blessed me hitherto.] Multiplied them exceedingly, as appears from *Numb.* xxvi. 34, 37.

Ver. 15. *And Joshua answered them, If thou be a great People.*] Tho' he was their Flesh and Blood, yet *Joshua* would not humour them; but returns their Argument upon them, that since they were so great a People, they should do as here follows.

Then get thee up to the Wood Country.] Which was in the Highlands, *Ver.* 18. which is full of Trees; For *Aba*, as *Bochart* observes, signifies very thick Woods, Lib. 2. *Canaan*, *Cap.* 9.

And cut down for thy self there.] Make it habitable.

In the Land of the Perizzites.] Who were a rough uncivilized People, living in these mountainous Forests; as *Bochart* gathers from this Place; and thinks they had their Name from thence. Because they did not live in Cities and Towns, but in those *Pagi* that were in the Woods; which the *Hebrews* call *Pherazoth*; from whence the *Pagani*, the People who lived in those Places, were called *Pherazim*, Lib. 4. *Phaleg.* Cap. 36.

And of the Giants.] There were some of the *Rephaim* (as the *Hebrew* Word is) still remaining here; or it was a Place where they had been wont to dwell.

If Mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee.] If that noble Mount which was given them for their Portion, with the rest of the Land before-mentioned (which is included in the Name of Mount *Ephraim*, the principal Part being put for the whole) did not afford them Room enough, he exhorts them to enlarge their Bounds, by taking in these Wood-lands before-mentioned.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of Joseph said, The Hill is not enough for us.*] They still insisted, that if they could get Possession of the woody Mountain, and destroy all the Inhabitants, and cut down all the Trees, it would not be sufficient to contain them.

And all the Canaanites that dwelt in the Land of the Valley.] But if it would, they further alledge, they had no Hope to conquer it; because, before they could come at it, they must encounter those that lived in the Valley below it, who were too strong for them.

Have Chariots of Iron.] Before which they were not able to stand: For he doth not mean Chariots made of Iron, but armed with Iron; which the Ancients called *currus falcati*, in *Greek* δρεπανοφόρα· having a kind of Scythes of two Cubits fastned to long Axle-Trees on both Wheels; which being driven swiftly thro' a Body of Men, made great Slaughter, mowing them down like Grass or Corn. *Xenophon* gives a Description of them in his *Cyro-Pædia*, Lib. 6. and *Quintus Curtius*, Lib. 4. Cap. 9. *Vegetius* also, *de Re Militari*, Lib. 3. Cap. 24. *Bonfrerius* hath heaped up abundance on this Subject; and so hath *Joh. Cunradus Dietericus* in his *Antiq. Biblicæ*, P. 329, *&c.* where he observes *Xenophon* imagined *Cyrus* to have been the Inventor of these Chariots; which had been in use among the *Canaanites* eight hundred Years before.

Both they who are of Beth-shean and her Towns, and they who are in the Valley of Jezreel.] Which Cities, it seems, lay near to this Mountain, unto which *Joshua* directed them, and both of them possessed by the *Canaanites*.

Ver. 17. *And Joshua spake unto the House of Joseph, even unto Ephraim and Manasseh.*] He was not moved, by their Objections, from his Resolution; but told them.

Thou art a great People, and hast great Power.] That, by their own Confession, they were very numerous; and consequently, of great Power.

Thou shalt not have one Lot only.] And therefore need not be straitned in their Habitation; which they said was not sufficient for one Tribe.

Ver.

Ver. 18. *But the Mountain ſhall be thine.*] For they ſhould have the Mountain added to their Portion; which he could not enlarge any other way, it being ſettled by a divine Decree.

For it is a Wood, and thou ſhalt cut it down.] Or, *tho'* it be a Wood, yet they could cut it down, and grub it up; and then it would afford a commodious Habitation.

And the Goings-out of it ſhall be thine.] They ſhould have the Product of it: Or, all the Country below in the Valley (*Ver.* 16.) ſhould be theirs alſo.

And thou ſhalt drive out the Canaanites, tho' they have Iron Chariots, and tho' they be ſtrong.] He anſwers all their Objections (*Ver.* 16.) with an Aſſurance that they ſhould be able, with GOD's Help, to diſpoſſeſs the preſent Inhabitants, notwithſtanding their great Force and Power: For ſo GOD had commanded them to believe, and not to be afraid of their Chariots, which now ſeemed ſo terrible to them. See *Deut.* xx. 1.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the whole Congregation of the Children of Iſrael.*] All their Elders and Heads of their Tribes, who repreſented the People of *Iſrael*; and are ſometimes meant by the *whole Congregation*, as *Corn. Bertram* hath ſhewed in many Inſtances, particularly in 1 *Chr.* xiii. 1, 2, *&c.* See *L. de Repub. Judaica*, in the latter End of Cap. 6. and Cap. 11. But here it may well ſignify the whole Body of the People, who accompanied the Ark to ſettle it in a new Place.

Aſſembled together at Shiloh.] A Place in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, not far from *Jeruſalem*; and, as the great Primate of *Ireland* thinks, the ſame with *Salem*. But I do not find any Ground for that Opinion.

And ſet up the Tabernacle of the Congregation there.] Which had hitherto remained in *Gilgal*; but now, by GOD's Order, no doubt, (for he was to chooſe the Place of his own Reſidence, *Deut.* xii. 5, 11, 14. *&c.* was removed hither; together with the Camp of *Iſrael*, which tarried ſo long in *Gilgal*, merely becauſe the Tabernacle was there. If it be enquired, what Token GOD gave of his Choice of this Place, Mr. *Mede* anſwers (*Diſcourſe* XLV. *Book* 1.) perhaps it was by giving ſome extraordinary Token of his Approbation, by accepting their Sacrifices; or, it may be, they conſulted him in this Caſe by the Oracle of *Urim* and *Thummim*. For when he made Choice of Mount *Sion*, an Angel bad the Prophet *Gad* tell *David* he ſhould ſet up an Altar in the Threſhing-floor of *Ornan*; and there GOD anſwered him by Fire, *&c.* See 1 *Chron.* xxi. 18, 26. Now the Reaſon of its being tranſlated to *Shiloh*, it is likely, was becauſe it would have been too far, after the Diviſion of the Land, for all the Tribes of *Iſrael* to go to *Gilgal*, to perform all that the Law required to be done at the Tabernacle. Which was now indiſpenſibly to be performed, tho' while they lived in the Wilderneſs, they did not live by theſe Rules, (*Deut.* xii. 8, 9, 10.) and perhaps while they continued unſettled in *Canaan*, could not exactly obſerve them. This Place alſo was very convenient for all the Tribes to reſort unto; and likewiſe very ſafe, being guarded by the two powerful Tribes of *Judah* and *Ephraim*. And it was, as I ſaid, in the Lot of the latter; for it was fit it ſhould be where *Joſhua* was; who, being of this Tribe, lived among them. Here it is thought the Tabernacle continued for the Space of three hundred and fifty Years, till the Days of *Samuel*; but our Primate before-mentioned reckons no more than three hundred and twenty-eight Years.

And the Land was ſubdued before them.] Or rather, *for* the Land was ſubdued, *&c.* that is, continued quiet, without any Oppoſition from the old Inhabitants, ſince the Conqueſt mentioned, xi. 23.

Ver. 2. *And there remained among the Children of Iſrael ſeven Tribes, which had not yet received their Inheritance.*] For whom no Lot had been drawn at *Gilgal*. The Reaſon of which, was, perhaps, becauſe the laſt-mentioned Tribes, of the Houſe of *Joſeph*, were not ſatisfied with the Diviſion which was begun to be made there. And therefore *Joſhua* ſtopp'd his Proceedings till he had made a new Survey of the whole Country. In order to which, GOD commanded him to remove hither; from whence, being in the middle of the Country, they might do it more eaſily; and alſo give the Children of *Joſeph* greater Content, by ſettling GOD's Houſe among them.

Ver. 3. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the Children of Iſrael.*] Unto the *Congregation* before-mentioned, *Ver.* 1.

How long are you ſlack to go and poſſeſs the Land, which the LORD God of your Fathers hath given you?] He doth not blame them for not taking Poſſeſſion of the Land which was conquered, without GOD's Direction, by a Lot (for that was expreſly commanded) but for their being ſo ſlow to conſider of, and propound, ſome Means of making ſuch an equal Diviſion, as they deſired; that they might take Poſſeſſion of the Land, where their Lot ſhould fall.

Ver. 4. *Give out from among you three Men for each Tribe.* He therefore himſelf propounds a Method for their Satisfaction; and ſuch an one as they could not diſlike, *viz.* that they ſhould chuſe three Men (for he would not appoint them, but only give them Orders what to do) out of each of the ſeven remaining Tribes that were not provided for; or rather, out of the nine Tribes and an half; that they who had already received their Portion, might be willing to reſign up ſome Part of it, if they found, upon the Survey, there was not ſufficient left for their Brethren.

And I will ſend them, and they ſhall riſe, and go thro' the Land.] Give them Orders to go immediately thro' the whole Country; both that which was divided, and that which was not.

And deſcribe it.] Set down not only the Dimenſions of it, but its Condition and Quality; whether barren or fruitful, mountainous or plain, *&c.*

According to the Inheritance of them.] Making ſo many Parts in the Deſcription, as there remain Tribes that want their Inheritance. Thus the next Verſe teaches us to explain it.

And they ſhall come again to me.] Make their Report to him, when they had done, that he might judge of it.

Ver. 5. *And they ſhall divide it into ſeven Parts.*] Of equal Extent, with a juſt Reſpect, as *Joſephus* obſerves, not merely to the Quantity of Ground, but the Goodneſs of the Soil. But there was no Reſpect to the greater or leſſer Number of Perſons in each Tribe; for then theſe Men had given each Tribe their Portion, and there had been no need of a Lot. Their Buſineſs was to divide the Country into ſeven equal Portions and leave God to appoint which Portion ſhall fall to each Tribe: Who would have no Reaſon to complain, when the Diviſion was made by themſelves.

Judah ſhall abide in their Coaſt on the South, and the Houſe of Joſeph ſhall abide in their Coaſts on the North.] But the Lot of *Judah*, which was Southerly, and the Lot of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, which, with reſpect to the former were Northerly, were not to be altered. But theſe Tribes were to remain undiſturbed in their Poſſeſſions, unleſs it ſhould be found, that they had more than they needed, and others had leſs. For this was the very Reaſon of Making a new and more exact Survey of the Country, than had been made before the firſt Diviſion; that there might be an Allotment made more to every one's Satisfaction; when they had a more perfect Account of all the Land. Accordingly it is evident, that the Tribe of *Judah* (by common Conſent, no doubt) parted with ſome of their Portion to the *Simeonites*, and the *Danites*. whoſe Lot appeared to be too ſcanty, xix. 29, 41.

Ver. 6. *Ye ſhall therefore deſcribe the Land into ſeven Parts, and bring the Deſcription hither to me.*] When the Men, who were appointed to meaſure the Country, had divided it into ſeven Parts, he orders that the Deſcription, thus divided, ſhould be laid before him.

That I may caſt Lots for you here before the LORD.] Whereby their Poſſeſſions were ſettled and eſtabliſhed by a Divine Authority. For the Lots being drawn before the Sanctuary, God was deſired to declare what Portion every Tribe ſhould have. Accordingly, it was their Duty to look upon it as a ſacred Appointment, and to be contented with it; for it was done at the very Door of the Tabernacle, as we read, xix. *ult.*

Ver. 7. *But the Levites have no Part among you for the Prieſthood of the LORD is their Inheritance.*] He declared, what had been often ſaid before, that in this Diviſion of the Land, the Prieſts and Levites were to have no Share; God having otherwiſe provided for them. See xiii. 14, 32. xiv. 3.

And Gad and Reuben, and half the Tribe of Manaſſeh, have received their Inheritance beyond Jordan, &c.] And as for the reſt, no Care was to be taken of them in this Diviſion; becauſe *Moſes* had provided for them before they came over *Jordan*.

Ver. 8. *And the Men aroſe, and went away.*] Being choſen by their Brethren (as *Joſhua* directed *ver.* 4.) to act in their Name.

And Joſhua charged them that went to deſcribe the Land, ſaying, Go, and walk through the Land, and deſcribe it, &c.] Before they went, *Joſhua* gave them a Charge to do the Buſineſs they went about, with Care and Fidelity; uſing their beſt Diligence to be truly and fully informed: And at their Return, give him an Account; that he might put an End to all Diſputes, by deſiring God to aſſign every Tribe their Portion.

That I may here caſt Lots for you before the LORD in Shiloh.] Theſe Words ſound as if he gave this Charge to them in the Preſence of God, before the Sanctuary; that they might be excited to execute his Orders with greater Diligence.

Ver. 9. *And the Men went and paſſed thro' the Land.*] Thro' the whole Country, which they had conquered.

And deſcribed it by Cities.] Set down the Name of every City, and its Villages, and the Territory about it, with its Situation. For ſo, I ſuppoſe, *Joſhua* charged them.

Into ſeven Parts in a Book.] In which were ſeven Maps, as we now call them; which made a Chorographical Deſcription of all the Cities, Towns, Mountains, Plains, Woods, and all other Conditions of the Soil.

And came again to Joſhua to the Hoſt at Shiloh.] For the Tabernacle being removed hither, the Camp followed it, as I obſerved, *ver.* 1. And here it remained till the Land was divided among the ſeven Tribes. Which could not be done in a ſhort time; for *Joſephus* ſaith they were ſeven Months in taking this Survey, and making the forenamed Deſcription.

Ver. 10. *And Joſhua.*] With the Aſſiſtance of *Eleazer* and the Princes, xiv. 1.

Caſt Lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD.] As he told them he would, *ver.* 6. The Manner of it, ſee upon *Numb.* xxvi. 55, 56.

And there Joſhua divided the Land unto the Children of Iſrael according to their Diviſions.] That is, according to the Diviſions made by the Surveyors; which were ſo juſt and equal, that all conſented the Lot ſhould determine what Part ſhould belong to them.

Ver. 11. *And the Lot of the Tribe of Benjamin came up.*] The Providence of God ſo ordered it, that his Children ſhould have the firſt Lot of theſe ſeven, next to the Children of *Joſeph*; they two being the only Sons of *Rachel*, *Jacob*'s beloved Wife.

According to their Families.] To be divided according to their Families.

And the Coaſt of their Lot came forth between the Children of Judah.] Who lay on the South of them.

And the Children of Joſeph.] For the *Ephraimites* lay on the North of them. And it is obſervable, that in the Bleſſing of *Moſes*, *Benjamin* is placed between *Judah* and *Joſeph* (*Levi* having no Inheritance among them) which Prophecy of *Moſes* by this Lot, was exactly fulfilled concerning him, *Deut.* xxxiii. 12.

Ver. 12. *And their Border on the North Side was from Jordan, and the Border went up to the Side of Jericho, on the North Side.*] Juſt thus the South Border of *Ephraim* proceeded from *Jordan* by *Jericho*, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. See xvi. 1, 7.

And went up thro' the Mountain Weſtward.] Thro' the mountainous Country, which lay on the North of *Jericho*, it went up to the Weſtern Part of the Country.

And the Goings-out thereof were at the Wilderneſs of Bethaven.] A Place near *Beth-el*; which in After-times (when they committed foul Idolatry there) was called *Beth-aven*, an Houſe or Place of Iniquity, *Hoſea* iv. 15. x. 8.

Ver. 13. *And the Border went out from thence towards Luz, to the Side of Luz (which is Beth-el) Southward.*] On the South Side of that City. See xvi. 2. The *Jews* think there were two *Beth-els*; one here named in the Confines of *Benjamin* and *Joſeph*, where *Jacob* had the Viſion of the Ladder reaching up to Heaven; and the other *Beth-el* near to *Ai*, viii. 6, 17.

And the Border deſcended to Ataroth-adar.] Called in the Place forenamed, xvi. 2. *Archi-ataroth.*

Near the Hill that lieth on the South Side of the nether Beth-horon.] A City in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, xvi. 3. called *the nether*, becauſe there was an higher hard by it, in the Mountain adjoining. Tho' others will have the two *Beth-horons* to have been at a great Diſtance, one in the Mountains of *Ephraim*, the other in the Valley near *Jordan*.

Ver. 14. *And the Border was drawn thence.*] In a Line bending Weſtward, as appears by what follows in the End of the Verſe; which tells us the Weſtern Border began from *Beth-horon* the nether.

And compaſſeth the Corner of the Sea Southward, from the Hill that lieth before Beth-horon.] I cannot give any Account of this Border, according to our Tranſlation: For, it is certain, it did not compaſs any Corner of the *Mediterranean* (and no other Sea can be here meant) nor came near unto it. Therefore, by *Peath*, which we tranſlate *Corner*, muſt be underſtood *the Side* of the Sea. As if he had ſaid, it ran along in a parallel Line to the Sea. So the Vulgar hath it, *over-againſt the Sea*; and the LXX to the ſame Purpoſe. And the Word *Southward* is joined by Vulgar, not to the *Sea*, but to the next Words, Southward from the Hill that lieth before *Beth-horon*.

Southward.] That is, the Hill was to the South of *Beth-horon*, as we read in the Verſe before.

And the Goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal (which is Kirjath-jearim a City of Judah.] See xv. 60.

This was the Weſt Quarter.] Here the *Peath* before-mentioned (for it is the ſame Word we before tranſlate *Corner*) the Weſt Side, or Quarter, ended: For that is meant by *its Goings out.*

Ver. 15. *And the South Quarter.*] The ſame Word again in the *Hebrew*, viz. *Peath.*

Was from the End of Kirjath-jearim, and the Border went out on the Weſt.] Did not go directly South, but bordered ſomething towards the Sea till it came to *the Well of Waters of Nephtoah*, as this Verſe concludes. See xv. 9. By conſidering of which, and the foregoing and following Verſes, it will be unneceſſary to ſay much of this South Border of *Benjamin*; it being the ſame with the North Border of *Judah*. For the very ſame Places are named here, that are there, and in the ſame Order; with this Difference only, that in deſcribing this Border, he proceeds from the Weſt toward the Eaſt; but in deſcribing that of *Judah* from the Eaſt toward the Weſt. So that *Kirjath-jearim* is there the North Limits of *Judah*; as it is here the South Limits of *Benjamin.*

Ver. 16. *And the Border came down to the End of the Mountain that lieth before the Valley of the Son of Hinnom*, &c.] See xv. 8.

And deſcended to En-rogel.] See xv. 7.

Ver. 17. *And was drawn from the North, and went forth to En-ſhemeſh, and went forth towards Geliloth.*] See there; where this Place is called *Gilgal.*

Which is over-againſt the going up to Adummim, and deſcended to the Stone of Bohan, the Son of Reuben.] See there, and *ver.* 6.

Ver. 18. *And paſſed along towards the Side of Arabah Northward: and went down unto Arabah.*] Called *Beth-arabah*, xv. 6. and ſo the LXX have it here in this Verſe.

Ver. 19. *And the Border paſſed along to the Side of Beth-hoglah Northward.*] Leaving *Beth-hoglah* on the North of it, ſee xv. 6.

And the Out-goings of the Border were at the North Bay of the Salt Sea.] Its utmoſt Progreſs was to the Tongue or Bay of the Salt Sea, which is on the North Part of it.

At the South End of Jordan.] Where *Jordan* ends towards the South; being ſwallowed up by the Salt Sea.

This was the South Coaſt.] That is, hither it reached, and here it ended.

Ver. 20. *And Jordan was the Border of it on the Eaſt Side.*] Till, near *Jericho*, it met with the Bounds of the Tribe of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh.*

This was the Inheritance of the Children of Benjamin, by the Coaſts thereof round about.] That is, a Deſcription of its Bounds, on all Sides.

According to their Families.] Which was divided among as many Families, as were in that Tribe.

Ver. 21. *Now the Cities of the Tribe of the Children of Benjamin, according to their Families, were Jericho.*] Having given a Deſcription of the Bounds of the Country, he ſets down the principal Cities in it. The firſt of which was well known, *viz. Jericho*; the Territory of which remained, tho' the City itſelf was deſtroyed. And perhaps there were ſome Houſes there, tho' without Walls or Gates; which ſeem to be the only Things which *Joſhua* commanded ſhould not be built, vi. 26.

And Beth-hoglah.] A City nigh to *Jericho*; not far from the River *Jordan.*

And the Valley of Keziz.] Rather, *Emer-Keziz*; for he ſpeaks of a City, not of a

Valley. Or, it may be interpreted, *Keziz* in the Valley; that is, in the Plain of *Jericho*.

Ver. 22. *And Beth-arabath.*] This City is reckoned to *Judah*, xv. 61. being, it ſeems, in the Confines of both Tribes. It ſtood alſo in the Plain of *Jericho*, ſignifying as much as *Domus Campeſtris*, an Habitation in the Fields: For there were large Fields about it, as *Bochartus* ſuppoſes; from whence a Place in *Aſſyria*, for this Reaſon, was called *Oraba*, as he ſhews, Lib. 4. *Phaleg.* Cap. 21.

And Zemaraim.] A City, it is probable, built by *Zemari*, the tenth Son of *Canaan*, *Gen.* x. 18. There was a Mountain alſo called by this Name; from this City, it is likely. For tho' it is ſaid to be in Mount *Ephraim*, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 14. It might alſo, in part, belong to *Benjamin*; as *Betharaba* and the next Cities did belong to two Tribes.

And Beth-el.] A City in the Confines of the Tribe of *Ephraim* and of *Benjamin*; which ſeems to have belonged to both.

Ver. 23. *And Avim, and Parah, and Ophrah.*] We know no more of theſe Cities but their Names.

Ver. 24. *And Cephar-haamonai, and Ophni.*] Theſe alſo are unknown Cities.

And Gaba.] This is often named in Scripture, and called *Gibeah*; being that Place where the foul Fact was committed, which almoſt ruined this Tribe, *Judg.* xix. And is called *Gibeah* of *Saul*; becauſe it was his native Country; where he made his Reſidence, after he was King, 1 *Sam.* x. 26. And it was one of the Cities of the Prieſts, *Joſh.* xxi. 17.

Twelve Cities, with their Villages.] Which ſeem to have been in the Eaſtern Part of their Country.

Ver. 25. *Gibeon, and Ramah, and Beeroth.*] The firſt of theſe is well known from the Story of its ancient Inhabitants, related in the ninth Chapter of this Book. It was alſo a City of the Prieſts, xxi. 17. and ſeated on a Hill, as its very Name imports. *Ramah* alſo was an eminent City on the North Side of *Jeruſalem*, as *Bethlehem* was on the South. So that *Jeruſalem* was in the Road from the one to the other; as appears from the Man that went from *Bethlehem-Judah* to *Ramah*, *Judg.* xix. 2, 11, 13.

Beeroth alſo is notorious upon this Account, that it was one of the Cities which cunningly joined with *Gibeon* to deceive *Joſhua* and procure a Peace with them, ix. 17.

Ver. 26. *And Mizpeh.*] There were ſeveral Cities of this Name, as I have noted before, xv. 38. and this was in the Confines of the Tribe of *Judah*; ſo that it ſeems to have belonged both to them, and to *Benjamin*, as ſeveral others did.

And Cephirah.] Another of the Cities depending upon *Gibeon*, ix. 17.

And Mozah.] An unknown City.

Ver. 27. *And Rekem.*] This is a City mentioned both by *Euſebius* and St. *Hierom*; but they do not ſay where it was, nor ſo much as name the two next, *Irpeel* and *Taralah*.

Ver. 28. *And Zelah, Eleph.*] Two Cities, of which no more than the Names are remaining. *Euſebius* and St. *Hierom* mention the former as in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, but ſay no more.

And Jebuſi, which is Jeruſalem.] See xv. 63. where it is reckoned to the Tribe of *Judah*; for both that Tribe and *Benjamin* had an Intereſt in it. The old City belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*; unto which an Addition being made, it belonged to *Judah*, (as ſome make account) that is, the North Part, with Mount *Moriah*, was in the Portion of *Benjamin*; but the South Part, wherein Mount *Sion* was, belonged to *Judah*.

Gibeah.] This was a diſtinct City from *Gaba*, *Ver.* 24. and I ſuppoſe near to *Jeruſalem*.

And Kirjath. The very Name imports a City: Which, *Euſebius* and St. *Hierom* ſay, was under the Metropolis of *Gibeath*, fore-mentioned. Πόλις ὑπὸ Μητρόπολιν Λαβαθά.

Fourteen Cities, with their Villages.] Which were in the Weſtern Part of this Tribe.

This is the Inheritance of the Children of Benjamin.] Which was one of the ſmalleſt, with reſpect to the Quantity of Ground which they poſſeſſed; but the Soil was the richeſt of all other Tribes, as *Joſephus* informs us.

According to their Families.] All the Families of the *Benjamites* were diſpoſed of into theſe great Cities, and the Territories belonging to them; in which, it is probable, there were leſſer Cities, not here named. For we find two Cities of the Prieſts in this Tribe, which are not among thoſe here ſet down, *viz.* *Anathoth*, and *Almon*, xxi. 18.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND the ſecond Lot came forth to Simeon, even for the Tribe of the Children of Simeon.*] Both the LXX. and the Vulgar leave out the latter Part of theſe Words, as if they were ſuperfluous; and only ſay, *the ſecond Lot came forth from Simeon.* But I ſuppoſe the Words following in the *Hebrew*, are intended to ſhew, that tho' their Inheritance was within that of the Tribe of *Judah* (as the next Word tells us) yet thoſe Cities were not all that were given to this Tribe, but they had another Share by Lot that fell to them: And God diſpoſed it ſo, that the very next Lot to *Benjamin* came up for them; *Simeon* being the eldeſt Son of *Jacob* that was unprovided.

According to their Families.] Which was divided by *Eleazar*, *Joſhua*, and the Princes among their ſeveral Families.

And their Inheritance was within the Inheritance of the Tribe of Judah.] So we well tranſlate it; for tho' the Word in the *Hebrew* be *betoch* (*in the midſt*) of the Inheritance of *Judah*; yet it ſignifies no more than *within*. For the Lot of *Simeon* did not lie in the very Heart (as we ſpeak) but in the Skirts of the Country of *Judah*: From whoſe Northern and Weſtern Border ſome Part was cut off, and given to the *Simeonites*; for the Reaſon mentioned, *Ver.* 9.

Ver. 2. *And they had in their Inheritance Beer-ſheba, and Sheba.*] Or rather, *Beer-ſheba*, which is *Sheba:* For they were one and the ſame Place; ſometimes called at length *Beerſheba*, and ſometimes contracted in *Sheba:* Nothing being more common than to cut off the Beginning of the Names of Towns, and Places, as *Bochartus* hath ſhewn in many Inſtances, in his *Phaleg.* Lib. 2. Cap. 24. which he repeats in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 15. And certainly it is ſo here; for otherwiſe it would not have been ſaid, *Ver.* 6. there were *Thirteen* Cities in all, but *Fourteen*; for there are ſo many if *Sheba* be diſtinct from *Beer-ſheba.* Which was the laſt City in the South belonging to the Land of *Iſrael.* From whence the common Saying, *from Dan to Beer-ſheba*, to expreſs the whole Length of the Country; from *Dan* in the *North*, to *Beer-ſheba* in the South.

And Moladah.] This is mentioned before, in the Account we had of the Lot of *Judah*, xv. 26.

Ver. 3. *And Hazar-ſhual.*] A Place where there was abundance of Foxes.

And Balah.] The ſame that is mentioned in the South of *Judah*, xv. 29.

And Azem.] It ſignifies in *Hebrew great Strength.* We read of it no where elſe but in this Place, and 1 *Chron.* iv. 29. where it is called *Ezem.*

Ver. 4. *And El-tolad.*] Called there *Tolad*; the firſt Syllable being cut off, as I ſaid *Ver.* 2. it often is.

And Bethul.] Called there *Bethuel.* Which ſome will have to be the ſame with *Bethulia*, where *Judith* dwelt; becauſe ſhe was of the Tribe of *Simeon.* But that is a Miſtake; for this was in the South of *Judah*, and that a City in *Galilee.*

And Hormah.] Which is mentioned in the ſame Place, 1 *Chron.* iv. 30. and was one of the Cities, to whom *David* ſent Part of the Spoil he took from the *Amalekites*, 1 *Sam.* xxx. 30.

Ver. 5. *And Ziglag.*] A neighbouring City, as appears from both the forementioned Places.

And Beth-marcaboth, and *Hazar-ſuſah.*] It is a very probable Conjecture of *Bochartus*, that theſe were two of the Cities, where *Solomon* kept his Chariots and Horſes, 1 *Kings* x. 26. For the former of theſe ſignifies *the Houſe of Chariots*; and the other, *the Village of Horſes.* For it is called *Hazar-Suſin*, in the Plural Number, 1 *Chron.* iv. 31. See *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. L. 2. C. 9.

Ver. 6. *And Beth-lebaoth, ana Sharuhen.*] They ſeem to be the ſame Cities, called in After-times *Beth-birei*, and *Shaaraim*, 1 *Chron.* iv. 31.

Thirteen Cities, and their Villages.] See *Ver.* 1.

Ver. 7. *Aain, Remmon, and Ether, and Aſhan.*] One of theſe Towns is otherwiſe called in 1 *Chr.* iv. 32. *viz. Etam*, not *Ether*; and a fifth is added. Which ſhews all the Cities and Towns belonging to *Simeon*, are not here mentioned; no more than all thoſe belonging to *Benjamin*; as I obſerved on *Ver.* 28. of the foregoing Chapter. *Aſhan* alſo is thought by *Bochart* (in the Place before-named) to be the ſame with *Chor-aſhan* in 1 *Sam.* xxx. 30. by cutting off the firſt Syllable.

Four Cities, and their Villages.] Which are mentioned ſeparate from the reſt; either becauſe they were in another Part of the Country; or becauſe they were not properly Cities, but only *Chatſerim* (large Villages) as they are expreſly called, 1 *Chron.* iv. 32. that is, Towns which were without Walls. Here indeed they are called *Cities*; but that muſt be underſtood largely, to make it agree with the *Chronicles*, for Towns of more than ordinary Bigneſs.

Ver. 8. *And all the Villages that were round about theſe Cities.*] Here the Word *Chatſerim* (*Villages*) is oppoſed to Cities; and ſignifies all the Towns great and ſmall, that lay about all the Cities before-mentioned.

To Baalah-beer Ramath.] This is the Name but of one City, called ſimply *Baal* in 1 *Chron.* iv. 33. and is that City in the Tribe of *Judah*, mentioned xv. *Ver.* 24. or *Ver.* 29. As far as which City the Bounds of the Tribe of *Simeon* reached. Some think this is the City which *Solomon* built, *i. e.* repaired, and made larger and ſtronger, 1 *Kings* ix. 18.

On the South.] This doth not relate to the Situation of the City before-mentioned; but of the Inheritance of this Tribe; which was on the South of *Judah.*

Ver. 9. *Out of the Portion of the Children of Judah was the Inheritance of Simeon.*] For which Reaſon the Bounds of this Tribe on all Sides are not deſcribed, as of the foregoing; becauſe that was ſufficiently done in the Deſcription of the Poſſeſſion of *Judah*; out of which the Inheritance of this Tribe was taken.

For the Part of the Children of Judah was too much for them.] They who were ſent to make a new Survey of the whole Land, found that the former Surveyors had not meaſured it exactly; but left one Diviſion too big in Proportion to the reſt; which fell to the Tribe of *Judah:* Who had now, therefore, a large Slice cut from them; becauſe they had too much, and others too little.

Therefore the Children of Simeon had their Inheritance, within the Inheritance of them.] Within that Lot, which was at firſt given to the Tribe of *Judah:* Yet not abſolutely given, but ſo that if it appeared there was not ſufficient for the reſt of their Brethren, and they had more than enough; that Error ſhould be corrected, by taking ſomething from them, and giving it to another Tribe; as it was now in this new Allotment.

Ver. 10. *And the third Lot came up for Zebulun, according to their Families.*] He was not the next Brother; for *Iſſachar* was born before him. But he is mentioned before *Iſſachar*, both in the Bleſſing of *Jacob*, *Gen.* xlix. 13. and of *Moſes*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 18.

And the Border of their Inheritance was to Sarid.] No more is ſaid of this Place by *Euſebius*, but that it was ὅριον Ζαβυλὼν the Bound or Limit of *Zebulun*; and St. *Hierom* ſaith the ſame. And, by what follows, it ſeems to have been the South-Weſt Border.

Ver. 11. *And their Border went up toward the Sea.*] That is, the *Mediterranean*, which was in the Weſt.

And Maralah, and reacheth to Dabbaſheth.] Theſe were Cities in the Weſtern Borders, as appears by the following Words.

And reacheth to the River that is before Jokneam.] See xii. 22.

Ver. 12. *And turned from Sarid Eaſtward toward the Sun riſing.*] This is the Deſcription of the South Border; which went from *Sarid* in the Weſt, unto *Jordan* in the Eaſt.

Unto the Border of Chiſloth-tabor.] A City near Mount *Tabor* in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, *ver.* 18. For, as on the Weſt the *Zebulonites* were contiguous to the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*; ſo, toward the Eaſt, they were to the Tribe of *Iſſachar*.

And then goeth out to Deborah.] A City alſo in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, xxi. 28.

And goeth up to Japhia.] It is uncertain where this City was, tho' ſome think it to be the ſtrong City which *Joſephus* called *Japha* (L. 2. *de Bello Jud.* Cap. 25.) and places it in *Galilee* near *Jotapata*.

Ver. 13. *And from thence paſſeth on along on the Eaſt to Gittah-hepher.*] This ſeems to be a Deſcription of the Eaſtern Border. We read of *the Land of Hepher*, 1 *Kings* iv. 10. which was near the Sea of *Galilee*. There this City was, in which *Jonah* the Prophet was born, 2 *Kings* xiv. 25.

And Ittah Cazin.] This City, it is likely, was upon the ſame Sea of *Galilee*, called *Geneſaret*; which the Vulgar calls *Thacaſin*.

And goeth out to Remmon-methoar, to Neah.] Here the Eaſtern Border ended (for that is meant by the Phraſe *goeth out*) at the Sea of *Geneſaret*. So *Joſephus* expreſly affirms. See *Gen.* xlix. 13.

Ver. 14. *And the Border compaſſeth it on the North Side to Hannathon.*] Here begins the Deſcription of the Northern Border; which from the laſt named Place, went in a bending Line towards *Hannathon*; a City, it is ſuppoſed, in this Tribe.

And the Out-goings thereof are in the Valley of Jiphthah-el.] Here the Northern Border ended. But we know no more of this Valley of *Jiphthah-el*, than that it was in the Tribe of *Aſher* in the Confines of this Tribe, *ver.* 27.

Ver. 15. *And Kattath, and Naballal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem.*] It is not certain whether theſe Cities belonged to *Zebulon*, or are ſet down as Places upon which this Tribe bordered. Of the two firſt, I can give no Account; but we read of *Shimron* as a principal City, which had a King in it conquered by *Joſhua*. See xii. 20. And *Idalah* is mentioned by St. *Hierom* (*de locis Hebraicis*) and called *Jadela*; as if it were compounded of *Jad* (which ſignifies a *Place*, *Deut.* xxv. 12.) and *Ela* (a *Goddeſs*) being the Place where *Venus* was worſhipped, as *Bochartus* conjectures, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 3. As for *Beth-lehem*, we are not to take it for the Place where our Saviour was born; which is called *Bethlehem-Judah*, to diſtinguiſh it from this, which was far from it.

Twelve Cities, with their Villages.] Here are more Cities than *twelve*; therefore ſome of them are mentioned only as the Boundaries of this Country. There is no doubt but thoſe mentioned *ver.* 13. were in this Tribe; and many think thoſe five here mentioned in this, were ſo alſo. *Jokneam* likewiſe belonged to it; but which were the reſt to make up the Number *twelve*, cannot be determined.

Ver. 16. *This is the Inheritance of the Children of Zebulon, according to their Families, theſe Cities, with their Villages.*] That is, theſe were the Bounds of it; but all the Cities belonging to it are not here ſet down: For we read of two, *Kartah*, and *Dimnah* (xxi. 34, 35.) which are not here named. And indeed *twelve* Cities do not ſeem ſufficient for ſixty thouſand Men, (*Numb.* xxvi. 27.) therefore they were only the principal; and all, perhaps, that the Meaſurers of the Land had noted in their Book.

Ver. 17. *And the fourth Lot came out for Iſſachar, for the Children of Iſſachar, according to their Familes.*] Thus far there is ſome Kind of Order obſerved in theſe Lots: *Iſſachar* being Brother to *Zebulon* by the ſame Mother.

Ver. 18. *And their Border was towards Jezreel.*] This was one of the Royal Seats of the Kings of *Iſrael* in After-times, 1 *Kings* xxi. 1. which *Euſebius* and St. *Hierom* place in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*; but ought to be accounted belonging to this Tribe, as the next Place is agreed to be. There was another in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 56.

And Cheſulloth.] Mentioned *ver.* 12. which both the forementioned Authors place in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, under the Name of *Acheſeloth*.

And Shunem.] Where that noble Lady lived who entertained *Eliſha* at her Houſe, 2. *Kings* iv. 8, 12. And where *Abiſhag*, the Wife of *David*, in his old Age, was born, 1 *Kings* i. 3.

Ver. 19. *Hapharaim, and Shihon, and Anaharath.*] He doth not deſcribe the Borders on all Sides of this Tribe; but only ſets down ſome principal Cities; for it lying between *Manaſſeh* and *Zebulon*, the Stuation of it was ſufficiently known. And they do but gueſs, who ſay theſe ſix Cities named in the foregoing Verſe and in this, were in the Southern Border.

Ver. 20. *And Rabbith*, and *Kiſhion, and Abez.*] Theſe three Cities, and the two next that follow (*ver.* 21.) they will have to conſtitute the Weſtern Border.

Ver. 21. *And Remeth and En-gannim.*] Here, as I ſaid, they imagine the Weſtern Border ended.

En-haddah, and Beth-Pazzez.] Theſe two, and the three next, *ver.* 22. they will have to be the Northern Border.

Ver. 22. *And the Coaſt reacheth to Tabor.*] That is, this Northern Border; for Mount *Tabor* was in the North; and this City was hard by it, and received its Name from the Mount, or gave its Name to it.

And Shahazimah, and Beth-ſhemeſh.] Here ended the Northern Border. There was another *Beth-ſhemeſh* in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *ver.* 38. and another in the Tribe of *Judah*, xxi. 16.

And the Out-goings of their Border were at Jordan.] This makes it probable, the former Account of its other Borders is not true; becauſe it leaves no City for the Eaſtern Border near *Jordan*; nor any for the Middle of the Country.

Sixteen Cities, with their Villages.] This ſhews that *Tabor* was a City; otherwiſe there would be but *fifteen*.

Ver. 23. *This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Iſſachar, according to their Families, the Cities and Village.*] Theſe were their principal Cities; but it is likely there were others: For we read of two not here mentioned, xxi. 28 and 29. *Deborah* and *Jarmuth*; yet there are thoſe who think *Jarmuth* is but another Name for *Remeth*, here mentioned, *ver.* 2. which to me doth not ſeem probable,

Ver. 24. *And the fifth Lot came out for the Tribe of the Children of Aſher, acording to their Families.*] No Reaſon can be given for this Order; unleſs it be, that God was pleaſed to place this Tribe, being deſcended from the Handmaid of *Leah*, not far from *Zebulon*, one of *Leah's* Sons. As for *Gad*, the elder Brother of *Aſher*, he was provided for before, on the other Side of *Jordan*.

Ver. 24. *And their Border was Helkath, and Hali, and Beten, and Achſhaph.*] We know no more of the three firſt of theſe Cities, than their Names. But the laſt of them was very conſiderable; Mention being made of the King of *Achſhaph*, xi. 1. xii. 20. The firſt of them alſo we find was a *Levitical* City, xxi. 31. called *Hukock*, in 1 *Chron.* vi. 75. It appears likewiſe, by the Mention of *Carmel* in the next Verſe, unto which this Border reached, that theſe Cities lay in the Weſt near the *Mediterranean* Sea.

Ver. 26. *And Alammalech, and Amad, and Miſhael, and reacheth to Carmel Weſtward.*] Or, *by the Sea*, not far from *Ptolemais*; to diſtinguiſh it from the other *Carmel*, in the Tribe of *Judah*, near *Hebron*. See xv. 55. Here the great Prophet *Elijah* ſometimes dwelt, and confuted the *Baalites* by a ſtupendous Miracle. But we are as ignorant of the three Cities mentioned in this Verſe, as we are of the other in the foregoing.

And to Shihor-Libnath.] Whether this was a City (ſome fancy *Ptolemais*) or a Promontory, or a muddy River, (for there are thoſe different Opinions about it) I cannot determine.

Ver. 27. *And turneth toward the Sun-riſing.*] It turned from the Sea toward the Eaſt; and ſo Northward, bending toward the Weſt again. For there are no Borders or Sides of this Tribe deſcribed: But from the South Part of the Sea it turned Eaſtward, and then Northward, in the Form of a Bow, toward the North Part of the ſame Sea, where *Zidon* was, *ver.* 28.

To Beth-dagon.] There was a Place of this Name mentioned before in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 41. where it is thought there was a famous Temple of *Dagon*, the God of the *Philiſtines*.

And reacheth to Zebulon, and to the Valley Jiphthah-el.] And ſo touched upon the North Border of the Tribe of *Zebulon*; in which the Valley of *Jiphthah-el* lay. See *ver.* 14.

Toward the North Side of Beth-emek, and Neiel.] Where theſe were, is not known. Only *Euſebius* and St. *Hierom* ſay, *Beth-emek* lay in a Valley, or low Place in this Tribe; as the Word ſeems to import.

And goeth out to Cabul on the Left-Hand.] On the North Side (called the *Left-Hand*) of this City, which lay in the Tribe of *Aſher*, this Border ended. Some have been ſo frivolous as from hence to argue, that this Book was written long after *Joſhua's* Time; becauſe the Land of *Cabul* (1 *Kings* ix. 13.) was not known till the Days of *Solomon*, when *Hiram* gave this Name to the Land, which *Solomon* preſented him withal. As if there were no Difference between the *Land*, and the City of *Cabul:* When one of them was a little Region, containing twenty Towns, and the other a ſmall Place in the Confines of *Ptolemais*; both of them in the Tribe of *Aſher*. They are plainly diſtinguiſhed by *Joſephus*, who calls one of them γῆν Χαβαλὼν, the Land of *Cabul*; and the other κώμην, the Village of *Cabul* as *Huetius* hath obſerved, *Propoſ.* 4. *Demonſtr. Evang.* P. 186.

Ver. 28. *And Hebron.*] Called *Elbon* by the LXX, and by the Vulgar *Abran*; to diſtinguiſh it, I ſuppoſe, from that *Hebron* in the Land of *Judah*.

And Rehob.] There were two Cities of this Name in this Tribe. See *ver.* 30. One of them was a *Levitical* City, xxi. 31. and the *Canaanites* kept Poſſeſſion either of that, or the other, *Judg.* i. 31.

And Hammon.] There was a *Levitical* City of this Name in the Tribe of *Napthali*, 1 *Chr.* vi. 76. called *Hammothdor* in xxi. 32. of this Book.

And Kana.] There were two Cities of this Name; one in the Upper *Galilee*, which was *Kana the Greater*; and the other in the Lower *Galilee*, called *Kana the Leſs*. He ſpeaks here of the Greater, which was near to *Sidon*. The Leſſer was that wherein our Saviour turned Water into Wine, and of which *Nathanael* and the *Syrophœnician* Woman were.

Even unto Great Sidon.] See before concerning this City, xi. 8.

Ver. 29. *And then the Coaſt turneth to Ramah.*] Another City on the Northern Part of the *Mediterranean* Sea.

And to the ſtrong City Tyre.] This Tranſlation is queſtionable: For we never read one Word of the City *Tyre* (unleſs it be here) until the Days of *David*; tho' we often read of *Sidon* in the Books of *Moſes*; even in the Prophecy of *Jacob*. And, as *Bochartus* obſerves, *Homer* himſelf, who ſpeaks frequently of *Sidon* and the *Sidonians*, never names *Tyre*, Lib. 4. *Phaleg.* Cap. 85. Therefore, it is highly probable, ſome other Place is meant by *Tzor* (as our Margin notes the Word is in the *Hebrew*) which was a fenced City, as we render the Word here tranſlated *Strong*, *ver.* 35. And there were ſeveral Cities, perhaps, called by this Name of *Tzor* or *Tyre*, beſides that famous one in future Times; particularly *Palætyrus*; as much

much as to say *old Tyre*. And it is no improbable Conjecture of *Campegius Vitringa*, that into these two Places, *Sidon* and *Tzor*, many of the People of *Canaan* fled, to secure themselves when *Joshua* invaded them: For *Tzor*, signifies not only a *Rock*, but any strong fortified Place; from whence it is possible, the *Latin* Word *Turris*, and then our *English*, *Tower*, is derived. Certain it is, that these two were famous Cities, ἐνδοξικοὶ λαμπροὶ, as *Strabo* calls them, Lib. 16. where he saith, they were so anciently, and not only in his Time; insomuch, that it was uncertain which was the Metropolis of the *Phœnicians*. But it is certain he speaks of the *New Tyre*, which was built in an Island; but the *Old* one was one of the Continent. See his *Observationes Sacræ*, Lib. 1. Cap. 1.

And the Coast turneth to Hosah.] Declined a little towards a City of this Name.

And the out-goings of it are at the Sea, from the Coast of Achzib.] It ended at the Country which belonged to *Achzib*; for so *Hebel* (which we here translate *Coast*) signifies. In proper speaking, it signifies a *Cord*, whereby Ground was measured; and thence was used to signify the Portion of Ground itself, which was measured by that Cord, or Line. Thus we read of *Hebel Argob*, the Region of *Argob*, *Deut.* iii. 13. and *Hebel Hajam*, the Region of the Sea, *Zeph.* ii. 5. *Achzib*, according to St. *Hierom*, is that Place, which by *Pliny* and others, was called in After-times *Ecdippa*.

Ver. 30. *Ummah also, and Aphek, and Rehob.*] It is probable, these were three Ciries in the Heart of the Country of *Asher*.

Twenty-two Cities, with their Villages.] There are more than this Number here mentioned, tho' we do not reckon *Carmel*, nor *Jiphthah-el*; one of which was a Mountain, the other a Valley. Therefore some of them were only the Boundaries of this Tribe, but did not belong to their possession.

Ver. 31. *This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Asher, according tt their Families, these Cities, with their Villages.*] That is, these were the most eminent Cities; tho' it be probable there were some other. For we read of one called *Abdon*, xxi. 30. not here mentioned.

Ver. 32. *And the sixth Lot came out for the Children of Naphtali, even for the Children of Naphtali, according to their Families.*] Here the younger Son of *Bilhah*, the Handmaid of *Rachel*, is preferred before the Elder, who was *Dan*, (*Gen.* xxx. 6, 8.) as *Zebulon* was before *Issachar*. Such was the Method of divine Providence in that Nation; to shew them that they ought not to value themselves too highly, as they were prone to do, upon their external Privileges.

Ver. 33. *And their Coast was from Heleph, from Allon to Zaanannim, and Adami, Nekeb, and Jabneel, unto Lakum.*] He doth not say what Coast this was; but by what follows, it appears to be the Northern Border, where these Cities were situated, near *Lebanon* and *Sidon*, and the rest of the Northern Part of *Asher*'s Country: For *Naphtali* comprehended the Upper *Galilee*.

And the Out-goings thereof were at Jordan.] This Border ended at this River; and at the very Fountain of it, which was at the Foot of *Libanus*.

Ver. 34. *And then the Coast turneth Westward to Aznoth-tabor, and goeth out from thence to Hukkok.*] The Southern Border began at the former of these Cities; and ended at the latter.

And reacheth to Zebulon on the South Side.] Touched on the Confines of the Tribe of *Zebulon*: so that the North Side of *Zebulon* was the South Side of *Naphtali*.

And reacheth to Asher on the West Side.] This is a short Account of their Western Border, which went as far as to the Borders of the Tribe of *Asher*.

And to Judah upon Jordan toward the Sunrising.] It was not near *Judah*, there being several Tribes between them. Therefore, the Meaning is, this Tribe had Communication with that of *Judah* by the River *Jordan*. So the Word *upon* in our Translation must be interpreted, (tho' there be no Proposition at all in the *Hebrew* before *Jordan*) which River afforded them Convenience of carrying Merchandizes to *Judah*, or bringing them from thence. And thus some think the Prophecy of *Moses* was fulfilled, *Deut.* xxxiii. 23. *Possess thou the West and the South.* Which doth not signify that they had any Land in the South; but that they trafficked with it, by the Means of *Jordan*.

Ver. 35. *And the fenced Cities are Ziddim, Zer, and Hammath, Rakkath, and Cinnereth.*] These were Northern Cities, it appears by that mentioned in the Midst, *Hammath*; or *Hamath*, which was the utmost Bounds of the Land of *Israel* Northward. See *Numb.* xiii. 21. xxxiv. 8. 1 *Kings* viii. 65. It seems to have had its Name from the youngest Son of *Canaan*, who, it is likely, built it, as his eldest Son did *Sidon*, *Gen.* x. 18. It continued a famous City a long time; for in the Days of *David*, we read how the King of it cunningly made his Peace with him, by a great Present, 2 *Sam.* viii. 9, *&c.*

Rakkath.] Which follows that, is, in the Opinion of some of the *Jews*, the same with *Tiberias*. So the Author of the Book *de Cippis Hebraicis*, set forth by *Hottinger*. Whence the *Talmudists*, as he observes, say, *Rakath* is *Zipporia*; which was called *Rakath*, because it was seated upon the Bank of a River. It was also called *Mæsia*, and at last *Tiberias*; tho' other *Jewish* Authors make *Rakkath* different from that City.

Cinnereth.] A Place upon this Sea of *Tiberias*; in which there were fine Gardens, and a kind of Paradise. Whence it was called *Geneser*; as much as to say, *the Gardens of Princes* (*Gannoth-Sarim.*) And it had the Name of *Cinnereth*, from its Sweetness and Pleasures, as the *Jews* say (*Cod. Megill.*) *Kinnereth, is Ginser And why is it called Cinnereth? because its Fruits are as sweet to the Taste, as the Sound of an Harp is to the Ear.* See *Hottinger* in his Annot. on the forenamed Book, P. 36.

As for the two first Cities, *Ziddim* and *Zor*, I can say nothing of them.

Ver. 36. *And Adamah, and Ramah, and Hazor.*] We may gueſs where theſe Cities were, by the laſt of them, *Hazor*, to which they were Neighbours. See concerning it, xi. 1.

Ver. 37. *And Kedeſh, and Edrei, and Enhazor.*] The firſt of theſe was a *Levitical* City, xxi. 32. in which that famous Captain *Barak* was born, *Judg.* iv. 6. where it is called *Kedith-Naphtali*, to diſtinguiſh it from thoſe of that Name in other Tribes. Of the other two Cities we know nothing.

Ver. 38. *And Iron, and Migdal-el, and Horem, and Beth-anath and Beth-ſhemeſh.*] Every one knows there was another *Beth-ſhemeſh* in the Tribe of *Judah*; and that this City and *Beth-anath*, the Children of *Naphtali* could not conquer, *Judg.* i. 33. But we know no more of them, nor of the reſt; ſave only that *Euſebius* ſays there ways a large Village, called *Magdal-el*, between *Dora* and *Ptolomais*.

Nineteen Cities, with their Villages.] Six of which were fenced Cities, certainly belonging to this Tribe, and there are as many more mentioned, as make up twenty-three. Some of which therefore muſt be accounted as bordering Cities; or only large Villages, and not properly Cities.

Ver. 39. *This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Naphtali, according to their Families, the Cities, and their Villages.*] This muſt be underſtood (as in the Account of the fore-mentioned Tribes) of the principal Cities; for there were more beſides theſe, as appears from xxi. 32. Where *Hammoth-der*, and *Kartan*, are numbred among the *Levitical* Cities in this Tribe, which are not mentioned here.

Ver. 40. *And the ſeventh Lot came out for the Tribe of the Children of Dan, according to their Families.*] They were the only remaining Tribe, that was to be provided for.

Ver. 41. *And the Coaſt of their Inheritance was Zorah, and Eſhtaol, and Ir-ſhemeſh.*] He doth not deſcribe their Lot by its Borders; but mentions the Cities that were in it. Some of which at firſt were given to *Judah*; out of whoſe Share, it being too large, ſome Cities were taken for the *Danites*, as others were for the *Simeonites*. And it is certain the two firſt of theſe fell to *Judah*, in the firſt Diviſion of the Land, xv. 33. Both very eminent Places, for the Birth and Burial, and mighty Motions of *Sampſon*: For at *Zorah* he was born, *Judg.* xiii. 2. between *Zorah* and *Eſhtaol* he was buried, *Judg.* xvi. *ult.* and here the Spirit of God began to move him at certain Times, xiii. 25. It is probable alſo, that *Ir-ſhemeſh* was in the Tribe of *Judah* at the firſt; it being of the ſame Signification with *Beth-ſhemeſh*: For one ſignifies the *City of the Sun*; the other, the *Houſe*, or *Place of the Sun*.

Ver. 42. *And Shaalabbin.*] Which the *Amorites* kept in their Poſſeſſion, *Judg.* i. 35. where, by a ſmall Change of Letters, it is called *Shaalbin*; and in ſome Copies of the LXX tranſlated ἐν ᾧ ἠ αἱ ἀλώπεκες, and in others ἐν Θίλαβιν. And in our preſent LXX both theſe are retained. For a Fox in the *Arabian* Language is called *Thalab*, and in the *Phœnician* (which is half *Arabick*) *Saalab*; as *Bochartus* obſerves in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 13. and in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 34. P. 684.

And Ajalon.] Another City which the *Amorites* kept from them, as we find in the ſame Place, *Judg.* i. 35. And was one of the *Levitical* Cities, xxi. 23. and that famous Place mentioned x. 13.

And Jethlah.] We know no more of it, than that it was a City in this Tribe.

Ver. 43. *And Elon, and Thimnathah, and Ekron.*] It is certain, that the laſt of theſe three Cities was at firſt given to *Judah*, xv. 45. But *Thimnathah* was not the ſame with *Timnath* in the ſame Tribe, (xv. 10. 57.) but quite different from it; as *Gibeath*, I obſerved in the foregoing Chapter, was from *Geba*. For *Sampſon* went down to this City *Timnath*, *Judg.* xiv. 5. which ſhews it was in a Valley; whereas *Judah* went up to *Timnath* to ſhear his Sheep, (*Gen.* xxxviii. 11, 13.) which ſhews it was upon an Hill. Concerning *Elon*, I can ſay nothing; unleſs it be the ſame with *Holon*, in the Tribe of *Judah*, xv. 51.

Ver. 44. *And Eltekeh, and Gibbethon, and Baalah.*] Some think that the firſt of theſe is the ſame with that City, in the Tribe of *Judah*, called *Eltekon*, xv. 59. and the laſt the ſame with that called there *Baalah*, *ver.* 39. As for *Gibbethon*, the *Danites* ſeem not to have got Poſſeſſion of it, or to have loſt it again; for it was in the Hands of the *Philiſtines* after the Days of *David*, 1 *Kings* xv. 27. xvi. 15. and yet appointed one of the *Levitical* Cities, *Joſh.* xvi. 21, 23.

Ver. 45. *And Jehud, and Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon.*] Where *Jehud* was, I find not; but Βαραχαὶ is mentioned by *Euſebius* as a Village near *Azotus* (or *Aſhdod*) and St. *Hierom* ſaith in his Time was called *Bernea*. Which may incline us to his Opinion, that *Gith-rimmon* was no other than the City of *Gath* ſo often mentioned in Scripture as one of the principal Cities of the *Philiſtines*, It is reckoned among the *Levitical* Cities, xxi. 24. as *Gibbethon* was (*ver.* 44.) tho' in the Hands of the *Philiſtines*.

Ver. 46. *And Mejarkon, and Rakkon.*] It is not certain where theſe Places were; but very likely near to the Place next mentioned.

With the Border before Japho.] This Place was afterward called *Joppa*, being the principal Port-Town in all *Judæa* (mentioned by *Pompon. Mela*, *Strabo*, and *Pliny*) and continues ſo to this Day; retaining the Name of *Japha*, which in *Hebrew* ſignifies *fair*, or *beautiful*. It is not certain that it was a Part of the Tribe of *Dan*, tho' *Euſebius* calls it a Sea-Town of the Lot of *Dan*; for theſe Words may ſignify no more, but that their Portion comprehended the Border which lay before this Place.

Ver. 47. *And the Coaſt of the Children of Dan went out too little for them.*] Theſe Words, *too little*, are not in the *Hebrew*; where there is nothing anſwering to them. But the Words run thus, *the Coaſt of the Children of Dan went out from them*; that is, they were diſpoſſeſſed of it in ſome Parts by their powerful Neighbours, the *Amorites*; who forced them into the Mountains, and would not let them dwell in the Valley

Judg. i. 34. This put them to ſuch Straits, that they were conſtrained to enlarge their Border ſome other Way; which they did by the Means following. I ſhall only further note, that this is no ſtrange Phraſe; for in the Year of *Jubilee* Lands are ſaid to *go out*, when they returned to their firſt Owners, from the preſent Poſſeſſors, *Levit.* xxv. 28, 30, 31, 33.

Therefore the Children of Dan went up to fight againſt Leſhem.] A City not far from *Jordan*, called *Laiſh* in the Book of *Judges*, before it was taken by the *Danites*. In After-times, when it fell into the Hands of the *Romans*, it was called *Paneas*; and made the Metropolis of *Iturea* and *Trachonitis*. And from *Philip* alſo Son of *Herod* the Great, who very much enlarged and adorned it, it was called *Cæſarea Philippi*, in Honour of *Tiberius Cæſar*.

And took it, and ſmote it with the Edge of the Sword, and poſſeſſed it, and dwelt therein.] Were not diſturbed in their Poſſeſſion.

And called Leſham-Dan, after the Name of Dan their Father.] Thus Conquerors were wont to change the Names of Places, which they ſubdued. This was done after *Joſhua*'s Death; and is related more largely in the Book of *Judges*, Chap. xviii. where there is an Account of the whole Expedition. From whence ſome argue this Book was not written by *Joſhua*; whereas no more can be inferred from it than this, that in After-times, *Ezra*, or ſome other, thought good to put in this Verſe here, to compleat the Account of the *Danites* Poſſeſſions. But any one may ſee, as *Huetius* obſerves, that if this Verſe were taken away, all that is ſaid of this Tribe coheres perfectly; and there is no Breach at all in the Context of the foregoing with the following Verſe after this. Which is an Argument, that this ſhort Account of their taking *Leſhem*, were not the Words of the Writer of this Book, but inſerted afterward by ſome other Perſon. For if they were taken away, this Relation of the *Danites* Lot would be more like the Account of the Lot of all the reſt

Ver. 48. *This is the Inheritance of the Tribe of the Children of Dan according to their Families, theſe Cities, with their Villages.*] The Number of them is not ſet down, as in the foregoing Tribes; of which it is to no Purpoſe to enquire the Reaſon.

Ver. 49. *When they had made an End of dividing the Land for Inheritance, by their Coaſts.*] That is, after every Tribe had their Portion aſſigned to them.

The Children of Iſrael gave an Inheritance to Joſhua the Son of Nun, among them.] We cannot but obſerve the wonderful Modeſty of this great Man, who received his Portion laſt of all; and then, not by Lot, but by their Gift; who were already poſſeſſed of the whole Land.

Ver. 50. *According to the Word of the LORD, they gave him the City which he aſked.*] God indeed had ordered that he ſhould have a Portion, and that he ſhould chuſe it; but he was content to ſtay for it till every body elſe was ſerved. We do not expreſly read of this Command; but many Things were ſaid and done, which are not recorded. And he being as faithful and upright as *Caleb* (and beſides, choſen to be the Captain of God's People) we cannot but think, that when God ordered what *Caleb* ſhould have, he gave the ſame Direction about *Joſhua*. And ſo much is implied in thoſe Words of *Caleb* himſelf, when he demanded his Portion of *Joſhua*, xiv. 6. *Thou knoweſt the thing the LORD ſaid unto Moſes the Man of GOD concerning me and thee in Kadeſh-barnea.*

Even in Timnah-Serah in Mount Ephraim.] He did not chuſe the beſt Place in all the Country, but a convenient Place in his own Tribe; which was ſeated on the North Side of a Hill called *Gaaſh*; as we read in the latter End of this Book.

And he built the City, and dwelt therein.] Repaired it, I ſuppoſe (for in all likelihood there was a City there before) and made a convenient Habitation for his Family and Kindred. But we read nothing of them; for as he did not affect to make himſelf King of *Canaan*, ſo he contented himſelf with a little, and made no large Proviſion for his Poſterity. We have no Mention made of his Sons or Daughters; but (as *Conrad. Pellicanus* ſpeaks) all the *Iſraelites* were his Children.

Ver. 51. *Theſe are the Inheritances, which Eleazar the Prieſt, and Joſhua the Son of Nun, and the Heads of the Fathers of the Tribes of the Children of Iſrael, divided for an Inheritance by Lot, in Shiloh, before the LORD, at the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.*] It is uſual, after ſo long an Account, to recapitulate in brief what they had done, and by what Authority; which he doth in this Verſe.

So they made an end of dividing the Country.] Every Tribe had the Place of their Settlement appointed to their Satisfaction; ſo that there was no further Diviſion made of the Land.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND the LORD ſpake unto Joſhua, ſaying.*] From the Tabernacle, at the Door of which he and *Eleazar*, and the Princes had been making a Diviſion of the Land; as the laſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter tells us.

Ver. 2. *Speak unto the Children of Iſrael, ſaying, Appoint out for you Cities of Refuge.*] This was the proper Time for it; when they were all met together to receive their ſeveral Portions of Land; after an exact Survey of the Country.

Whereof I ſpake to you by my Servant Moſes.] In *Numb.* xxxv. 9, 10, 11, &c. where he treats of them at large; and repeats it again, *Deut.* xix. 1, 2, &c.

Ver. 3. *That the Slayer that killeth any Perſon unawares, and unwittingly, may flee thither.*] Such Places every Body knows, there were among the Heathen; but commonly they were their Temples, and their Altars; as many have obſerved. Particularly *Joh. Gentius* lately, in his Book *de Victimis Humanis*, Pars 2. Cap. 21. P. 483, &c. But there were alſo ſome Cities, that had this Privilege, as *Dilherrus* (who thinks

thinks herein the *Gentiles* imitated the *Jews*) obſerves out of *Tacitus*, L. 3. *Annal.* where he ſaith the principal Cities of *Greece* contended before *Tiberius* about this Matter, *de Jure Aſylorum.* See *Diſſert. de Cacozelia Gentilium*, Cap. 3.

And they ſhall be your Refuge from the Avenger of Blood.] Protect ſuch Perſons from him who ſtudied to avenge the Blood of the Slain. Concerning whom, ſee *Numb.* xxxv. 12.

Ver. 4. *And when he that doth flee unto one of thoſe Cities, ſhall ſtand at the Entrance of the Gate of the City.*] Deſiring to be admitted and protected there.

And ſhall declare his Cauſe in the Ears of the Elders of that City.] That is, the Judges, who ſat in the Gate before-mentioned, *Deut.* xvi. 18.

They ſhall take him into the City unto them.] Being ſatisfied he was ſuch a Perſon as he pretended.

And gave him a Place that he may dwell among them.] Aſſign a convenient Habitation for him; theſe Cities being appointed by GOD for that Purpoſe, and given unto thoſe who inhabited them, on this Condition, that they ſhould entertain ſuch Perſons when they fled to them.

Ver. 5. *And if the Avenger of Blood purſue after him.*] Deſiring he might be delivered up into his Hand,

Then they ſhall not deliver the Slayer up into his Hands.] But defend him from his Aſſaults.

Becauſe he ſmote his Nieghbours unwittingly, and hated him not before-time.] It was a caſual Slaughter, without any Deſign of doing him Hurt, as far as appeared to them. If the Avenger purſued the Slayer ſo cloſely, that they had not Time to examine the Matter at the Gate of the City, they were not to let him ſtand there; but take him in (and afterward hear his Cauſe, and judge it) leſt the Avenger ſhould kill him before he was admitted into their City.

Ver. 6. *And he ſhall dwell in that City, until he ſtand before the Congregation for Judgment.*] The Avenger might bring him before another Tribunal, to be tried whether he killed the Man by Chance or not. See *Numb.* xxxv. 24, 25.

And until the Death of the High Prieſt, that ſhall be in thoſe Days.] If that Court found him not guilty of wilful Murder, he was reſtored to the City of Refuge; but confined to live there till the Death of the High-Prieſt. See in the ſame Place.

Then ſhall the Slayer return, and come unto his own City, and his own Houſe, &c.] See *Numb.* xxxv. 28.

Ver. 7. *And they appointed Kedeſh in Galilee, in Mount Naphtali; and Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and Kirjath-arba (which is Hebron) in the Mountain of Judah.*] It is commonly obſerved, that as theſe three Cities were ſeated on high and eminent Places, that they might be ſeen afar off; ſo they were at ſuch a Diſtance from each other, that all the Country might more eaſily have the Benefit of one or other of them. For *Kedeſh* was in the North; and *Hebron* in the South; and *Shechem* between both. Thus they fulfilled the Command of GOD, *Deut.* xix. 8.

Ver. 8. *And on the other ſide Jordan by Jericho Eaſtward.*] On the Eaſt of *Jericho*, in the Land of the two Tribes and half; which was almoſt as long as the Land of *Canaan*, tho' not ſo broad.

They aſſigned Bezer in the Wilderneſs, upon the Plain, out of the Tribe of Reuben; and Ramoth Gilead out of the Tribe of Gad; and Golin in Baſhan out of the Tribe of Manaſſeh.] Theſe Cities were aſſigned by *Moſes* before he died, *Deut.* iv. 43. but had not the Privilege till now. And it is obſervable, that if *Bezer* ſtood in a flat Country, the other two, *Ramoth* and *Golan*, were in the high.

Ver. 9. *Theſe were the Cities that were appointed for all the Children of Iſrael, and for the Stranger that ſojourneth among them.*] For the Safety of all Sorts of Perſons, as is manifeſt from *Numb.* xxxv. 15.

That whoſoever killeth any Perſon at unawares, might flee thither, and not die by the Hand of the Avenger of Blood, until he ſtood before the Congregation.] It is obſervable, that all theſe Cities belonged to the *Levites*; who, by their Authority, might defend the Man from unjuſt Uſage; and, by their Wiſdom, direct the Elders to judge aright concerning his Cauſe; and alſo give him good Inſtructions while he lived among them, untill the Death of the High Prieſt.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *THEN came near.*] After the Cities of Refuge were ſettled.

The Heads of the Fathers of the Levites.] So the Princes of the ſeveral Tribes (who divided the Land together with *Joſhua* and *Eleazar*) are called, xiv. 1. and in the Concluſion of this Verſe. And therefore, the chief Perſons deſcended from *Koahath*, *Gerſhon*, and *Merari*, (who were the Fathers of the *Levites*) are here meant by the *Heads of the Fathers* of that Tribe.

Unto Eleazar, and unto Joſhua, and unto the Heads of the Fathers of the Tribes of the Children of Iſrael.] Appointed by GOD to ſee the Land divided, called the *Princes* of the Tribes, *Numb.* xxxiv. 18.

Ver. 2. *And they ſpake unto them at Shiloh in the Land of Canaan, ſaying, The LORD commanded by the Hand of Moſes, to give us Cities to dwell in, with the Suburbs thereof, for our Cattle.*] This Command is regiſter'd in *Numb.* xxxv. 2, *&c.* and is ſet down before the Mention of Cities of Refuge (which are commanded in the following Part of the Chapter) tho', it ſeems, that Command was executed before this.

Ver. 3. *And the Children of Iſrael gave unto the Levites out of their Inheritance, at the Commandment of the LORD, theſe Cities, and their Suburbs.*] Not only *Joſhua*, *Eleazar*, and the *Princes*, but all the People of *Iſrael* acknowledged this Obligation, which GOD had laid upon them;

and accordingly, these Words import, that the People separated so many Cities as he commanded by *Moses* (which were to be forty and eight, *Numb.* xxxv. 7.) for the Habitation of the *Levites*.) Which Cities are here named, and distributed among them in this Chapter.

Ver. 4. *And the Lot came out for the Family of the Kohathites.*] After the Cities were set out, which should belong to them; then they were divided by Lot among the several Families of the *Levites*; as the whole Land was among the Tribes. And the first Lot came out for the noblest Family in the Tribe of *Levi*; for *Moses* and *Aaron* were descended from *Kohath*.

And the Children of Aaron the Priest, which was of the Levites.] The Family of *Aaron* being Priests, were the principal among the *Levites*; and therefore, were first and very honourably provided for.

Had by Lot out of the Tribe of Judah, and out of the Tribe of Simeon, and out of the Tribe of Benjamin, thirteen Cities.] It was by a special Providence, that the Share which fell to the Priests, was in those Tribes that were nearest to the City; which God intended should be the fixed Place of his Worship and Service in future Times; that the Priests might be ready to give their Attendance there, without much Trouble.

Ver. 5. *And the rest of the Children of Kohath.*] All his Descendants were not *Priests*, but *Aaron* and his Family alone; the rest were bare *Levites*.

Had by Lot out of the Family of the Tribe of Ephraim, and out of the Tribe of Dan, and out of the half Tribe of Manasseh, ten Cities.] These three Tribes were nearest to the three fore-mentioned so that the *Kohathites* were not far separated one from another.

Ver. 6. *And the Children of Gershon had by Lot out of the Families of the Tribe of Issachar, and out of the Tribe of Asher, and out of the Tribe of Naphtali, and out of the half Tribe of Manasseh in Bashan, thirteen Cities.*] Among the Sons of *Levi*, *Gershon* is mentioned as the eldest, (*Exod.* vi. 16. *Numb.* iii. 17.) but the Lot came up first to the Children of *Kohath*, the Priests being descended from him.

Ver. 7. *And the Children of Merari by their Families, had out of the Tribe of Reuben, and out of the Tribe of Gad, and out of the Tribe of Zebulun, twelve Cities.*] This is only a general Account of the Tribes in which their several Lots fell, and of the Number of Cities bestowed on their several Families.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Israel gave by Lot unto the Levites these Cities, with their Suburbs.*] The Children of *Israel*, as I said before, gave them; and the Lot divided them.

As the LORD commanded by the Hand of Moses.] Who ordered both how many Cities they should have; and how large the Suburbs of them should be. See *Numb.* xxxiv. 3, 4.

Ver. 9. *And they gave out of the Tribe of the Children of Judah, and out of the Tribe of the Children of Simeon, the Cities, which are mentioned by Name.*] Here now follows a particular Account of the Names of those Cities, which were said before in general to have been given out of these two Tribes. Which are put together; because the Lot of *Simeon* was taken out of the Lot of *Judah*.

Ver. 10. *Which the Children of Aaron, being of the Family of the Kohathites*, &c.] One of the Families of the *Kohathites*, and the eldest of them; for they descended from *Amram*, the eldest Son of *Kohath*. *Exod.* vi. 18. *Numb.* iii. 19.

For theirs was the first Lot.] They had the Honour to be first provided for, as was said before, *ver.* 4.

Ver. 11. *And they.*] That is, *Eleazar*, *Joshua*, and the *Princes*.

Gave them the City of Arba, the Father of Anak, which is Hebron, in the Hill-Country of Judah, &c.] See of this City, xiv. 15. xv. 13.

Ver. 12. *But the Fields of the City, and the Villages thereof, gave they to Caleb, the Son of Jephunneh, for his Possession.*] The Priests had only the City and Suburbs; which were their Possession, as much as the Fields and Villages were *Caleb*'s; on whom they were bestow'd before, xiv. 13, &c.

Ver. 13. *Thus they gave to the Children of Aaron the Priest, Hebron with her Suburbs, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.*] It was given them with this Condition, that they who slew a Man unawares, should be entertained here, and have a Place given them to live securely among them, xx. 4.

And Libnah, with her Suburbs.] This is to be understood to belong to them no otherwise than *Hebron* did; unto which they had no Right beyond the City and Suburbs: And therefore the Fields and the Villages of *Libnah* they had nothing to do withal; and the same is to be noted of all the following Cities of the Priests.

Ver. 14. *And Jattir, with her Suburbs; and Eshtemoa with her Suburbs.*] These are mentioned as belonging to *Judah*, xv. 48, 50.

Ver. 15. *And Holon with her Suburbs.*] Called *Helin*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 56.

And Debir, with her Suburbs.] See xv. 15.

Ver. 16. *And Ain, with her Suburbs.*] A City in the Tribe of *Simeon*, xix. 17. but taken out of *Judah*, xv. 32.

And Juttah, with her Suburbs.] xv. 55.

And Beth-shemesh, with her Suburbs.] Unto which City the Providence of God directed the Kine, which drew the Cart wherein the *Philistines* put the Ark, when they sent it home, there being a great many Priests in it, to receive it with due Care and Reverence, 1 *Sam.* vi. 12, 13.

Nine Cities out of these two Tribes.] For the Tribe of *Judah* was very large; and the Command of God was, that *from them which had many Cities, they should give many*, Numb. xxxv. 8.

Ver. 17. *And out of the Tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon, with her Suburbs, Goba, with her Suburbs.*] See xviii. 24, 25.

Ver. 18. *Anathoth, with her Suburbs.*] The City of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who was a Priest, *Jer.* i. 1.

And Almon, with her Suburbs.] Called *Alemeth*, in 1 *Chron.* vi. 60. For there were greater

Alterations than this made, by Length of Time, in the Names of Places.

Four Cities.] Which was a great many out of ſo ſmall a Tribe; but the Soil of it, as I obſerved before, was very rich.

Ver. 19. *All the Cities of the Children of Aaron the Prieſt, were thirteen Cities, with their Suburbs.*] As was ſaid, *ver.* 4.

Ver. 20. *And the Families of the Children of Kohath, the Levites which remained of the Children of Kohath.*] Who were mere *Levites*, and not *Prieſts*.

Even they had the Cities of their Lot out of the Tribe of Ephraim.] Part of them were planted there, and Part of them in two other Tribes, as it follows, *ver.* 23, *&c.*

Ver. 21. *For they gave them Shechem, with her Suburbs, in Mount Ephraim, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.*] See xx. 7.

And Gezer, with her Suburbs.] See xvi. 3, 10.

Ver. 22. *And Kibzaim, with her Suburbs.*] Which is called *Jokmeam* in 1 *Chron.* vi. 68.

And Beth-horon, with her Suburbs.] We read of both the *Beth-horons* in the Deſcription of this Tribe, the Upper and the Nether, xvi. 3, 5. the firſt of which ſeems to be here meant.

Ver. 23. *And out of the Tribe of Dan, Elkeleth, with her Suburbs; Gibethon, with her Suburbs.*

Ver. 24. *Aijalon, with her Suburbs; Gath-rimmon, with her Suburbs, four Cities.*] The four Cities mentioned in theſe two Verſes, we find before in this Tribe, xix, 41, 44, 45.

Ver. 25. *And out of half of the Tribe of Manaſſeh.*] That half of it which was ſettled in *Canaan*.

Tanach, with her Suburbs.] xvii. 11.

And Gath-rimmon, with her Suburbs.] In 1 *Chron.* vi. 70. theſe two Cities are called *Aner*, and *Bileam*; ſo much were Names changed in a long Tract of Time. Or, they being diſpoſſeſſed of the two Cities here mentioned, by the Invaſions of their Enemies, (who perhaps demoliſhed them) theſe two others were given in lieu of them.

Two Cities.] Which was a juſt Proportion to the other whole Tribes; who gave *four*.

Ver. 26. *All the Cities were ten, with their Suburbs, for the Families of the Children of Kohath that remained.*] Who were not of the Children of *Aaron*, the Prieſts, *ver.* 5.

Ver. 27. *And unto the Children of Gerſhon, of the Family of the Levites, out of the other half Tribe of Manaſſeh.*] Which had their Inheritance on the other ſide of *Jordan*.

Golan in Baſhan, with her Suburbs, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.] xx. 8. From whence the neighbouring Country was called *Gaulonitis*.

And Beeſhterah, with her Suburbs.] Called *Aſhtaroth* in 1 *Chron.* vi. 71. by a very light Change; only leaving out the firſt Letter.

Two Cities.] The ſame Number that was given out of the other half of this Tribe, *ver.* 25.

Ver. 28. *Out of the Tribe of Iſſachar, Kiſhon, with her Suburbs.*] xix. 20. Called *Kedeſh*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 72.

And Dabareh, with her Suburbs.] Not mentioned before in this Book, but in 1 *Chron.* vi. 72.

Ver. 29. *And Jarmuth.*] Called *Ramoth*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 73.

And Engannim.] xx. 21. Called, *Anem*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 73.

Ver. 30. *And out of the Tribe of Aſher, Miſhal, with her Suburbs.*] Called *Miſhael*, xix. 26. and *Maſhal*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 75.

And Abdon.] Mentioned in that Place in the *Chronicles*; but not in the nineteenth Chapter of this Book. See *ver.* 31. of that Chapter.

Ver. 31. *Helkath, with her Suburbs.*] xix. 25. Called *Hukok*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 75.

And Rehob.] Mentioned there, and *Joſh.* xix. 28.

Ver. 32. *And out of the Tribe of Naphtali, Kedeſh in Galilee, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.*] xx. 7.

And Hammoth-dor, with her Suburbs.] Called ſimply *Hamath*, xix. 35. and *Hammoth*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 76.

And Kartan, with her Suburbs.] Called *Kirjathaim* in 1 *Chron.* vi. 76.

Three Cities.] This being a ſmaller Territory, it ſeems, than the reſt of the Tribes fore-mentioned, who gave *four*.

Ver. 33. *All the Cities of the Gerſhonites, according to their Families, were thirteen Cities, with their Suburbs.*] As was ſaid before, *ver.* 6.

Ver. 34. *And unto the Families of the Children of Merari, the reſt of the Levites.*] The remaining Families of the *Levites*; for there were three Heads of them; *Gerſhon*, *Kohath*, and *Merari*.

Out of the Tribe of Zebulun, Jokneam, with her Suburbs, and Kartah, with her Suburbs.] Of the former, ſee xix. 11. and of the latter, *ver.* 16.

Ver. 35. *Dimnah, with her Suburbs; Mahair, with her Suburbs.*] See xix. 15, 16.

Four Cities.] There are but two mentioned, 1 *Chron.* vi. 77. with quite different Names; the other two, it ſeems, being loſt before that Time.

Ver. 36. *And out of the Tribe of Reuben, Bezer, with her Suburbs.*] Which was one of the Cities of Refuge, xx. 8. tho' not here mentioned, as the reſt are in the foregoing Part of this Chapter; and in *ver.* 38.

And Kedemoth, with her Suburbs.] Theſe, and the two Cities in the following Verſe, *Kedemoth* and *Mephaath*, are mentioned as Cities in this Tribe, xiii. 18. And ſo they are in 1 *Chron.* vi. 78, 79. as *Levitical* Cities.

Ver. 37. *Kedemoth, with her Suburbs,* &c.] Some have urged againſt the Integrity of the *Hebrew* Text, that this and the foregoing Verſe are not to be found in ſome ancient Copies of the Bible; and indeed, the *Maſorites* acknowledge as much. But it is evident that they are found in Copies of very great Antiquity; and the Context ſhews, that they ought to be here; as Biſhop *Walton* obſerves in his *Conſiderator Conſidered*, Chap. 6. Sect. 14. And *Hottinger* alſo (who anſwers this Cavil more largely) obſerves, that they are in a moſt accurate MS. of the Duke of *Rohan*'s, written 1495. See his *Theſaurus Philolog.* L. 1. Cap. 2. Quæſt. 4. P. 181, *&c.* The *Maſorites*,

Maſorites, who take Notice of this Omiſſion, acknowledge in the Margin of this Verſe, that it was to be found in ſeveral Copies.

Ver. 38. *And out of the Tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead, with her Suburbs, to be a City of Refuge for the Slayer.*] xx. 1.

And Mahanaim, with her Suburbs.] This City was made by *Abner* the Royal Seat for *Iſhboſheth*, Βασίλειον ἐπίυησε, as *Joſephus* ſpeaks, L. 7. Antiq. Cap. 1.

Ver. 39. *Heſhbon with her Suburbs; Jazer, with her Suburbs; four Cities in all.*] Theſe, with the foregoing, are mentioned 1 *Chron.* vi. 80, 81.

Ver. 40. *So all the Cities for the Children of Merari, &c. were by their Lot twelve Cities.*] As was ſaid in general before, *ver.* 7.

Ver. 41. *All the Cities of the Levites within the Poſſeſſion of the Children of Iſrael, were forty and eight Cities, with their Suburbs.*] So God ordered by *Moſes*, *Numb.* xxxv. 7. And it is a Demonſtration that *Moſes* was divinely inſpired, to make ſuch an Appointment; before they knew whether, without ſtraitning the other Tribes, they could afford ſo many Cities to the *Levites*. For when *Joſhua* and *Caleb* went up to ſearch the Land (with the reſt, mentioned *Numb.* xiii.) they could have no Opportunity to take the Dimenſions of the Country; whereby *Moſes* might know there would be Room enough to allow the *Levites* ſo large a Proportion as this; but he was directed to it by a Divine Foreknowledge.

Ver. 42. *Theſe Cities were every one of them, with their Suburbs round about them.*] *Viz.* Two thouſand Cubits on every Side, round the City, as is ordered *Numb.* xxxv. 5. Which muſt be owned to be a great Proportion for this Tribe; which was the ſmalleſt of them all. But God would have an ample Proviſion made for his Miniſters; and they had none of the Land belonging to theſe Cities, as was before obſerved, but only Room for themſelves, and for their Cattle.

Thus were all theſe Cities.] Diſpoſed and ſettled according to the Divine Commandment. *Six* of which were Cities of Refuge; and the other *Forty-two* had the ſame Privileges, if the Inhabitants pleaſed, and at the Coſt of thoſe that fled thither for Safety. See upon *Numb.* xxxv. 6.

Ver. 43. *And God gave unto Iſrael all the Land, which he ſware to give unto their Fathers.*] He gave them a Right to the whole Country, (which was diſtributed among them, as he appointed, by a Lot which he ordered and directed) and he gave them the *actual Poſſeſſion* and Enjoyment of the greateſt Part of it; and he gave them *Power* to ſubdue the reſt (if they continued obedient to him) as ſoon as it was convenient. Which was exactly according to his Promiſe and Oath made to them; for they not being numerous enough to people the whole Country, at their firſt coming into it, he never intended to expel all the old Inhabitants at once, but by degrees; as we read expreſly, *Exod.* xxiii. 29, 30.

And they poſſeſſed it, and dwelt therein.] Went every Man to his Lot, and peopled the Country, as far as at preſent they were able.

Ver. 44. *And the LORD gave them Reſt round about, according to all that he ſware unto their Fathers.*] None moleſted them in their Poſſeſſions; but they ploughed, and ſowed, and reaped, *&c.* without any Diſturbance.

And there ſtood not a Man of all their Enemies before them.] For whoſoever had oppoſed them, were overthrown and deſtroyed by them; and, as it follows,

The LORD delivered all their Enemies into their Hand.] Which is not to be underſtood, as if all the People of *Canaan* were abſolutely under their Power; but that, as long as *Joſhua* lived, not a Man appeared to fight with them, but was delivered up unto them.

Ver. 45. *There failed not ought of any good Thing which the LORD had ſpoken unto the Houſe of Iſrael; all came to paſs.*] Which they themſelves (he tells them afterward, xxiii. 14.) knew very well, and could not but confeſs. But it muſt be underſtood according to the Explication of *ver.* 43. For the Time of fulfilling ſome Part of his Promiſe, was not come; and the Completing of what was begun, depended upon their Obedience to him. *But* (as *Conradus Pellicanus* here admoniſhes) *we are taught by this the Truth of the Divine Promiſes; and it ought to eſtabliſh the Belief of the Faithful, that it do not fluctuate; tho' the Promiſes of God ſeem to us to be fulfilled very ſlowly.*

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND Joſhua called the Reubenites, and Gadites, and the half Tribe of Manaſſeh.*] Who came as Auxiliaries to their Brethren when they paſſed over *Jordan*; as they had engaged to do, when they received their Inheritance on the other ſide of it, i. 12, 13, 14, *&c.*

Ver. 5. *And ſaid unto them, Ye have kept all that Moſes the Servant of the LORD commanded you: and have obeyed my Voice in all that I commanded you.*] *Numb.* xxxii. 20, *&c. Deut.* iii. 18, *&c.* In this and the following Verſes, he commends them for their Obedience unto God and unto him; and for their Fidelity to their Promiſes; and their Conſtancy and Patience in their Piety to God, and Love to their Brethren.

Ver. 3. *Ye have not left your Brethren theſe many Days, unto this Day.* Seven Years (ſome think, as many more) they had continued in their Service; as long as the War laſted with the *Canaanites*; yea, till they had ſeen their Brethren ſettled in the Lots fallen to them.

But have kept the Charge of the Commandment of the LORD our God.] During which Time they never refuſed what was expected from them, for the Help of their Brethren. See xi. 18. xiv. 10. This was a great Proof of their patient Obedience, in ſtaying ſo long from their Wives and Children.

Ver. 4. *And now the* LORD *your God hath given Reſt unto your Brethren, as he promiſed them.*] Which he had done for them before, i. 13.

Now therefore return to your Tents.] So he calls their Houſes, becauſe this was the common Word uſed for a long Time in the Wilderneſs, to ſignify an *Habitation.*

And unto the Land of your Poſſeſſion, which Moſes the Servant of the LORD *gave you on the other ſide Jordan.*] It was but reaſonable and juſt, that they ſhould go and enjoy what God had given them; now their Brethren were in a quiet Poſſeſſion of their Portion; and that their Fidelity in performing their Promiſe, ſhould be rewarded with the like, in diſmiſſing them, when they had done their Buſineſs. For they engaged to ſerve no longer, than till they had driven the *Canaanites* out of their Country, *Numb.* xxxii. 21.

Ver. 5. *But take diligent heed to do the Commandment of the Law, which Moſes the Servant of the* LORD *charged you.*] That is, to obſerve all his Precepts, (as they had done this of aiding their Brethren) and for that End, preſerve in Mind all that God had done for them. See *Deut.* iv. 9.

To love the LORD *your God, and to walk in all his Ways, and to keep his Commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to ſerve him with all your Heart, and with all your Soul.*] Eſpecially to worſhip the LORD alone, with ſincere Affection; which *Moſes* inculcated above all Things, before he left them, *Deut.* vi. 5, 13, 14. x. 12. xi. 13, 22. xx. 9. xxx. 6, 20.

Ver. 6. *So Joſhua bleſſed them, and ſent them away.*] He not only praiſed and commended them; but diſmiſſed them with a ſolemn Prayer to God for his Bleſſing upon them. And he ſeems firſt to have diſmiſſed with his Bleſſing the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*; and then to have bleſſed the *Manaſſites* by themſelves.

And they went unto their Tent.] In order to pack up their Goods, and make themſelves ready for their Departure.

Ver. 7. *Now to the one half of the Tribe of Manaſſeh, Moſes had given Poſſeſſion in Baſhan; but unto the other half thereof, gave Joſhua among their Brethren on this ſide Jordan Weſtward.*] This is repeated to ſhew why he mentioned only half the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, *ver.* 1. and to introduce what follows.

And when Joſhua had ſent them away alſo unto their Tents.] As he had done the *Reubenites* and *Gadites.*

Then he bleſſed them.] This ſeems to ſignify that he gave a peculiar Bleſſing to the *Manaſſites*; that is, rewarded their Services, by ſome Preſent which he made them: For ſo the Word *Bleſſing* (I obſerved before) ſometimes ſignifies, 2 *Kings* v. 15. And he did this the rather, becauſe the *Manaſſites* were near of Kin to the Children of *Ephraim*, (of which Tribe he himſelf was) and were now to be ſeparated from the reſt of their Brethren in *Canaan.*

Ver. 8. *And he ſpake unto them, ſaying.*] This Speech ſeems to be directed to the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*, as well as to the *Manaſſites*; tho' they had a peculiar Concern in it.

Return with much Riches unto your Tents, and with very much Cattle, and with Silver, and with Gold, &c.] As much as to ſay, Part with your Brethren contentedly and well pleaſed; laden with the Spoils which you have got in the Wars againſt the People of *Canaan.* For they had their Share in the Prey, as well as the other ſeven Tribes and half; and carried it away to their own Country.

Divide the Spoil of your Enemies with your Brethren.] He orders them, when they came home, to let thoſe that ſtaid on the other ſide *Jordan*, to defend their Wives, Children, and Cattle, to have a Share in the Spoil which they had gotten. For this was thought an equal thing by God himſelf in the War they had with the *Midianites*, before they came over *Jordan*; when twelve thouſand went out to fight; who had one half of the Spoil; the other half being divided among all the Congregation, that ſtaid at home, *Numb.* xxxi. 27. And it is very reaſonable to think that now the ſame Proportion was obſerved; the forty thouſand who went to help their Brethren in the War, having one half of the Spoil; and their Brethren who ſtaid to guard their Poſſeſſion, the other half: So that the Warriors had the far greater Share, as there was Reaſon; becauſe they had hazarded their Lives in the Enterprize. But in *David*'s Time, it was made a Law, that they who went to fight, and they that ſtaid to guard the Stuff, ſhould have an equal Share in the Prey, 1 *Sam.* xxx. 24, 25. See *Gen.* xiv. *ult.*

Ver. 9. *And the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manaſſeh, returned and departed from the Children of Iſrael out of Shiloh, which is in the Land of Canaan, to go into the Country of Gilead,* &c.] This ſhews that he gave them all his Bleſſing in *Shiloh*, where the Sanctuary was; and ſent them from thence, under the divine Protection, to their own Country: Which is here called *the Country of Gilead*; becauſe that was an eminent Part of their Country, divided between the Children of *Gad* and *Manaſſeh*; and here comprehends all the reſt of the Land, where the *Reubenites* lived.

Ver. 10. *And when they came to the Borders of Jordan.*] Or, *they came* (for the Word *when* is not in the *Hebrew*) unto the Banks of that River.

Which are in the Land of Canaan.] This ſeems to import that they built the Altar, mentioned in the End of the Verſe, before they went over *Jordan*, in the Land of *Canaan.* Which is not at all likely; for it would not have anſwered their Intention; which was to ſhew, that *Jordan* did not make ſuch a Separation between them and their Brethren, but that they were one People with thoſe in *Canaan*; where the Altar of God was in *Shiloh.* Therefore I take this to be a ſhort manner of Speech; ſignifying, that they came to the Borders of *Jordan* in the Land of *Canaan*; and paſſed over into their own Country on the other ſide of the River. And ſo the *Hebrew* Word *Geliloth* (which we tranſlate *Borders*) ſeems to ſignifiy, a certain Place near *Jordan*, to which they came. The *Vulgar Latin* tranſlates

tranſlates it *Heaps*; the LXX. in the *Vatican* Copy, retains the Word Γαλααὸδ (or Γαλιλωὸθ, as other Copies more truly have it) taking it for ſome noted Place, which was near to their Paſſage over *Jordan*.

The Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manaſſeh, built there an Altar by Jordan.] The Word *there* hath made it thought, that they built this Altar in the *Land of Canaan* before mention'd: But the Particle *Sham* relates to Time, as well as Place, and may be tranſlated *then*, as well as *there*. Examples of which there are in *Judg.* v. 21. *Prov.* viii. 27. compared with *ver.* 30. *Eccleſ.* iii. 17. and moſt plainly *Iſa.* xlviii. 16. And thus it is to be here interpreted, that before they went any farther, they ſtaid by *Jordan*, till they had built this Altar, on the Borders of their own Country: For ſo the next Verſe teaches us to expound it, and will admit of no other Senſe; where it is ſaid, they had built an Altar *over againſt the Land of Canaan*.

A great Altar to ſee to.] Which made a great Show, being very high and conſpicuous, that it might be ſeen afar off. For being built, not by a private Perſon, but by the whole Body of a great People, they thought they could not make it too ſtately and magnificent. And herein it differ'd ſo much from the Altar made by *Moſes*, that they thought perhaps it would adminiſter the leſs Occaſion to their Brethren, to ſuſpect it was intended for Sacrifice.

Ver. 11. *And the Children of Iſrael.*] That were in the Land of *Canaan*. This is an Inſtance of ſuch a ſhort Manner of Speech, as I take that in the foregoing Verſe to be; which muſt be made out by ſome ſuch Supplement as is there mention'd. For the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, &c. were *the Children of Iſrael*, as well as thoſe ſettled in the Land of *Canaan*.

Heard ſay.] This is an Argument the Altar was not built on their ſide of *Jordan*; for then they would have ſeen what they were doing, and hinder'd the Building; whereas they heard nothing of it till it was built.

Behold, the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manaſſeh, have built an Altar.] By a common Conſent.

Over-againſt the Land of Canaan, in the Borders of Jordan, at the Paſſage of the Children of Iſrael.] Either there where they now paſs'd over *Jordan*, or where they all paſs'd over when they enter'd *Canaan*, or at the uſual Place where every body was wont to paſs over, that they might take the more Notice of it. And here alſo were the *Geliloth* before mention'd, like thoſe on the other ſide; which ſeem to have been great *Banks* caſt up, to keep *Jordan* from overflowing too far.

Ver. 12. *And when the Children of Iſrael heard of it, the whole Congregation of the Children of Iſrael.*] Not all the People of the Land but their Elders, and Heads of their Tribes, who, in the foregoing Books, are often call'd by the Name of *Colledath* (*all the Congregation.*) See *Numb.* xxvii. 2. xxxii. 2. and Chap. xviii. of this Book, *ver.* 1.

Gathered themſelves together at Shiloh.] It ſeems they had been ſeparated, being gone to ſettle in their ſeveral Cities.

To go to War againſt them.] To conſult about it. For they imagin'd them to be Apoſtates from their Religion, which, as it required them to worſhip the LORD alone, and no other God, ſo at no other Place but that which he himſelf had choſen. Where he allow'd but one Altar, as there was but one God. See *Deut.* xii. 5, 6, 11, 13, 18, 26, 27. xiii. 12, &c. That Altar alſo, where he commanded Sacrifices to be offer'd, was to be but three Cubits high, (*Exod.* xxvii. 1.) ſo that they went not up to it by Steps, (*Exod.* xx. 26.) whereas this was an high Altar, like thoſe among the Heathens, who lov'd to ſacrifice on high Places, (*i. e.* Mountains) and alſo upon high and lofty Altars, which advanced their Sacrifices nearer Heaven. And this, perhaps, was one Thing that incenſed the Congregation now aſſembled, and made them think their Brethren were lapſed to Idolatry; either intending to worſhip other Gods, or the God of *Iſrael* in an unlawful Place and Manner.

Ver. 13. *And the Children of Iſrael ſent unto the Children of Reuben, and to the Children of Gad, and to the half Tribe of Manaſſeh into the Land of Gilead.*] Their Zeal did not ſo tranſport them, but that they prudently conſider'd, it was fit firſt to be rightly inform'd of the Matter of Fact; and, if any thing was amiſs, to endeavour to ſet it right by Counſel and Arguments, before they betook themſelves to Arms: In order to which, they ſent the Embaſſy here mention'd.

Phineas the Son of Eleazar the Prieſt.] A Perſon of very eminent Authority among them, and more likely to be receiv'd with due Regard, *Numb.* xxxi. 6.

Ver. 14. *And with him ten Princes, of each chief Houſe a Prince, throughout all the Tribes of Iſrael.*] Which were nine and an half; ſo that a Prince was choſen out of the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, as well as out of the other Nine.

And each one was an Head of the Houſe of their Fathers, among the Thouſands of Iſrael.] That is, they were *Chiliarchs*, as the LXX calls them, and the Chief among ſuch *Rulers of Thouſands* in the ſeveral Tribes, *Exod.* xviii. 21.

Ver. 15. *And they came unto the Children of Reuben, and to the Children of Gad, and to the half Tribe of Manaſſeh.*] Who hearing of their coming, held a Congregation, it is likely, of the chief Perſons among them, to receive their Meſſage.

Into the Land of Gilead.] So he calls here, and *ver.* 13. the Country of the two Tribes and half; by the Name of an eminent Part of it, which is put for the Whole, as I obſerv'd upon *ver.* 9.

And they ſpake unto them, ſaying.] Made the following Speech in the Aſſembly of the two Tribes and half, by the Mouth of *Phineas*.

Ver. 16. *Thus ſaith the whole Congregation of the LORD.*] The Repreſentatives of the whole People of *Iſrael*, in whoſe Name this Embaſſy was ſent.

What Treſpaſs is this that you have committed againſt the LORD *God of Iſrael.*] They were not able to expreſs the Heinouſneſs of it.

To turn away this Day from following the LORD.] So ſoon after they had ſeen his wonderful Works, and receiv'd ſuch a Charge from *Joſhua*, as he gave them at their Departure from *Canaan*, *ver.* 5.

In that you have built you an Altar.] which they ſuppoſed was for Sacrifice.

That you might rebel this Day againſt the LORD?] Which was direct Oppoſition to his expreſs Command, immediately after he gave them the Law from Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* xx. 24. And ſee the Places before named, upon *ver.* 12.

Ver. 17. *Is the Iniquity of Peor too little for us, from which we are not cleanſed to this Day.*] He inſtances in this, being himſelf an Actor in the Puniſhment of it, tho' it deſerv'd ſtill greater Puniſhment. For that's the Meaning of *we are not cleanſed*; have not ſufficiently ſuffer'd for that Sin; there being ſome remaining (he feared) that were infected with thoſe Idolatrous Inclinatious, whom God might juſtly cut off.

Although there was a Plague in the Congregation of the LORD.] Which deſtroyed Twenty and four Thouſand, *Numb.* xxv. 9.

Ver. 18. *But that you muſt turn away this Day from following the* LORD?] Commit more Sins of that Nature. For whether they intended to worſhip other Gods, or to worſhip the God of *Iſrael* in a Manner he did not allow, it was, in his Eſteem, Idolatry.

And it will be, ſeeing you rebel to day againſt the Lord.] It muſt be acknowledg'd, that they were a little too haſty in concluding their Brethren to be Rebels, before they had ask'd them for what Purpoſe they had erected this Altar, which ſhould properly have been the firſt Queſtion; but their pious Fear, leſt God ſhould be offended, made them immediately fall into this vehement Expoſtulation.

That to Morrow.] That is, quickly, or ſpeedily.

He will be wroth with the whole Congregation of Iſrael.] With you for committing this Sin, and with us for not puniſhing it.

Ver. 19. *Notwithſtanding.*] Or rather, *and now*, as the LXX tranſlate the *Hebrew* Particle *Veac.*

If the Land of your Poſſeſſion be unclean.] They imagin'd the *Reubenites*, and *Gadites*, and *Manaſſites*, might take their Land to be leſs Holy, for want of an Altar, and ſuch a Token of the Divine Preſence, as there was in the Tabernacle. This appears to be the Senſe, by what follows: Which our Mr. *Mede* carries ſomething further, in his Obſervations concerning the Appropriation of ſome Place for the Worſhip of God: Which ſo univerſally prevail'd from the Beginning, that it was believ'd, in thoſe elder Times, that thoſe Countries and Territories, wherein no place was ſet apart for God's Worſhip, were unhallow'd and unclean This, he thinks, may be rightly gather'd from theſe Words. See Book II. upon *Eccleſ.* v. 1. p. 433.

Then paſs ye over to the Land of the Poſſeſſion of the LORD, *wherein the* LORD's *Tabernacle dwelleth, and take Poſſeſſion among us.*] This expreſſes a wonderful Zeal for God, and the common Good, wherewith they were at preſent poſſeſs'd; which made them deſire rather to give up ſome of their own Land to them, than have them fall from their Religion.

But rebel not againſt the LORD, *nor rebel againſt us.*] They deſire them not to break the common Bond that ty'd them to each other, as well as unto God, which was the ſame Religion.

In building an Altar, beſide the Altar of the LORD *our God.*] Which was, in effect, to forſake the LORD.

Ver. 20. *Did not Achan the Son of Zerah.*] Deſcended from *Zerah*, vii. 17, 18.

Commit a Treſpaſs in an accurſed Thing.] This was a freſher Inſtance than that of *Baal-Peor*, *ver.* 17.

And Wrath fell upon all the Congregation of Iſrael? And that Man periſhed not alone in his Iniquity.] vii. 1, 2, *&c.* In this he explains what he ſaid, *ver.* 18. that the whole Congregation was in danger to fall under the Divine Diſpleaſure by their Apoſtacy.

Ver. 21. *Then the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, and the half Tribe of Manaſſeh, anſwered and ſaid unto the Heads of the Thouſands of Iſrael.*] Some of the Heads of their Tribes made the following Reply, in the Name of all the reſt.

Ver. 22. *The* LORD *God of Gods, the* LORD *God of Gods.*] In the Hebrew, *the God of Gods, the* LORD; *the God of Gods, the* LORD. Where there are three Names of God, *El*, *Eloim*, and *Jehovah*; ſignifying that they own'd no other God, but him whom their Fore-fathers worſhip'd, by what Name ſoever he was call'd: That God, who is infinitely above all Creatures; the Fountain of all other Beings: And they double the Expreſſion of their Devotion to him, that they might ſignify their Earneſtneſs and Vehemency to purge themſelves from the Crime objected to them.

Some of the ancient *Jews* thought a great Myſtery is contain'd in theſe Words: For the *Midraſch Tillim* upon the *Fiftieth* Pſalm, (quoted by *Mart. à Raymund*, in *Pugio Fidei*, P. III. Diſtinct. 1. Cap. 4.) thus diſcourſes, "What did they ſee, that they mention theſe "Words twice, *El*, *Elohim*, *Jehovah*; *El*, *Elo-* "*him*, *Jehovah*? They ſaid, *God*, *God*, *Jehovah*, "the firſt Time, becauſe by theſe the World "was created; and they ſaid *God*, *God*, *Jehovah*, "the ſecond Time, becauſe by theſe the Law "was given." Where he plainly inſinuates a Plurality of Perſons, ſaying, *Behen*, (*by theſe*) the World was created, *&c.* and refers to the firſt Words of *Geneſis*, where it is ſaid, *Elohim* created in the Beginning the Heaven and the Earth. No wonder then that Chriſtians have been of the ſame Opinion, and thought theſe three Names denoted the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: As the Author of the old *Nitzacon* (Three hundred Years before that of *R. Lipman*'s)

man's) acknowledges, p. 59. Unto which he gives no Anſwer, but only this, That theſe three belong to one God; which we alſo acknowledge.

He knoweth.] They appeal to him who ſearcheth the Hearts of Men, and their moſt ſecret Deſigns.

And Iſrael they ſhall know.] By ſeeing their Conſtancy in the Religion of their Anceſtors.

If it be in Rebellion, or if in Tranſgreſſion againſt the LORD, (ſave us not this Day).] They turn their Speech on a ſudden (as is uſual in great Paſſion) unto God himſelf; deſiring they may not live, but be immediately deſtroy'd by him, if they intended either to throw off his Worſhip and Service; or to worſhip him any other Way, than according to his Appointment.

Ver. 23. *That we have built us an Altar to turn from following the LORD, or if to offer Burnt-Offerings thereon, or Meat-Offerings, or if to offer Peace-offerings thereon, let the LORD himſelf require it.*] That is, they deſire God to puniſh it, (for ſo the Phraſe *requite it* ſignifies, *Deut.* xviii. 19.) if they intended to offer any Sort of Sacrifice whatſoever, upon this Altar; which they acknowledge had been to turn from their Religion.

Ver. 24. *And if we have not rather done it for fear of this Thing.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Deaga* (which we tranſlate *Fear*) ſignifies ſuch Anxiety in their Mind, as gave them much Trouble; till they thought of this way to give themſelves Eaſe.

Saying, In time to come your Children might ſpeak unto our Children, ſaying, What have you to do with the LORD God of Iſrael?] They were afraid a Time might come, when they ſhould be look'd upon as Aliens, who had no Right to come to the Tabernacle, and the Altar, to offer Sacrifice there. The *Targum* hath it, *What have you to do with the WORD of the LORD God of Iſrael?*

Ver. 25. *For the LORD hath made Jordan a Border between us and you, ye Children of Reuben,* &c.] Divided us from you by the River *Jordan.*

Ye have not Part in the LORD; ſo ſhall your Children make our Children ceaſe from fearing the LORD.] Make them loſe their Religion (which is call'd the *Fear of God*) by pretending they are none of the LORD's People. It was not likely, one would think, ſuch a Thing ſhould happen; but they did not know what Length of Time, and their Diſtance from them, might do, to make them forget their Relation unto them, and unto God; their Country being no Part of the Land of Promiſe, as *Canaan* was. Here again the *Targum* hath it; *Ye have no Part in the Word of the LORD.*

Ver. 26. *Therefore we ſaid, Let us now prepare to build us an Altar, not for Burnt-offering, or for Sacrifice.*] They again diſclaim that, before they give the true Reaſon of what they had done.

Ver. 27. *But it may be a Witneſs between us and you, and our Generations after us.*] For it had been an ancient Way of preſerving the Remembrance of Things, by raiſing ſuch Structures to teſtify to them, *Gen.* xxx. 48. and uſed afterwards by *Joſhua* himſelf, xxxiv. 27.

That we might do the Service of the LORD before him, with our Burnt-offerings, &c.] Have the Privilege to come and Worſhip God at the Tabernacle, by offering ſuch Sacrifices as the reſt of the *Iſraelites* did.

That your Children may not ſay unto our Children, in time to come, Ye have no Part in the LORD.] That they might not be thruſt away from the Altar when they brought their Sacrifices, under a Pretence that they were none of God's People, becauſe they did not live in the Land which he promis'd to their Fathers. Here the *Targum* uſes the ſame Language again, *No Part in the WORD of the LORD.*

Ver. 28. *Therefore ſaid we, That it ſhall be, when they ſhall ſo ſay to us, or to our Generations in time to come, that we may ſay again.*] Have a Reply ready, if ſuch a thing as we fear ſhould happen.

Behold the Pattern of the Altar of the LORD which our Fathers made.] Which they could not have exactly imitated, if they had not been acquainted with it, and worſhipp'd God there with their Brethren.

Not for Burnt-offering, nor for Sacrifice.] They thought this could not be too often repeated, that they might not be miſunderſtood.

But it is a Witneſs between us and you.] A publick Teſtimony that we ought not to be excluded from the Worſhip of God among you, being of the ſame Communion with you.

Ver. 29. *God forbid that we ſhould rebel againſt the LORD, and turn this Day from following the LORD, to build an Altar for Burnt-offerings,* &c.] They utterly renounce all ſuch Intentions, as they were ſuſpected to have; proteſting again moſt ſolemnly, they meant not to rebel *againſt the WORD of the LORD*, as the *Targum* again expreſſes it.

Ver. 30. *And when Phineas the Prieſt, and the Princes of the Congregation, and Heads of the Thouſands of Iſrael which were with him, heard the Words that the Children of Reuben,* &c. *ſpake, it pleaſed them.*] They not only acquieſced in their Anſwer, but were very glad to hear it.

Ver. 31. *And Phineas the Son of Eleazar the Prieſt, ſaid unto the Children of Reuben,* &c.] He ſpake to them in the Name of all his Company.

This Day we perceive that the LORD is among us, becauſe ye have not committed this Treſpaſs againſt the LORD.] He thankfully acknowledges the gracious Preſence of God with them, in preſerving the *Reubenites*, &c. from ſo great a Sin, as they fear'd they had committed; and all the People of *Iſrael* from ſuch heavy Judgments, as it would have deſerv'd.

Now you have delivered the Children of Iſrael out of the Hand of the LORD.] Who would have puniſhed them for this Schiſm, if they had been guilty of it, and not cenſur'd for it. This whole Verſe runs thus in the *Targum*; *This Day we perceive that the SCHECHINAH* (or Divine Majeſty) *is among us, becauſe ye*

have not committed this Treſpaſs againſt the WORD *of the* LORD; *whereby you have delivered the Children of Iſrael out of the Hand of the* WORD *of the* LORD.

Ver. 32. *And Phineas the Son of Eleazar the Prieſt, and the Princes, returned from the Children of Reuben and from the Children of Gad, out of the Land of Gilead,* &c.] Under *Reuben* and *Gad*, the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh* is included, both here, and *ver.* 25, 32, 33. as under the *Land of Gilead* is included the whole Country of theſe Tribes. The LXX. thought good to add here (and in all thoſe Verſes) expreſly, *and the half Tribe of Manaſſeh*; tho' not in the *Hebrew*.

And brought them Word again.] Inform'd them how they found things among their Brethren.

Ver. 33. *And the Thing pleaſed the Children of Iſrael.*] They were ſatisfy'd in the Account they gave them; and approved of what their Brethren had done.

And they bleſſed God.] As *Phinehas* had done, that their Brethren had not offended the Divine Majeſty, as they ſuſpected.

And did not intend to go up againſt them in Battle.] Laid aſide that Intention, (which was in their Mind, *ver.* 12.) and purſu'd it no further.

To deſtroy the Land wherein the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad dwelt.] For ſo they thought they were Bound to do by the Command, *Deut.* xiii. 12, *&c.* which extended to a whole Country, as well as a City.

Ver. 34. *And the Children of Reuben, and the Children of Gad, called the Altar* ED.] That is, *a Witneſs*; for the Reaſon following.

For it ſhall be a Witneſs between us that the LORD *is God.*] That we own no other God but JEHOVAH; and him only will we worſhip, as he hath commanded. So the LXX ὅτι Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς αὐτῶν ἐστι, *that the* LORD *is their God.*

In all this whole Relation from *ver.* 10. to the End of the Chapter, there being no Mention of *Joſhua*, who is not once nam'd, either as ſending theſe Embaſſadors, or receiving the Report which they brought back, ſome have thence entertain'd a Conceit, that *Joſhua* was dead before this happen'd; and conſequently that he could not be the Author of this Book. But it is manifeſt ſuch Perſons have a great Deſire to weaken the Authority of theſe Holy Books, or elſe they would not draw ſuch Conſequences from ſuch frivolous Obſervations. For it is evident, that all this came to paſs not long after *Joſhua* had diſmiſs'd theſe Tribes, with good Counſel, and with his Bleſſing: For they returning immediately after this to their own Country, went no further than *Jordan* before they erected this Altar; upon which thoſe great Perſons went to expoſtulate with them, and heard their Apology, and came back, and reported it. All this is told in one continu'd and coherent Hiſtory, (as it were with one Breath) without the leaſt Signification of any conſiderable Time that paſs'd between one Part of it and the other. And the LXX were ſo well ſatisfy'd of this, that they took the Anſwer of the *Reubenites*, *Gadites*, and *Manaſſites* to have been brought to *Joſhua*; for they ſay he impoſed the Name of *ED* upon the Altar. So their words are in the *Vatican* Edition, which is moſt common among us, Καὶ ἐπωνόμασεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τ Βωμὸν, *&c.*

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs, a long time after that the* LORD *had given Reſt to Iſrael from all their Enemies round about.*] Some take it to have been fourteen Years after their Conqueſt of the Country, xi. 23. and ſeven Years after the Diviſion of it. See xiv. 10.

That Joſhua waxed old and ſtricken in Age.] This was ſaid of him before the Land was divided, (xiii. 1.) and a Portion thereof given unto him: Where he built a City; which took up ſo much Time, that probably he was now in the laſt Year of his Life.

Ver. 2. *And Joſhua called for all Iſrael.*] Sent out a Summons to them, to come to him at *Timnah-Serah*, where he liv'd, as the *Jews* will have it; but rather to *Shiloh*, where they might appear before God, as well as before him, and have the greater Regard to his Words.

And for their Elders, &c.] The Word *and* is not in the *Hebrew* Text, and therefore theſe Words are an Explication of what he means by *all Iſrael:* Not all the People, (who could not, without great Inconvenience, come thither, and could not all hear him if they did) but their *Elders*; that is, the great *Sanhedrim*, as they were call'd in future Times; and *for their Heads*, that is of their Tribes and Families, and *for their Judges*, who were ſettled in all the leſſer Cities; and *for their Officers*, who attended upon the Judges to execute their Sentence.

And ſaid unto them, I am old and ſtricken in Age.] He would make them ſenſible, that this might be the laſt Time he ſhould be able to ſpeak of them, which might move them to give greater Attention unto what he ſaid.

Ver. 3. *And ye have ſeen.*] Or rather, *behold ye have ſeen*; for ſo the Particle *ve* (which we tranſlate *and*) ſometimes ſignifies, *Gen.* xxiv. 31. *Behold, I have prepared the Houſe,* &c.

All that the LORD *hath done unto all theſe Nations, becauſe of you.*] For your Sake; that he might make Room for you in their Country, by expelling them out of it.

For the LORD *your God is he that hath fought for you.*] See i. 9. xi. 8, 10. 42. xi. 6. The *Targum* here ſaith (as in x. 42). *The* LORD *your God, his* WORD *fought for you.* See xiv. 12.

Ver. 4. *Behold, I have divided unto you by Lot, theſe Nations that remain, to be an Inheritance for your Tribes, from Jordan, with all the Nations that I have cut off, even unto the great Sea Weſtward.*] The Meaning is, he had divided among them the whole Land of *Canaan*, from *Jordan* in the Eaſt, to the *Mediterranean* in the

the West; as well that Part of the Land which remain'd still unconquer'd, as that out of which they had expell'd the ancient Inhabitants.

Ver. 5. *And the LORD your God he shall expel them from before you, and drive them from out of your Sight*, &c.] This relates unto those who *remained* unsubdu'd (mention'd in the Beginning of the foregoing Verse) whom they should undoubtedly conquer, and possess their Country, if they adhered to God in faithful Obedience; as he exhorts them in the following Part of this Chapter.

Ver. 6. *Be ye therefore very couragious, to keep, and to do.*] Or, (as it may be translated) *by observing and doing.*

All that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses.] Which was the Condition upon which God promis'd to continue them in the Possession of this Land. By this it is evident, that the Book of the Law of *Moses* was extant in those Days, and that the People read it.

That ye turn not aside therefrom, to the Right Hand or to the Left.] See upon *Deut.* v. 32.

Ver. 7. *That ye come not among these Nations, these that remain amongst you.*] Have no Familiarity with them, especially by Marriage.

Neither make mention of the Name of their Gods.] With any Sort of Respect to them. See *Exod.* xxiii. 13. and *Deut.* xii. 3.

Nor cause to swear by them.] Not make a *Gentile* swear by the Name of his God; which was utterly unlawful, as *Selden* observes out of *Maimonides in Aboda Zara.* See Lib. 2. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 13. For this was to suppose they had Knowledge of Mens Thoughts, and Power to punish those that forswore themselves. And the forbidding this, was also to secure them from making Leagues and Covenants with the *Gentiles*, which they would not look upon as binding without an Oath.

Neither serve them.] By offering Sacrifices, or Praying, or making Vows to them, tho' never so secretly.

Nor bow yourselves to them] As all inward Reverence, so all outward Respect likewise was forbidden to be paid to them; especially open and publick Acts of Worship. Interpreters here observe a Gradation from Familiarity with them, to the most gross Idolatry, in which their Friendship with these People concluded.

Ver. 8. *But cleave unto the LORD your God, as you have done unto this Day.*] A remarkable Instance of which they had all lately given, when the Nine Tribes and half were so unanimously resolved to punish Idolatry, with the Extirpation of those that were guilty of it; (xxii. 33.) and the other also most zealously disclaimed all Inclinations to it, *ver.* 22, 29.

Ver. 9. *For the LORD had driven out from before you great Nations, and strong.*] The seven Nations of *Canaan*, who dwelt in strong Cities, and brought mighty Armies against them, with Horses and Chariots, and were some of them Gigantick Persons, xi. 4, 22.

But as for you, no Man hath been able to stand before you unto this Day.] None that gave them Battle; tho' from some of their strong Cities they had not yet driven them. See xxi. 44.

Ver. 10. *One Man of you shall chase a Thousand.*] He gives them Hope of a good Success for the future, as they had hitherto. *Levit.* xxvi. 8.

For the LORD your God is he that fighteth for you, as he hath promised you.] But he would not have them ascribe it to their own Courage, but to the Divine Power, *Deut.* xxxii. 30. Here again the *Targum* hath it *the WORD of the Lord* &c. as *ver.* 3.

Ver. 11. *Take good heed therefore unto yourselves, that ye love the LORD your God.*] It highly therefore concerned them to keep close to the Worship and Service of God alone, with sincere Love to him; since all their Happiness depended upon his Favour to them; for that this is meant by *loving God*, appears from the following Verse; and from *Deut.* vi. 4, 5. x. 12. xi. 22.

Ver. 12. *Else if you do in any wise go back.*] From God, and fall to Idolatry.

And cleave unto the Remnant of these Nations, even these that remain among you.] Embrace their Errors, as the *Vulgar* translates it; which they might easily do by making Friendship with them, as the Phrase properly signifies.

And shall make Marriages with them.] Which was the Effect of their Familiarity wtih them.

And go in unto them, and they to you.] The same Thing that was said before in other Words, which only signify the Consummation of Marriage; which was strictly forbidden them, *Exod.* xxiii. 32. xxxiv. 12, 15, 16. *Deut.* vii. 3.

Ver. 13. *Know for a Certainty that the LORD your God will no more drive out any of these Nations from before you.*] As he had hitherto done, and promised still to do, if they would be obedient, *ver.* 8, 9. The *Targum* saith *the WORD of the LORD will no more drive*, &c.

But they shall be Snares and Traps unto you.] Remain in the Land to inveigle and seduce them into further Impiety. See *Exod.* xxxiv. 12. *Deut.* vii. 4, 16.

And Scourges in your Sides.] Bring sore Chastisements upon them; for this alludes to the Lashes that were given Offenders upon their Sides, *Ecclus.* xxx. 12. xlii. 5.

And Thorns in your Eyes.] Most grievously afflict them. See *Numb.* xxxiii. 55.

Until ye perish from off this good Land, which the LORD your God hath given you.] For with the Love and Favour of God, they forfeited also their Inheritance which he had bestowed on them.

Ver. 14. *Behold, this Day I am going the Way of all the Earth.*] Shall die shortly, as all Men must one time or other; therefore hearken to the Words of a dying Man.

And ye know in all your Hearts, and in all your Souls.] Are all fully convinced.

That not one Thing hath failed, of all the good Things which the LORD your God ſpake concerning you, &c.] See upon xxi. 45. And God was as good as his Word ever after, as *Solomon* acknowledges, 1 *Kings* viii. 56.

Ver. 15. *therefore it ſhall come to paſs, that as all good Things are come upon you which the LORD your God promiſed you; ſo ſhall the LORD.*] When he ceaſed to be *their God.*

Bring upon you all evil Things, &c.] According to what *Moſes* had predicted at large, *Levit.* xxvi. and *Deut.* xxviii. In my Annotations upon which laſt Chapter, I have demonſtrated, that not one Thing hath failed of all the Threatnings there mentioned, but all literally fulfilled to a Tittle: For God's Faithfulneſs is no leſs viſible in fulfilling his Threatnings, than his Promiſes.

Ver. 16. *When ye have tranſgreſſed the Covenant of the LORD your God which he commanded you, and have gone and ſerved other Gods*, &c.] This was the principal Thing in the Covenant, that they ſhould have no other Gods but him alone; as I have obſerved from a great Number of Places in the Book of *Deuteronomy.*

Then ſhall the Anger of the LORD be kindled againſt you, and ye ſhall periſh quickly from off the good Land which he hath given unto you.] See *Deut.* xxviii. 20.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND Joſhua gathered all the Tribes of Iſrael.*] It is likely that *Joſhua*, living longer than he expected, when he made the foregoing Speech to them, called the People together once more, to give them good Advice before he died; as *Moſes* made a great many Speeches to them (I obſerv'd upon the Book of *Deuteronomy*) before his Departure from them; Or, perhaps, it was the uſual Cuſtom of *Joſhua* to take Occaſion often to call them together, and put them in mind of their Duty. And theſe two Exhortations, which he made to them in the latter End of his Life, he thought fit to record.

To Schechem.] Some will have this Place to be the ſame with *Shiloh*; call'd here *Schechem* becauſe it was in the Country of *Schechem*, and not far from it. The LXX alſo call it Σηλὼ, both here, and *ver.* 25. It is plain alſo, by the latter End of the Verſe, that they aſſembled there where God dwelt, which was in *Shiloh:* Yet all this is not ſufficient to make us think they were not ſummon'd to the City call'd *Schechem:* For there is no good Reaſon for calling *Shiloh* by this Name; it being (as St. *Hierom* ſaith) ten Miles from *Schechem:* And all other Copies of the LXX, but the *Vatican*, having Συχὲμ, not Σηλώ. And as for their appearing before God at this Place, I ſhall give an Account of it in the End of this Verſe; and now only ſay, that it is likely *Joſhua*, who was the ſupreme Governor of God's People, being old and infirm, cauſed the Ark, for this Time, to be brought to *Schechem*, being near to him, that he might renew the Covenant with the People in that Place where *Abraham* firſt ſettled, when he came into the Land of *Canaan*, and where he built an Altar, and God eſtabliſh'd his Covenant with him, (*Gen.* xii. 6, 7.) and where the Patriarchs were bury'd, (*Acts* vii. 15, 16.) and where he was about to lay the Bones of *Joſeph*, (*ver.* 32. of this Chapter) and where the *Iſraelites*, at their firſt Entrance into *Canaan*, renew'd their Covenant with God, *Joſh.* viii. 30, &c. For *Ebal* and *Gerzim* were hard by *Schechem.*

And called for the Elders of Iſrael, and for their Heads, and for their Judges, and for their Officers.] The ſame Perſons mention'd xxiii. 2. Which Places give us a diſtinct Account of the Perſons concern'd in the Government of the *Iſraelites*; as *Conſt. L' Empereur* obſerves, in his Annotations upon *Bertram de Repub. Judaica*, P. 362, 395, 396.

And they preſented themſelves before God.] At his Tabernacle; which was, as I ſaid, for the preſent brought hither. For it is plain, as *Cornel. Bertram* obſerves, (L. *de Republ. Judaica*, Cap. 15. P. 249.) the Kings or chief Rulers of *Iſrael* had a Power to carry the Ark from the Place of its conſtant Reſidence, when there was a great Occaſion for it, 1 *Sam.* iv. 3, 4. 2 *Sam.* xv. 24. And now at this great Aſſembly of the whole Nation by their Repreſentatives, there was a juſt Reaſon for its being brought hither, (ſeeing *Joſhua* could not conveniently, by reaſon of his great old Age, go to *Shiloh*) that it might be a more ſolemn Meeting, being held in the Preſence of God. Mr. *Mede* hath another Notion of this Matter; for he thinks that there was a *Proſeucha*, or *praying Place*, erected by the *Iſraelites* (at leaſt by the *Ephraimites*, in whoſe Lot *Shechem* was) after they had ſubdued the Country, that they might reſort hither to call upon God, when they were not able to go as far as the Tabernacle. Many ſuch Places he makes account there were; of which ſee more on *ver.* 26.

Ver. 2. *And Joſhua ſaid unto all the People.*] That were there preſent, *viz.* the *Elders*, *Heads*, *Judges*, and *Officers*, mention'd in the foregoing Verſe; who were to report his Words to all the People.

Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael.] This is an Argument, that *Joſhua* ſpake all that follows by a Divine Impulſe; for he begins his Speech in the ſolemn Form uſed by the Prophets (*thus ſaith the LORD*) and introduces God himſelf ſpeaking in his own Perſon. From whence it may be inferr'd, he was a *Prophet*, as well as the *Ruler* of God's People.

Your Fathers dwelt on the other ſide of the Flood.] That is, of the River *Euphrates.*

In old Time.] A long time before they came from *Ur* of the *Chaldees* into *Haran*, *Gen.* xi. 28, 31.

Even Terah, the Father of Abraham, and the Father of Nahor.] Theſe were *Terah*'s two eldeſt Sons, *Gen.* xi. 26.

And they ſerved other Gods.] All agree that *Terah* was an Idolater, living in that Country from whence, as many think, Idolatry firſt came, *Gen.* xxxi. 19. The *Jews* in *Schalſch. Hakkabala* ſay, he was a *Prieſt*, ſee *Hottinger* in his

his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. P. 290. Others of them ſay, he was a *Statuary*, who made Images of ſeveral *Materials*, λέγων τέτες εἶναι θεὸς, *ſaying, Theſe were Gods*; as *Suidas* ſpeaks, who, together with *Epiphanius*, is of this Opinion. See *Bochart.* in his *Phaleg.* Lib. 2. Cap. 5. *Abraham* himſelf alſo, moſt agree, was bred up in the ſame Idolatry; tho' ſome few deny it; as *Hottinger* obſerves in the ſame Place; where he alledges the Words of *Maimonides*, who ſaith, he was converted to the Worſhip of the Creator of All in the 48th Year of his Age; and that his Father *Terah* alſo repented, and worſhipped the true and only God. See upon *Gen.* xi. 31.

Ver. 3. *And I took your Father Abraham from the other Side of the Flood.*] From that Idolatrous Country where he was born and educated. Which is mention'd as a ſingular Obligation upon the *Iſraelites* to adhere unto God, who ſingled out the Father of their Families, ſo many Ages ago, to be his Worſhipper. This *Maimonides*, having Occaſion to mention theſe Words of *Joſhua*, repreſents in very pathetical Expreſſions: "How great is the Benefit, *ſaith* "*he*, that we receive by theſe Precepts, which "have freed us from ſuch a grand Error in "which our Father was educated, and con-"verted us to the true Belief of God? by "teaching us that he created all Things, and "that he is to be worſhipp'd and lov'd, and "fear'd, and he only; and that there is no "great Labour required to do his Will, but "only the Love and Fear of him, in which "two all his Worſhip is perfected, *&c. More Nevochim*, P. 3. Cap. 29.

And led him.] From *Charran*, after his Father's Death.

Throughout all the Land of Canaan.] Till he came to *Schechem*, (where the *Iſraelites* now were aſſembled) and ſo to *Beth-el*; and ſo on ſtill toward the South of the Land of *Canaan*, *Gen.* xii. 6, 8, 9.

And multiplied his Seed, and gave him Iſaac.] In order to the fulfilling of his Promiſe, *Gen.* xv. 5. he beſtow'd a Son upon him, when he was an hundred Years old, *Gen.* xxi. 1, 2, *&c.*

Ver. 4. *And I gave unto Iſaac, Jacob and Eſau.*] Who had a very numerous Iſſue, *Gen.* xxv. 24, *&c.*

And I gave unto Eſau Mount Seir to poſſeſs it.] He and his Brother being grown ſo rich, and their Cattle ſo increas'd, that there was not Room for them both, in the Land of *Canaan*, where they ſojourn'd, *Gen.* xxxvi. 6, 7, 8.

And Jacob and his Children went down into Egypt.] Tho' *Eſau* left the Land of *Canaan* entirely to him, yet the Time was not come when God intended to plant his Poſterity in it; but they were forced to go down into *Egypt*, where they ſuffer'd a cruel Bondage, *Gen.* xlvi. 6. *Exod.* i. 11, *&c.* So the LXX explain it.

Ver. 5. *I ſent Moſes alſo and Aaron.*] And when they were multiply'd exceedingly, (*Exod.* i. 7, 14, 20.) theſe two great Perſons were ſent to deliver them from that Bondage, *Exod.* iii. 10. iv. 14.

And I plagued Egypt, according to that I did amongſt them.] Smote it with thoſe Signs (as the LXX explain) which are related in that Book of *Exodus*.

And afterward I brought you out.] By thoſe wonderful Plagues they were at laſt conſtrain'd to let the *Iſraelites* depart, as they deſired, *Exod.* xii. 31, *&c.*

Ver. 6. *And I brought your Fathers out of Egypt, and you came unto the Sea.*] When he had brought them out (as is related *Exod.* xii. 40.) they were led by God through the Way of the Wilderneſs of the Red Sea, *Exod.* xiii. 18. by which they encamp'd, and were in very great Straits, xiv. 9.

And the Egyptians purſued after your Fathers with Chariots and Horſemen into the Red Sea.] Imagining them to be in ſuch Difficulties, that they could not eſcape out of their Hand, *Exod.* xiv. 3.

Ver. 7. *And when they cried unto the LORD, he put Darkneſs between you and the Egyptians.*] So that when they had overtaken them, they could not ſee where they were, *Exod.* xiv. 10, 19, 20.

And brought the Sea upon them, and covered them.] Inſomuch that they march'd after them into the Sea, where they were overwhelmed, *Exod.* xiv. 27, 28.

And your Eyes have ſeen what I have done in Egypt.] Or, *upon the Egyptians.* He appeals to them for the Truth of this, who had ſeen them lie dead upon the Sea Shore, *Exod.* xiv. 30, 31. For their *Elders*, to whom he now ſpeaks, (*ver.* 1.) were all then there: and now not only Men of great Dignity, but (many of them at leaſt) of great Age.

And ye dwelt in the Wilderneſs a long Seaſon.] Forty Years, *Numb.* xiv. 33. where he gave them a Law, and fed them miraculouſly, *&c.*

Ver. 8. *And I brought you into the Land of the Amorites, which dwelt on the other ſide Jordan.*] Towards the latter End of that Time, *Numb.* xxi. 20, 21.

And they fought with you, and I gave them into your Hand, &c.] See there, *ver.* 23, 24, 33, *&c.*

Ver. 9. *Then Balak, the Son of Zippor, King of Moab, aroſe, and warred againſt Iſrael.*] He did not actually draw out his Forces and fall upon them, but he prepared them and made them ready, with an Intention to drive them from his Coaſt, if *Balaam* could have diſabled them by his Curſes; which ſufficiently appears from *Numb.* xxii. 11. *David Camius* therefore notes pertinently, *the Deſign or Contrivance is reputed the Work itſelf.*

And ſent and called Balaam the Son of Beor to curſe you.] See *Numb.* xxii. 5, 6, *&c.*

Ver. 10. *But the LORD would not hearken unto Balaam.*] Who had a great Inclination to do what *Balak* deſired; and one would think by this, begg'd of God to give him Leave to uſe his Arts to do the *Iſraelites* Miſchief: And when this was deny'd him; yet obtaining Licence to go to the King of *Moab*, he went with theſe Intentions, and with Hope he might prevail with God to ſuffer him to proſecute his Deſign, *Numb.* xxii. 32.

Therefore he bleſſed you ſtill: So I delivered you out of his Hand.] He all along pronounced nothing but Bleſſings on them, inſtead of Curſes, notwithſtanding all the Attempts that were made to the contrary, *Numb.* xxiii. and xxiv. Which was to be aſcribed to the overruling Power of God, who hinder'd him from hurting them.

Ver. 11. *And ye went over Jordan.*] Having vanquiſh'd the two Kings of the *Amorites* on the other Side of it, and got quit of all other Enemies, (the *Moabites* and *Midianites*) God in a wonderful Manner brought them into *Canaan*, by drying up the River *Jordan* to give them a Paſſage over it.

And came unto Jericho.] Which was the firſt Place they beſieged, being the neareſt City to *Jordan*.

And the Men of Jericho fought againſt you.] We do not read of any Sallies they made upon the *Iſraelites*; but they ſhutting their Gates, to defend the City againſt them, it is likely flung Stones from their Wall upon them.

The Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Gergaſhites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites.] After which, it appears by this Book, that they fought with all the *Seven* Nations of *Canaan*; who engaged them in ſeveral Bodies, and at ſeveral times: Which was done ſo lately, that there was no need he ſhould repeat all the Particulars mention'd in the 10th, 11th, and 12th Chapters. But by the Diviſion of their Land among the *Iſraelites*, it was very well known to them, that (as this Verſe concludes) *God had delivered them into their Hands.* It is obſervable, that the *Gergaſhites* are here particularly mentioned, as fighting againſt *Iſrael* with the reſt of the ſeven Nations; which makes *Grotius* his Obſervation doubtful, of their Surrender at *Joſhua*'s firſt Summons; (ſee xvi. 10.) but if that be not true, it is manifeſt ſome of them remain'd unſubdu'd, and had a Settlement in *Canaan* in our Saviour's Days: When we read of the Country of the *Gergeſens*, the Inhabitants of which were not *Jews*, as appears by their breeding Swine. See *Conſtant. L'Empereur* in his Annotations on *Bava Kama*, P. 180.

Ver. 12. *And I ſent the Hornet before you, which drove them out from before you.*] This may ſignify either, that before the *Iſraelites* came into thoſe Parts, God ſent Hornets, which ſo infeſted them, that many of them were forced to leave their Country, and flee into other Places; or, that when they came to give them Battle, theſe Hornets made ſuch Aſſaults upon them, as facilitated the Victory. This God promis'd in *Exod.* xxiii. 27, 28. *Deut.* vii. 20. and here *Joſhua* remembers how true he was to his Word. The Book of *Wiſdom* calls them προδρόμους, the *Forerunners* of God's Hoſt; and *Kimchi* ſaith, they flew in the Eyes of the *Canaanites*, and made them ſo blind, that they could not ſee to fight.

Even the two Kings of the Amorites.] *Sihon* and *Og*, whoſe Country was firſt infeſted with them; and afterward the Kings of *Canaan*, and their People, felt their Fury: For this is a ſhort Expreſſion, like that which I obſerv'd xxii. 10.

But not with thy Sword, or with thy Bow.] The Swarms of Hornets, it ſeems, did greater Execution than the Armies of the *Iſraelites*. We do not read of their aſſaulting the *Canaanites* in any of the Battles that *Joſhua* fought with them; for he did not think fit to mention it particularly in the foregoing Account of his Victory, but now in general, when he was to ſum up all the Mercies of God to them.

Ver. 13. *And I have given you a Land for which you did not labour, and Cities which ye built not, and ye dwell in them.*] As *Joſhua* had obſerv'd before, xi. 13.

Of the Vineyards and Olive-yards which ye planted not, do ye eat.] According to his Promiſe, *Deut.* vi. 10, 11.

Ver. 14. *Now therefore fear the LORD.*] The Fear of God commonly ſignifies his Worſhip and Service, unto which he exhorts them in the following Words; which ſeem to relate to all outward Acts of Worſhip; as this to the inward Reverence they owed to him in their Minds, as the only God.

And ſerve him in Sincerity and Truth.] Worſhip no other God together with him, nor mix any Idolatrous Rites with thoſe preſcribed by him; but ſerve him conſtantly and purely according to his Law, *which is the Truth, Pſalm* cxix. 142.

And put away the Gods which your Fathers ſerved on the other ſide the Flood.] See *ver.* 2. This intimates, that there were now ſome Idolaters among them, tho' ſecretly in private, and not openly; For they had lately expreſs'd ſo unanimouſly ſuch a Zeal againſt any Appearance of Idolatry, that one cannot think there was any known Worſhipper of other Gods now in the Nation.

And in Egypt.] Where they began to be corrupted in their Religion, as is often ſuggeſted by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, xx. 6, 7, 8, 18. xxiii. 3, 8, 19, 21, 27.

And ſerve ye the LORD.] He repeats it again, as a Thing of the greateſt Moment, that they ſhould worſhip the LORD alone.

Ver. 15. *And if it ſeem evil unto you to ſerve the LORD, chuſe you this Day whom you will ſerve.*] He could not think they would turn Atheiſts, and have no God at all; and he was unwilling to ſuppoſe, that they would prefer any other God to Him, who had obliged them by ſuch Benefits as are before mention'd: Which he expreſſes in this Rhetorical Form of Speech; which is as much as if he had ſaid, If you like not the LORD's Service, tell me whom ye will ſerve? Where do you hope to find a God comparable to Him?

Whether the Gods that your Fathers ſerved, that were on the other ſide of the Flood.] That had ſome Colour for it, becauſe of its *Antiquity*; but was condemn'd by *Abraham* their Father, who forſook that Religion, and was bleſſed for it by God with the Inheritance he had now given them in the Land of *Canaan*.

Or the Gods of the Amorites, in whoſe Land ye dwell.] That was ſo abſurd, as to need no Confutation; for thoſe Gods could not defend their Servants that worſhipped them.

But

But as for me, I and my Houſe, we will ſerve the LORD.] He declares his firm Reſolution (let them take what Courſe they pleas'd) together with his whole Family, (as far as he could oblige them) to worſhip the LORD alone.

Ver. 16. *And the People anſwered and ſaid.*] All the Elders and others there preſent, and all thoſe to whom they reported what *Joſhua* had ſaid, made this Anſwer.

God forbid that we ſhould forſake the LORD.] The *Hebrew* Word *Chalila* (which we tranſlate *God forbid*) imports a great Abhorrence and Abomination of that which is mention'd with it.

To ſerve other Gods.] Which they now look'd upon as the greateſt Madneſs.

Ver. 17. *For the LORD our God, he it is that brought us up and our Fathers out of the Land of Egypt, from the Houſe of Bondage, and which did thoſe great Signs in our Sight*, &c.] They gave ſuch powerful Reaſons why they ſhould ſerve none but the LORD alone, that if they had always preſerv'd them as freſh in their Minds, as they were now, they could never have gone after other Gods.

Ver. 18. *And the LORD drove out from before us all the People.*] That is, of *Canaan.*

Even the Amorites which dwelt in the Land.] In the *Hebrew*, *and the Amorites*; that is, together with the two Kings of the *Amorites*, whom they had driven before out of the Land on the other ſide of *Jordan.*

Therefore will we alſo ſerve the LORD.] Follow the Example of *Joſhua*, their Leader, *ver.* 15.

For he is our God.] As they were convinced by their wonderful Deliverance out of *Egypt*; all the great Signs he wrought there, and after they came from thence; and the Care he took of them in the Wilderneſs, and all other Places; and now by their late Victories over moſt potent Enemies, whom he had driven out of their Country, and put the *Iſraelites* in Poſſeſſion of it.

Ver. 19. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the People, Ye cannot ſerve the LORD.*] This is far from ſignifying an utter Impoſſibiity of it; (for that would have contradicted his Exhortation, *ver.* 14.) but that they were ſo very prone to Idolatry, that they would not be able to perſevere ſtedfaſt in their Reſolution, unleſs they took Care conſtantly to reflect upon, and lay to Heart, what they had now acknowledg'd, (*ver.* 17, 18.) which he was afraid they would not do.

For he is an holy God, he is a jealous God.] Who having no Equal, (that's meant by *holy*) will endure no Rival; and therefore they who communicated the Worſhip proper to him, unto any other beſides him, or with him, were deem'd to deny his incomparable Sanctity, and ſaid in Scripture to *prophane* his Holy Name, as Mr. *Mede* obſerves, ſee Book I. Diſcourſe 2. It is a juſt Remark which Mr. *Alix* here makes, in his excellent Book (*of the Judgment of the Jewiſh Church againſt the Unitarians*, Chap. ix.) that here is a plain Idea of a Plurality of Perſons in the Godhead, the Words in the *Hebrew* being, *He is the Holy God*; like that *Eccleſ.* xii. 1. *Remember thy Creators.* And indeed this is a Place anciently noted by the Chriſtian Doctors, (whom the *Jews* call Hereticks) who aſk'd *R. Samlai*, as the *Jews* themſelves tell us, what he had to anſwer unto theſe Words, Ye cannot ſerve the LORD, *Ki Elohim Kedoſhim Hu*, becauſe he is the Holy Gods? Who had nothing to reply, but that *Joſhua* doth not ſay; *They are the Holy Gods*, but *He is the Holy Gods.* Which is the very ſame that we affirm, that he is Three in One. This is in *Bereſchith Rabba*, mention'd by *Raymund* in his *Pugio Fidei*, and by *J. Wagenſeil* in his Confutation of *Lipman*'s *Carmen Memoriale*, P. 129.

He will not forgive your Tranſgreſſions, nor your Sin.] But make thoſe who aſſume any other Deity into Fellowſhip with him in Worſhip, feel how he reſents ſuch Diſhonour done to his Divine Majeſty.

Ver. 20. *If you forſake the LORD, and ſerve ſtrange Gods.*] Either the Gods of the *Amorites*, before mention'd, or thoſe that their Fathers anciently ſerv'd.

Then he will turn, and do you Hurt, and conſume you, after that he hath done you Good.] Alter the Courſe of his Providence towards you, and ſend as many Curſes upon you, as he hath done Bleſſings; according to the Prediction of *Moſes* in *Deut.* xxviii. 63.

Ver. 21. *And the People ſaid unto Joſhua, Nay, but we will ſerve the LORD.*] They deſire him to entertain a better Opinion of them; for they perſiſt in their well-grounded Reſolution, *ver.* 16, 17, 18.

Ver. 22. *And Joſhua ſaid unto the People, Ye are Witneſſes againſt yourſelves, that ye have choſen the LORD to ſerve him.*] This ſolemn Profeſſion, which they had thus deliberately and publickly made, he tells them, would teſtify againſt them, and condemn them, if they proved falſe to God.

And they ſaid, We are Witneſſes.] Here they renew that Choice of God for their King, which their Forefathers made when they came out of *Egypt*, (in the xixth and xxivth Chapters of *Exodus*) and acknowledg'd they ſhould be ſelf-condemn'd, if they did not make it good.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore put away (ſaid he) the ſtrange Gods that are among you.*] See *ver.* 14. This is an Argument that he was a Prophet, as I ſaid upon *ver.* 2. that he ſaw their inward Diſpoſition, and the Secret Affection they had to Idols. For tho' there was no publick Idol worſhipped, yet he knew, by the Spirit of Prophecy, that they had their *Penates*, (as the *Romans* call'd them) *Houſhold Gods*; or, rather, Gods which they worſhip'd ſecretly in their Cloſets, as our Dr. *Spencer* obſerves, *Lib.* III *Diſſert.* 1. *Cap.* 3. Theſe being the very ſame Words which *Jacob* uſed to his Houſhold, when he ſuſpected them of the ſame Crime, tho' there was no open Idolatry practis'd among them, *Gen.* xxxv. 2.

And incline your Heart unto the LORD God of Iſrael.] Settle your Affection upon the LORD alone, who you profeſs is your Sovereign, to whom the whole Nation hath infinite Obligations, *ver.* 16, 17, 18.

Ver. 24. *And the People ſaid unto Joſhua, The LORD our God will we ſerve, and his Voice we will obey.*] They repeat their profeſs'd Reſolution

tion a third Time, which made it more binding; and a ſtronger Witneſs againſt them, if they forſook the LORD.

Ver. 25. *So Joſhua made a Covenant with the People that Day.*] Engaged them to make good this ſolemn Profeſſion, by renewing the Covenant they had formerly enter'd into, both in the Time of *Moſes*, and in his Time: Wherein they promiſed to worſhip him alone, and be obedient to him; and he promiſed to do for them as he had formerly done; that is, be their conſtant Protector and Benefactor. There are thoſe who think this Covenant was now eſtabliſh'd by Sacrifice, as it was when they came out of *Egypt*, *Exod.* xxiv. 4, 5. and when they came into *Canaan*, *Joſh.* viii. 31. But as there is no Mention of an Altar, or any Offering, ſo it is not likely, that *Joſhua* would offer any Sacrifice, but in the place which God had choſen, which was *Shiloh:* For tho' we ſuppoſe the Sanctuary to have been brought hither for a little Time, yet it was not the ſettled Place of the Divine Reſidence.

And ſet them a Statute and an Ordinance.] It is commonly interpreted, that he propounded to them in brief the Precepts of the Law; which are the Conditions of the Covenant: But it may be expounded, that he enacted this Covenant to have the Force of a Statute and Ordinance, or *Judgment*, as it in the *Hebrew*.

In Schechem.] So that it was call'd hereafter, the Covenant or Statute in *Schechem*, where they all made repeated Profeſſions of Love to God.

Ver. 26. *And Joſhua wrote theſe Words.*] From whence, as I obſerv'd in the Preface, the *Talmudiſts* gather *Joſhua* to have been the Author of this Book. As if theſe Words ſignify'd, that he, after the Example of *Moſes*, committed to Writing all that we read in this Book, and added it at the End of the five Books written by *Moſes*, as it is now annex'd to them. But it muſt be confeſs'd, that one cannot certainly infer more from thoſe Words, than that he wrote the Words of the foregoing Covenant; and this he did, as it here follows, in the very Book of the Law of God, that it might be preſerv'd in everlaſting Remembrance.

In the Book of the Law of God.] Which was laid up, by *Moſes* his Order, in the Side of the Ark, *Deut.* xxxi. 24, 25, 26. From whence he took it and wrote in it all that had paſs'd between him and the People, that they might look upon this as a ſacred Tranſaction, as indeed it was, and moſt carefully obſerve it: And perhaps he wrote it alſo in that Copy of the Law of God, which the Princes had for the Uſe of every Tribe. See upon *Deut.* xxxi. 9.

And took a great Stone and ſet it up there.] As a Monument of the Covenant now made. Which was an ancient Way of preſerving the Memory of things paſt, as appears by what *Jacob* did, *Gen.* xxviii. 18. and they themſelves had lately done, iv. 3, 20, 21, *&c.* Upon this Stone it is probable there was an Inſcription, ſignifying what it meant.

Under an Oak that was by the Sanctuary of the LORD.] This is one Argument Mr. *Mede* uſes (in the Place I mention'd upon *ver.* 1.) to prove that the Sanctuary, properly ſo call'd, cannot be here meant, becauſe it was unlawful to plant any Trees near it, *Deut.* xvi. 21, 22. and therefore he underſtands hereby a *Proſeucha*, or *Praying-place*, which, in Memory of *Jacob*, was here at *Schechem*. And he doth plainly ſhew there were both ſuch Places, and alſo *Synagogues*, in ſeveral Parts of the Country: the former being in the Fields, open on the Top; the latter in Cities, cover'd as our Houſes are. And I may add, that we do read of *Sanctuaries*, in the Plural Number, that were among them in After-times, *Amos* vii. 9. Yet it muſt be acknowledg'd, that the Argument he uſes from the Place I mention'd in *Deuteronomy*, is not cogent: For tho' they be prohibited there to plant a Grove of any Trees near God's Altar, after the Manner of the *Gentiles*, this did not make it unlawful to ſet up the Sanctuary under a Tree that had been planted before; eſpecially when it was done only for a ſhort Time, and not to make it the ſettled Place for its conſtant Abode.

But there are thoſe who avoid this ſeeming Difficulty, by referring theſe Words *in the Sanctuary of the LORD*, (as they may be tranſlated) not to the Sanctuary. And thus, it is going before, *the Book of the Law of God*; which was in the Sanctuary. And thus, it is certain, Words are ſometimes to be connected, not with thoſe immediately preceding, but with thoſe which are more remote. A notable Inſtance of which we have in *Gen.* xiii. 10. where thoſe Words in the End of the Verſe, *As thou comeſt unto Zoar*, cannot be join'd to *the Land of Egypt*, juſt before mention'd, but to *the Plain of Jordan*, in the very beginning of the Verſe.

Ver. 27. *And Joſhua ſaid unto all the People, This Stone ſhall be a Witneſs unto us.*] As *Laban* ſaid concerning the Heap of Stones which he and *Jacob* rais'd, *Gen.* xxxi. 48, 51, 52.

For it hath heard all the Words of the LORD which he ſpake unto us.] All thoſe Speeches which had been deliver'd by *Joſhua* in the Name of God, (*ver.* 2, 3, *&c.*) and all that the *Iſraelites* had anſwer'd to him: That is, the Covenant between God and them; which being renew'd before this Stone, it is ſaid, by an elegant Figure, to have *heard* what was ſpoken; becauſe it would remain to teſtify and declare to all Poſterity the Engagements that lay upon them. Thus the Prophet calls to all Creatures, *Hear, O Heaven*, &c.

It ſhall be therefore a Witneſs unto you, leſt ye deny your God.] To accuſe them; as much as if it had *heard* what they ſaid, and could *ſpeak* againſt them.

Ver. 28. *And ſo Joſhua let the People depart, every one unto his Inheritance.*] And the Sanctuary of the LORD returned to its ſettled Place, which was in *Shiloh*.

Ver. 29. *And it came to paſs, that after theſe Things.*] Not long after, in all Probability.

Joſhua the Son of Nun, the Servant of the LORD, died.] Leaving this honourable Character behind him, which *Moſes* alſo had, that he had ſerv'd the LORD faithfully. 1

Being an hundred and ten Years old.] Of the ſame age with *Joſeph.* How many of theſe Years he ſpent in *Canaan*, as the Chief Ruler of God's People, Mens Opinions are very widely different: For ſome ſay he lived twenty and eight Years after they came over *Jordan*, (which is the Opinion of the *Jews* in *Seder Olam*) tho' others will not allow ſo much as the odd *eight* Years, but ſay it was only *ſeven* There is a middle Opinion maintain'd by others, that he was their Governor *ſeventeen* Years. See *Bonfrerius.*

Ver. 30. *And they buried him in the Border of his Inheritance in Timnath-Serah.*] Called in *Judges* ii. 9. *Timneth-heres*; becauſe of the Image of the Sun engraven on his Sepulchre, in Memory of that famous Day, when the Sun ſtood ſtill till he had compleated his Victory. (Chap. x.) So ſeveral of the *Jewiſh* Authors ſay, particularly he who wrote the Book put up by *Hottinger* under the Title of *Cippi Hebraici*, P. 32. where he ſaith, his Father *Nun* was bury'd here, and *Caleb* the Son of *Jephunneh.* See alſo his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. p. 523. And thus *Tully* ſaith, a Sphere and a Cylinder were put upon the Tomb of *Archimedes.*

On the North Side of the Hill Gaaſh.] So called, as the *Jews* fable, becauſe it trembled and quaked, at the Burial of *Joſhua*, whoſe Death the People did not enough bewail. Which Fancy, it is likely, came into their Head, becauſe there is no Mention here of any Days of Mourning for him, as there were for *Aaron* and *Moſes.* In which St. *Hierom* and other of the Fathers think there is a Myſtery, *viz.* that under the Law, when the Kingdom of Heaven was not yet open'd, they had Reaſon to mourn and weep for the Death of their Friends; but under the Goſpel, wherein is reveal'd by the Lord *Jeſus* (of whom *Joſhua* was a Figure) the wonderful Love of God to Men, *&c.* there is no Reaſon for Mourning and Lamentation, but rather for Rejoicing.

Of this Hill ſee *Conſt. L'Empereur* upon *Benjamin* his *Itinerarium*, who calls *Montpellier* by this Name of *Har-Gaaſh*, the trembling Hill, p. 142, 143.

Ver. 31. *And Iſrael ſerved the* LORD *all the Days of Joſhua.*] No Idolatry appeared among them publickly while he lived, (whatſoever private Superſtition might be practis'd, *ver.* 14, 23.) for all that wicked Generation which came out of *Egypt* (except the younger Sort) were conſumed in the Wilderneſs, before *Joſhua* took the Conduct of them. And God kept them there ſo many Years, as waſted them alſo, for this Reaſon, among others, that they might forget the idolatrous Cuſtom of *Egypt*, unto which it early appear'd, by their making the Golden Calf, they were ſtrongly inclined. Thus St. *Chryſoſtom* diſcourſes, Lib. 1. *adverſ. vitæ Monaſt. vituper.* God, ſaith he, that the Children of *Iſrael* might unlearn the evil Cuſtoms of *Egypt*, brought them καλὰ μόνας ἐπὶ τῆς ἐρημίας, to lead a ſolitary Life in the Wilderneſs, forming their Minds, as in a *Monaſtery*, far from thoſe who had corrupted them. And he deſtroy'd there all the elder Sort, that none might enter into *Palæſtine*, but they who had not ſeen the ſuperſtitious Impieties of the *Egyptians*, ἵνᾳ μηδένα διδάσκαλον ἔχειν τῆς τοσαύτης πονηρίας, and that they might have no Maſter left among them, to teach them ſuch kind of Wickedneſs.

And all the Days of the Elders that outlived Joſhua, and which had ſeen all the Works of the LORD *that he had done for Iſrael.*] Theſe Elders had been choſen by *Moſes*, who knew them to be Men of great Piety; that had not only ſeen, but obſerv'd and kept in Mind all God's wonderful Works; and would put others in mind of them, and teach them to ſerve and obey the LORD.

From this Place the *Jews* labour to eſtabliſh all their Oral Traditions; which *Moſes*, ſay they, deliver'd to *Joſhua*, and he to theſe *Elders*, and they to the *Prophets*, and they to others, (ſee *Maimonides* in *Seder Zeraim*, ſet forth by our moſt learned Dr. *Pocock*, p. 34.) for which there is no Foundation.

Ver. 32. *And the Bones of Joſeph, which the Children of Iſrael brought out of Egypt.*] It is a needleſs Pains which the *Jews* beſtow, in reconciling thi Place with *Exod.* xiii. 19. where it is ſaid, *Moſes took the Bones of Joſeph with him.* For there is no Contradiction between theſe two Places, the Children of *Iſrael* doing what *Moſes* required them to do; who could not carry them away himſelf, but ſaw them brought out of *Egypt.* Yet thus they gravely diſcourſe about this Matter in the *Talmud.* Tit. *Sota*, Cap. 1. Sect. 47. *When any one begins a Thing, but doth not bring it to Perfection, and another comes and finiſhes it, the Scripture ſpeaks of him who compleats it, as if he alone had done it.*

Buried they in Shechem.] Which was one Reaſon, perhaps, for gathering the great Aſſembly above-mentioned, that they might the more ſolemnly depoſite the Bones of this great Man, in that Portion of Land which his Father *Jacob* had given him, (ſee *Gen.* xlviii. 22.) where it ſeems they thought it moſt agreeable to lay him, rather than in the Cave of *Machpelah.* It may be reaſonably thought alſo, that the Bodies of the reſt of the Sons of *Jacob*, from whom the Twelve Tribes deſcended, were brought into *Canaan*, to be there interr'd, as *Joſephus* relates from ancient Tradition, L. 2. *Antiq.* Cap. 4. And St. *Stephen* confirms it, *Acts* vii. 16. For tho' *Joſeph* excell'd them all in Dignity, and gave this ſpecial Charge about his Body, yet no doubt every Tribe had as great a Regard to the Head of it, and would be inclined to do the ſame for their Fathers, that *Joſeph* deſired for himſelf. But whether they bury'd them in the Sepulchre at *Machpelah*, or in ſome eminent Place in their own Tribe, as *Joſeph* was, there is none that gives us any Account.

In a Parcel of Ground which Jacob bought of the Sons of Hamor, the Father of Shechem, for an Hundred Pieces of Silver.] See *Gen.* xxxiii. 18, 19. This ſhews they did not bury him in the City of *Schechem*, but in a Field near it which was his own Ground: For ſo the ancient Manner was, not to bury in Cities and Towns, but in the adjacent Fields or Gardens.

And it became the Inheritance of the Children of Joſeph.] Of the *Ephraimites*, who gave *Schechem*

cbem to the *Levites*, for a City of Refuge, xxi. 20, 21.

Ver. 33. *And Eleazar the Son of Aaron died.*] Who imitated *Joſhua*, (if we may believe the *Samaritan Chronicle*) in calling all the Elders and Princes of the Tribes to him before he died, charging them ſtrictly to obey all the Commands of God. After which he put off his ſacred Garments, and cloathed his Son *Phineas* with them. This is ſo far from being improbable, that it is likely all the Elders did the ſame as far as their Authority could reach; being very deſirous their Poſterity might continue firm and ſtedfaſt in the Worſhip of God alone.

And they buried him in an Hill that pertained to Phineas his Son.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *in the Hill of Phineas*; that is, a Hill called by his Name. It being the Manner, as I have noted elſewhere, to call Places by the Name of their eldeſt Son.

Which was given him in Mount Ephraim.] It is a Queſtion to whom this Hill was given: Moſt probable to *Eleazar*, who being the High Prieſt at the Time of the Diviſion of the Land, they thought fit to give him a peculiar Portion, diſtinct from all the Cities of the Prieſts; none of which were in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, but all in the Tribes of *Judah*, *Benjamin*, and *Simeon*, as we read xxi. 9, 17, 19. And they gave it *Eleazar* in this Country, that he might be near to the Tabernacle, (which was in *Shiloh*) and near to *Joſhua*, to be ready on all Occaſions to adviſe him, and conſult the Oracle for him. But againſt this there lies a great Objection, that no Levite or Prieſt was to have any Portion in the Diviſion of the Land: And therefore it is the moſt received Opinion among the *Jews*, that either *Eleazar* or *Phineas* had this Inheritance in the Right of his Wife. So the *Gemara Babylonica* on *Bava Bathra*, and a great many others, mentioned by Mr. *Selden* in his Book *de Succeſſionibus ad Leges Hebr.* Cap. 18. where he obſerves another Example of this *Marital Succeſſion*, as he calls it; that is, the Husband ſucceeding his Wife in her Eſtate after her Death, in 1 *Chron.* ii. 21. where the twenty-three Cities which *Jair* poſſeſs'd, *Kimchi* ſaith he had by his Wife.

Theſe five laſt Verſes, it is evident, were not written by *Joſhua:* But this is no Argument he did not write this Book; no more than that *Moſes* did not write the *Pentateuch*, becauſe there is the like Account given of his Death and Burial in the Concluſion of it, by ſome other Author. See *Deut.* xxxiv. 1. The *Talmudiſts*, I obſerved, ſay, in *Bava Bathra*, that *Joſhua* wrote his own Book, and the eight laſt Verſes of the *Pentateuch*. And they ſay in the ſame Place, (*Cap.* 1.) as to what is written here, *ver.* 29. it was done by *Eleazar*; and what is ſaid, *ver.* 33. it was wrote by *Phineas:* Or rather, theſe five Verſes from 29. to the End, were written by *Samuel*, who being a Prophet, was moved and directed by God to continue the Hiſtory of this People from the Death of *Joſhua*, to his own Time.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

Book of *JUDGES.*

THIS Book is called by the Name of *SHOPHETIM*, or *JUDGES*, becauſe it treats principally of the great Things done by thoſe illuſtrious Perſons, who were raiſed up by God, upon ſpecial Occaſions, after the Death of *Joſhua*, till the Time of making a King, to *Judge*, that is, to Rule, the People of *Iſrael* and to deliver them from their Oppreſſions. It conſiſts of two Parts, the one containing the Hiſtory of the *Judges*, from *Othniel* to *Samſon*, which Ends with the 16th Chapter, (the Hiſtory of the two laſt *Judges*, *Eli* and *Samuel*, being not recorded here; but in the following Book.) The other containing ſeveral memorable Actions, which were performed in or about the Time of the *Judges*; with which the Holy Writer would not interrupt their Hiſtory, but reſerved them to be related by themſelves in the Concluſion, *viz.* in the 17th, and the following Chapters, unto the End of the Book.

It is but conjectur'd who was the Writer of it. Some think *Ezra*; but it is more probable the Prophet *Samuel*, who was the laſt of the *Judges*; and, by the Direction of God, brought down their Hiſtory unto his own Days, when they deſired a King to be ſet over them. The *Talmudiſts* in *Bava Bathra* (Cap. 1.) are of this Opinion; which *Kimchi*, *Abarbinel*, and other great Authors follow. And indeed there is reaſon to think, that he who wrote the Concluſion of the Book of *Joſhua*, was the Writer of this Book alſo; in the Second Chapter of which he inſerts Part of that which is written there. And it is manifeſt it was written before the ſecond Book of *Samuel*; where mention is made of a Paſſage in this Book; which would not have been ſo commonly known, if it had not been publiſhed here, 2 *Sam.* xi. 21. out of *Judg.* xi. 53. *David* alſo, in *Pſal.* lxviii. 7, 8, ſeems to allude unto what we read in the Song of *Deborah*, v. 4. See *Du Pin.* Certain it is, it was written before *David*'s Reign; for the *Jebuſites* were poſſeſſed of *Jeruſalem* when this Author lived, (*ver.* 21. of the firſt Chapter) who were driven out of it by *David*, 2 *Sam.* v. 6. and therefore this Book was written before that; and is of wonderful uſe, as *Procopius Gazæus* obſerves, to repreſent unto us the mighty Power

of true Religion to make a Nation happy; and the diſmal Calamities which Impiety brings upon it. And therefore, ſaith he, St. *Paul* thought fit to propound a great many Examples to us out of this very Book; ſuch as *Gideon*, and *Barak*, and *Samſon*, and *Jephthah*, who did marvellous Things by the Power of Faith.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW after the Death of Joſhua.*] And of *Eleazar*, it is probable, (for this Book gives an Account of what follow'd after thoſe Things that are mention'd in the foregoing) but how long after cannot be certainly determin'd: But we have reaſon to think, it was not till they were multiply'd ſo much, as to be able to people more of the Country than they had yet in Poſſeſſion.

It came to paſs that the Children of Iſrael.] There was no Perſon appointed by *Joſhua* to ſucceed him in the Government, as he was appointed by *Moſes* to be his Succeſſor; but the Government was left in the Hand of the Elders. For it is a mere Fiction which we meet withal in the *Samaritan Chronicle*, that at the laſt Aſſembly (mentioned *Joſhua* xxiv.) he choſe *Twelve* of the chief of the Tribes, and caſt Lots which of them ſhould hold his Place when he died; and that the Lot fell upon one whoſe Name was *Abel*, and his Nephew; to whom he aſſign'd his Authority, and ſet a Crown upon his Head. See *Hottinger* in his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 8. P. 522.

Asked the LORD, ſaying.] Enquired of him by *Urim* and *Thummim*, as the Manner was in all Caſes that concern'd the whole Congregation of *Iſrael*. For which End, it is to be ſuppoſed, that ſome who repreſented the Body of the People (their *Elders*, perhaps, or *Heads* of their Tribes) were ſent to *Shiloh*, where the Sanctuary was, and deſired *Phineas* the High Prieſt to repreſent their Caſe to God, and beſeech his Directions. Here the *Jews* raiſe a Queſtion, Why we never read that *Joſhua*, in all his Wars, conſulted God by the Oracle, but the Elders immediately after his Death did? To this they give ſeveral Anſwers. Seee *Numb.* xxvii. 21.

Who ſhall go up for us againſt the Canaanites firſt to fight againſt them?] They being increas'd, as I ſaid, to ſuch a Number, that they were able to people more of the Country; and beginning to be ſtraitned for want of Room, thought of enlarging their Poſſeſſions; but would not adventure without God's Approbation and Direction to do any thing: And therefore deſired he would tell them who ſhould make the firſt Attempt; that the reſt, being encouraged by their Succeſs, (of which they did not doubt, if they had his Warrant for what they did) might make the like. For it is evident by theſe Words, *go up for us*, that all the Tribes on this ſide *Jordan* were concern'd in this Matter.

Ver. 2. *And the LORD ſaid, Judah.*] *i. e.* The Tribe of *Judah*, who were very populous, and no leſs valiant.

Shall go up.] And aſſault the mountainous Country, which was the Lot of this Tribe. According to the Prophecy of *Jacob*, *Gen.* xlix. 8. where, comparing *Judah* to a Lyon's Whelp, he ſaith, From the Prey, my Son, thou art *gone up*.

Behold, I have delivered the Land into his Hand.] That is, all the Land belonging to their Lot. By this it ſeems plain, that the Anſwer by *Urim* and *Thummim* was given by a Voice which utter'd theſe Words. Here *Abarbinel* endeavours to give Satisfaction to the Queſtion before mention'd, why *Joſhua* did not enquire in this Manner, tho' it be expreſly ſaid, *Numb.* xxvii. 21. that *he ſhall ſtand before Eleazar the Prieſt, and ask Counſel of the* LORD; *after the Judgment of Urim.* He thinks he did ſo, all the Time after that, till *Moſes*'s Death, to ſhew he was made the Leader of God's People for none but ſuch could enquire by *Urim*: But after his Death, he was endued with the Spirit of Prophecy, as *Moſes* was, and ſo had no need to enquire in that Manner, being immediately directed by God in his Proceedings. But after his Death, there being none endued with the Prophetical Spirit, the Children of *Iſrael* were conſtrain'd to have reſort to this Oracle. Which is an Account very much below the Judgment of ſo great a Man; for *Moſes*, being a Prophet, did frequently ask Counſel of God at the Sanctuary, which was the ſame as if he had enquired by *Urim*. Therefore the true Anſwer is, that *Joſhua* did thus enquire of the LORD in the Caſe of *Achan*; and it is highly probable he did the ſame in the Management of his War, and other great Occaſions, tho' it be not expreſly mention'd in ſo many Words.

Ver. 3. *And Judah ſaid to Simeon his Brother.*] They were Brethren by the ſame Father and Mother; and alſo nearly join'd in their Situation, the Lot of the Tribe of *Simeon* being taken out of that of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xix. 9.

Come up with me into my Lot, that we may fight againſt the Canaanites.] Which People, with the *Perizzites*, (as is further declared in the next Verſe) ſtill poſſeſſed a conſiderable Part of the which fell to *Judah*.

And I likewiſe will go with thee into thy Lot.] To drive them out of that Part of the Country which was the Portion of *Simeon*.

So Simeon went with him.] They join'd their Forces together in this Expedition, under the Conduct, no doubt, of ſome eminent Leader. And who ſo fit as *Caleb?* who, tho' an old Man, was full of Vigour, and fit for War, (as he himſelf declared not long ago, *Joſh.* xiv. 10, 11.) and had not yet got Poſſeſſion (as appears by the Sequel) of the Portion which by God's Commandment was aſſigned him.

Ver. 4. *And Judah went up.*] They were the principal Perſons concern'd in this Expedition, and therefore only mention'd tho' the Children of *Simeon* alſo went up with them.

And the LORD delivered.] We meet with no ſuch Religious Expreſſion (which occurs often here in theſe Holy Books) in any Heathen Writer.

The Canaanites and Perizzites into their Hand.] Tho' moſt of the People properly called *Canaanites*

naanites dwelt by the *Mediterranean* Sea, yet many of them were ſcatter'd up and down in other Parts of the Country, (as I obſerv'd upon *Numb.* xiv. *ult.*) and particularly in theſe Mountains and woody Places, where the *Perrizzites* dwelt. See *Joſh.* xvii. 15, 16.

And they ſlew of them in Bezek ten thouſand Men.] In the Country near to *Bezek*, which was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, not far, ſome think, from *Bethlehem*. Here they choſe to make their Rendezvous (as we now ſpeak) of their Forces, and wait to receive the Children of *Judah*, that if they were worſted, they might eaſily find a ſtrong Place of Retreat.

Ver. 5. *And they found Adonibezek in Bezek.*] He was the King, or Lord of this Place, as his Name imports, whom they ſurprized, as the Word *found* ſignifies, (ſee *Bochart Hieroz.* P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 21.) by a ſudden Aſſault upon this City, whither he ſeems to have fled, when he had loſt the Field. *Theodoret* makes this King the ſame with *Adonizedek* (mention'd in *Joſh.* x.) but as their Names are different, ſo he was King of *Jeruſalem*, and this of *Bezek*; where he was overcome; but the former in *Gibeon*, who was killed alſo with the Sword, and then hanged on a Tree; but this had only his Thumbs and Toes cut off, and ſo brought to *Jeruſalem*, where he died.

And they fought againſt him.] Took the City wherein he thought to have defended himſelf, and the Remainder of his Army, which eſcaped hither.

And they ſlew the Canaanites and Perizzites.] Put all the People of thoſe two Nations, whom they found there, to the Sword.

Ver. 6. *But Adonibezek fled.*] He made his Eſcape.

And they purſued him, and caught him.] They found which Way he went, and purſued him ſo cloſe, that they overtook him before he could get to the ſtrong Fortreſs of the *Jebuſites*; where, it is likely, he hoped to ſecure himſelf.

And cut off his Thumbs and his great Toes.] That he might be made uncapable of War hereafter, being unable to handle Arms, by reaſon of the Loſs of his Thumbs; or to run ſwiftly (which was a noble Quality in a Warrior) by the Loſs of his great Toes. This had been his own Practice, it appears by his Confeſſion in the next verſe, which made them think it reaſonable to ſerve him in his kind.

Ver. 7. *And Adonibezek ſaid, Threeſcore and ten Kings.*] In thoſe Days the chief Perſon in every City had a Kingly Power; as we learn from the Hiſtory of *Joſhua*, who found many Kings in *Canaan* when he conquer'd it. And *Seventy* ſuch petty Princes *Adonibezek* had ſubdued; who were not Kings of ſo many ſeveral Cities, but ſome of them, it is likely, Kings of the ſame Place, who ſucceſſively oppoſed him, and were dethroned by him.

Having their Thumbs and great Toes cut off, gathered their Meat under my Table.] He was proud and inſolent, as well as cruel, treating thoſe Kings whom he conquer'd, as if they had been Dogs.

As I have done, ſo hath God requited me.] Juſtice was defined by the *Pythagoræans* to be τὸ ἀντιπεπονθὸς, to make others feel the Hurt they had done, by their ſuffering the like Puniſhment. Which *Harmenopulus* calls ταυτοπάθεια, *ſuffering the very ſame*; as *Grotius* notes, Lib. 2. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, C. 20. N. 32. Now, *Adonibezek*'s Acknowledgment of God's Juſtice in this Puniſhment, hath made ſome think he was a Penitent, and became a Convert to the true Religion: For he ſpeaks of God in the ſingular Number, and not of the Gods, as the Heathen Manner was; which might poſſibly be the reaſon why they ſpared his Life, and did not kill him. Certain it is, his Pride and Arrogance was very much humbled by his Puniſhment, which extorted this Confeſſion from him. For it carry'd in it (as Mr. *Mede* obſerves on theſe Words) the very Stamp and Print of the Sin for which it was inflicted.

And they brought him to Jeruſalem.] Which, as it follows in the next Verſe, was now in the Poſſeſſion of the Children of *Judah*: Tho' the *Jews* think they had not yet taken the City; but having begirt it, they brought him Priſoner thither, and he died in the time of the Siege.

And there he died.] After he had lived ſome time, perhaps, to perfect his Repentance.

Ver. 8. *Now the Children of Judah had fought againſt Jeruſalem, and taken it.*] We do not read of its being taken by *Joſhua*, though it ſeems to me highly probable, that when he took the King of *Jeruſalem*, he alſo took his City, and did to it as he did to the reſt of the Cities of thoſe Kings, mentioned *Joſh.* x. 3, 23. But when he was gone to conquer other Parts of the Country, it is likely the old Inhabitants returned again, and took Poſſeſſion of it: For the Land was not then divided among the *Iſraelites*: After which, this City falling in Part to the Share of *Judah*, they diſpoſſeſſed the *Jebuſites*, that dwelt there, of all but the ſtrong Fortreſs on the Top of Mount *Sion*, which held out till the Days of *David*. See upon *Joſh.* x. 1. and xv. 63.

And burnt it with Fire.] As *Joſhua* had done to *Jericho*, *Ai*, and *Hazor*: This being a City, it is probable, deeply infected with Idolatry; from which they thought fit entirely to purge it, before they rebuilt it.

Ver. 9. *Afterward the Children of Judah went down.*] From *Jeruſalem* (I ſuppoſe) which ſtood high.

To fight againſt the Canaanites that dwelt in the Mountain.] There were ſeveral Mountains round about *Jeruſalem*, (*Pſal.* cxxv. 2.) and we often read of the Mountains of *Judah*, which were poſſeſſed, it ſeems, by the old Inhabitants, till after the Death of *Joſhua*.

And the South.] Towards the Wilderneſs of *Paran*.

And the Valley.] Or the flat Country about thoſe Mountains, ſome of which are mentioned in the following Verſes.

Ver. 10. *And Judah went up againſt the Canaanites that dwelt in Hebron.*] This ſhews the old Inhabitants of the Country had returned to this Place, after it had been deſtroy'd by

Joſhua, as we read it was *Joſh.* x. 36, 37. Who were now again expelled by the Children of *Judah* after his Death, this City being in their Lot.

Now the Name of Hebron before time was Kirjath-Arba.] As much as to ſay, the City of *Arba*, who was the Father of *Anak*, See *Joſh.* xiv. *ult.* xv. 13.

And they ſlew Sheſhai, Ahiman, and Talmai.] Theſe were the three Sons of *Anak*, as we read there, *Joſh.* xv. 14. where it is ſaid that *Caleb* drove them out from thence: For he was the Conductor of the Children of *Iſrael* in this Expedition, (as I obſerved upon *ver.* 3.) and had great Reaſon to go up againſt this City, becauſe this Part of the Country was given to him by a particular Direction of God, *Joſh.* xiv. 13, 14. xv. 13. But he did not conquer it till after the Death of *Joſhua*, as this Place ſhews us.

Ver. 11. *And from thence he went againſt the Inhabitants of Debir*, &c.] Another City which had been taken by *Joſhua* in the Beginning of the War; (*Joſh.* x. 38, 39.) but while he was gone to bring under other Parts of the Country, was re-inhabited by the *Canaanites*, who were not expelled till after *Joſhua*'s Death: When *Caleb* (to whom it was given, together with *Hebron*, for his Portion, *Joſh.* xv. 15.) drove them out again, and poſſeſſed himſelf of it.

Ver. 12. *And Caleb ſaid.*] Hence it ſtill appears, that the Children of *Judah* fought under the Conduct of *Caleb*, as their General.

He that ſmiteth Kirjath-Sepher, and taketh it, to him will I give Achſah my Daughter to Wife.] This and the three following Verſes, 13, 14, 15. have been explain'd upon *Joſh.* xv. 16, *&c.* Where the Portion of *Judah* being deſcribed, there is a particular Mention of what was given to *Caleb*, and how he diſpoſed of it. Which Relation ſeems to have been taken out of this Book, and inſerted there, by the Authority of *Ezra*, for the fuller Illuſtration of all that belonged to that Tribe, whether by Lot or peculiar Donation before the Diviſion of the Land. For any one may ſee that the Deſcription of *Judah*'s Lot is entirely coherent, (as *Huetius* truly obſerves) if all between the *twelfth* and the *twentieth* Verſe were left out. And that all Things here mentioned were not done till after the Death of *Joſhua*, is ſo evident by the Narration which is here made of all that fell out after that Time, as to leave no Doubt of it.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of the Kenite, Moſes his Father-in-law.*] See *Numb.* x. 29. where *Hobab*, the Son of *Jethro*, was invited by *Moſes* to accompany him into the Land of *Canaan*, and in all Probability accepted the Invitation, as I there obſerved.

Went up out of the City of Palm-trees.] That is, *Jericho*, which was in a flat Country. See *Deut.* xxxiv. 3. Here it ſeems they were pleaſed to ſettle themſelves at their firſt coming into *Canaan*, where *Moſes* promiſed, that whatſoever Goodneſs God ſhould ſhew to the *Iſraelites*, they ſhould have their Share in it: And there was no ſweeter Place in that Country, than this about *Jericho*; in the Territory of which they dwelt, for the City itſelf was deſtroy'd.

With the Children of Judah.] Admiring the Courage and Succeſs of this Tribe, they ſeem to have contracted a particular Friendſhip with them, and to have accompanied them in this Expedition into the high Country.

Into the Wilderneſs of Judah, which lieth in the South of Arad.] In the Southern Part of the Land of *Canaan*, where *Arad* was, *Numb.* xxi. 1. which, as *Procopius Gazæus* here obſerves, was a City of the *Amorites*, near to the Wilderneſs of *Kadeſh*, which is *Paran*: In his Time it was a Village four Miles from *Malaathon*; but twenty from *Hebron*.

And dwelt among the People.] They removed from the City of Palm-trees, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and ſettled themſelves among the People of *Judah*. Yet not all of them; for ſome went into the Northern Parts among the Tribe of *Naphtali*, as appears from iv. 10, 11. What ſhould be the Reaſon of their forſaking ſo pleaſant a Place, as that where they were firſt ſettled, is but conjectured. Some think it was the Love of Solitarineſs and Retirement; which they gather from *Jerem.* xxxv. 6, *&c.* Or, as I ſaid, out of their great Affection to the Children of *Judah*; under whoſe Protection they hoped for greater Safety than in other Places.

Ver. 17. *And Judah went with Simeon his Brother.*] Having finiſhed, as far as they were able, the Conqueſt of what belonged to the Tribe of *Judah*, they went to aſſiſt the *Simeonites*, according to their mutual Engagement, *ver.* 3.

And they ſlew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly deſtroyed it.] Some think this was the Name both of a City, and of a ſmall Region; but whereabouts it was ſituated, is not known.

And the Name of the City was called Hormah.] From the utter Deſtruction before mentioned. Some think this was the ſame Place with that mentioned *Numb.* xxi. 2, 3. But there he ſpeaks of more Cities that were laid waſte; here but of one.

Ver. 18. *And Judah took Gaza, with the Coaſt thereof; and Askelon, with the Coaſt thereof; and Ekron, with the Coaſt thereof.*] Theſe *three* Cities were in the Land of the *Philiſtines*, upon the Sea-Coaſt; which the *Iſraelites* did not hold long, before the *Philiſtines* recovered them again. For the *Iſraelites* contenting themſelves with taking theſe Cities, without deſtroying the People, (as they did in other Places, and ought to have done here) and only making them Tributaries, it was not hard for them to regain their Liberty.

Ver. 19. *And the LORD was with Judah.*] The *Targum* here uſes the ſame Language, which we find all along in the Book of *Joſhua*, when he ſpeaks of God's Preſence with him (ſee *Joſh.* xiv. 12.) *and the WORD of the LORD helped the Houſe of Judah.*

And they drave out the Inhabitants of the Mountain.] God gave them ſuch Succeſs whereſoever they went, that it ought to have encouraged them to go on with their Enterprize;

which they did not, as the following Words tell us. This Mountain, it is very likely, was *Mons Caſius*, which was near to *Gaza*.

But could not drive out the Inhabitants of the Valley, becauſe they had Chariots of Iron.] Here now the Fountain of all the enſuing Evils which befel the *Iſraelites*, begins to be opened. In that, either through Sloth, or Covetouſneſs, or Diſtruſt of God's Power, or more Lenity than the law of *Moſes* allowed, they did not attempt thoſe People that were ſtronger than ordinary; or, being unfaithful to God, failed in their Attempt; or, having ſome Succeſs, only brought them under Tribute. And it is moſt likely, they were ſo affrighted at the Iron Chariots, (which were in uſe in the Plain Country, tho' not in the Mountains) that they were quite diſheartened; and did not remember what God had promiſed them, (*ver.* 2. of this Chapter) and how undauntedly *Joſhua* ſet upon thoſe that came thus dreadfully appointed, *Joſh.* xi. 4, 6. Concerning theſe Chariots, ſee *Joſh.* xvii. 16. 18. where I have obſerved they are frequently mentioned in prophane Authors. And ſee *Dilherrus*, Tom. 1. *Diſput. Academ.* P. 129.

Ver. 20. *And they gave Hebron unto Caleb, as Moſes ſaid, and expelled thence the three Sons of Anak.*] Thus ends the Account of the Wars of the Tribe of *Judah* which concludes with a Repetition of what Part in their Country was given to *Caleb*; becauſe he was their Leader, (as I have often ſaid) and this was his Reward, *viz.* the Country about *Hebron*; the City itſelf belonging to the *Levites*.

Ver. 21. *And the Children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebuſites that inhabited Jeruſalem.*] This Tribe, and that of *Judah*, had an Intereſt in *Jeruſalem:* But tho' both of them joined together, they could not drive the *Jebuſites* out of the South Part of it, where they had a ſtrong Fortreſs upon Mount *Sion*. See *Joſh.* xv. 63. Nay of that Part of the City which belonged to *Judah*, they were not diſpoſſeſſed till the forenamed Expedition.

But the Jebuſites dwelt with the Children of Benjamin to this Day.] That is, they kept Poſſeſſion of that Fortreſs, from which they were not able to drive them; but they dwelt there in the Days when *Samuel* wrote this Book, being not expelled till the Reign of *David*. And they ſeem alſo to have dwelt with the *Benjamites* in that Part of the City belonging to them; which tho' conquer'd, yet the Inhabitants were not deſtroy'd, but only brought under Tribute. For this was very agreeable to the lazy and covetous Humour which now began to prevail in *Iſrael*.

Ver. 22. *And the Houſe of Joſeph.*] *Viz.* The Tribe of *Ephraim*, *Joſh.* xvi. 1.

They alſo went up againſt Beth-el.] They, following the Example of *Judah*, *Simeon*, and *Benjamin*, endeavoured to enlarge their Border by taking *Beth-el*.

And the LORD was with them.] As the Succeſs demonſtrated. The *Targum* hath it, (as before *ver.* 19.) *The WORD of the LORD was their Helper.*

Ver. 23. *And the Houſe of Joſeph ſent to deſcry Beth-el.*] They proceeded very cautiouſly; ſending Spies (as we read in the next Verſe) to view the Strength of the Place, and to diſcover how it might be beſt approached.

Now the Name of the City before was Luz.] See *Gen.* xxviii. 19. *Joſh.* xvi. 2.

Ver. 24. *And the Spies ſaw a Man come forth out of the City.*] Whom they apprehended, as he paſſed by the Place where they lay to make their Obſervations, and get Intelligence.

And they ſaid unto him, Shew us, we pray thee, the Entrance into the City.] Where it may be moſt eaſily entered. For they did not enquire the Way to the Gate, which was common and plain enough; but for the weakeſt Part, where the Walls were loweſt, or moſt out of Repair, or had the leaſt Guard. Or, they deſired him, perhaps, to ſhew them ſome private Way to get into it, which none knew but the Inhabitants.

And we will ſhew thee Mercy.] As they ſpake civilly and gently to him when they apprehended him, ſo they make him a Promiſe of kind Uſage, when they got into the City, by ſparing his Life, and all belonging to him, as they did *Rahab* and her Family: Which, it is highly probable, he begg'd of them, being fallen into their Hands; and it was not unlawful for them to grant, if he changed his Religion, or left the Country, as we find he afterwards did.

Ver. 25. *And when he ſhewed them the Entrance into the City.*] Notice, I ſuppoſe, was immediately ſent to the Army, which lay not far off.

They ſmote the City with the Edge of the Sword.] Came upon them on a ſudden, and aſſaulted them where they leaſt expected it; ſo that they found little Reſiſtance.

But they let go the Man, and all his Family.] Did them no Harm; but gave them their Liberty, as well as Lives, to go whither they pleaſed.

Ver. 26. *And the Man went into the Land of the Hittites.*] A Colony of this Nation, I ſuppoſe, had planted themſelves heretofore in ſome of the neighbouring Countries, *Syria* or *Arabia*, or ſome of thoſe that fled upon *Joſhua*'s invading the Land, ſettled themſelves there. To whom this Man thought good to go with his Family, being perhaps of the ſame Nation.

And built a City.] Which is an Argument, that the Children of *Ephraim* were ſo kind as to diſmiſs him and his Family, with all their Goods and Eſtate.

And called the Name of it Luz.] To preſerve the Memory of the Place from whence he came. The Founders of Cities are mentioned with Honour by all Authors; and this ſeems to be ſo intended.

Which is the Name thereof unto this Day.] It kept this Name to the Time of the Writing of this Book, and long after. For it ſeems to be the ſame City mentioned by *Joſephus* in *Arabia*, (not far from *Judæa*) which he calls Λοῦσα. L. 14. *Antiq.* Cap. 2. And *Bochartus* obſerves, that this Place had its Name originally from the great Plenty of Almonds growing there; from whence alſo it may be *Luſitania* had its Name, Lib. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 35.

Ver.

Ver. 27 *Neither did Manaſſeh.*] He ſpeaks of that Part of this Tribe which was ſeated on this ſide *Jordan.*

Drive out the Inhabitants of Beth-ſhean and her Towns, &c.] Hitherto ſeveral of the *Iſraelites* had ſhewed ſome Valour, and expelled ſome of the *Canaanites*. But now he begins to ſhew how cowardly others of them were; for theſe do not ſeem to have attempted any thing againſt the Places here mentioned, or any where elſe. *Beth-ſhean* was a City not far from *Jordan*. See *Joſh.* xvii. 11. where the reſt of the Cities here named in this Verſe are mentioned.

But the Canaanites would dwell in that Land.] Not only in the Cities, where they might have been ſtreightned and kept under, but in the Towns and Villages, where they had the ſame Liberties with the *Iſraelites*, and perhaps held ſome of the Ground belonging to them. For ſo ſome think the Word *dwell* ſignifies; that they enjoyed all the Benefits that any others had. And this they demanded as their Right; which the *Hebrew* Word *Jaal* imports; a ſettled Reſolution not to quit that Land. See *Joſh.* xvii. 12.

Ver. 28. *And it came to paſs, when the Iſraelites were ſtrong, that they put the Canaanites to Tribute, and did not utterly drive them out.*] Herein they acted contrary to the Law, whereby they were enjoined to deſtroy them, when they were able. And being ſtrong enough to make them Tributaries, they might, no doubt, have utterly expelled them out of the Land. But they found more Profit in making them pay Tribute; and it coſt them leſs Pains to bring them into ſome Subjection, than to deſtroy them. And this ſeems to be here noted, as the common Fault of all the Children of *Iſrael*, that when they grew ſtrong, they did not uſe their Power to deſtroy or expel the *Canaanites*: but let them live quietly under them, upon Payment of Tribute.

Ver. 29. *Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites that dwelt in Gezer.*] *Joſh.* xvi. 10. It is very probable, they did not ſo much as exact a Tribute from them, (which is not here mentioned) but made a Covenant of Friendſhip with them; which was ſtill an higher Crime. And this the next Words ſeem to import.

But the Canaanites dwelt in Gezer among them.] Which is a Form of Speech not uſed in the foregoing Exceptions. And to dwell among a People, ſignifies a quiet Settlement, with the Enjoyment of all their Rights. As in 2 *Kings* iv. 13. when *Eliſha* offered the *Shunamite* to do her any Kindneſs at Court, ſhe expreſſes herſelf ſatisfied with her Condition, in theſe Words, *I dwell among my own People.*

Ver. 30. *Neither did Zebulun drive out the Inhabitants of Kitron, nor the Inhabitants of Nahalol.*] Which was the greater Crime, becauſe this laſt City was ἀφωρισμένη Λευίταις, one of thoſe that were ſeparated for the *Levites*, as *Euſebius* ſpeaks. See *Joſh.* xxi. 35. Yet they did more than the *Ephraimites*; for tho' they let them *dwell among them*, they made them pay Tribute.

But the Canaanites dwelt among them, and became Tributaries.] They troubled themſelves no further than to make them pay a Tribute to them; when they might, with a little more Pains, have expelled them. This Lazineſs, or Covetouſneſs, or whatſoever it was that made them act in this Manner, brought them into a dangerous Snare.

Ver. 31. *Neither did Aſher drive out the Inhabitants of Accho.*] A city near the *Mediterranean* Sea, called by *Strabo* and others *Ace*; and afterward *Ptolemais*, as *Euſebius* ſaith, who obſerves, that the *Aſherites* did not drive out the Αλλοφύλους from hence. *Procopius* ſaith the ſame.

Nor the Inhabitants of Sidon.] Which every one knows was another great City upon the ſame Sea.

Nor of Ahlab, nor of Achzib.] We find no Mention of the former of theſe elſewhere; but the latter is in *Joſh.* xix. 29. and was called in After-times *Ecdippa*, as *Euſebius* relates.

Nor Helbath, nor Aphik, nor of Rehob.] The two latter of theſe we read of in *Joſh.* xix. 28, 30. but nothing of the former, unleſs it be the ſame with *Helkath*, mentioned there, *ver.* 25.

Ver. 32. *But the Aſherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the Inhabitants of the Land; for they did not drive them out.*] They ſeem to have entered into a League of Friendſhip with the *Canaanites*; ſo that they were mixed with them as if they had been the ſame Nation, which was moſt ſtrictly forbidden by the Law of *Moſes*: For they did not ſo much as make them Tributaries; but the *Aſherites* ſeem to have ſubmitted to the baſeſt Condition of all the other Tribes: For it is not ſaid, as of the other Tribes, that the People dwelt among the *Aſherites*; but that the *Aſherites* dwelt among them. As if the *Canaanites* remained ſtill the Lords of that Country, and the *Aſherites* were only permitted to live among them.

Ver. 33. *Neither did Naphtali drive out the Inhabitants of Beth-ſhemeſh, nor the Inhabitants of Beth-anath.*] Both theſe Cities are mentioned as in the Lot of *Naphtali*, *Joſh.* xix. 38.

But they dwelt among the Canaanites, the Inhabitants of the Land.] Imitating the *Aſherites*, in letting the old Inhabitants live promiſcuouſly with them; or rather contenting themſelves with the Liberty to live quietly among the *Canaanites.*

Nevertheleſs, the Inhabitants of Beth-ſhemeſh, and Beth-anath, became Tributaries to them.] In this they were more valiant than the *Aſherites*, that they brought theſe two Cities under Contribution, and made them acknowledge them for their Lords.

Ver. 34. *And the Amorites forced the Children of Dan into the Mountain.*] The Condition of the *Danites* was the worſt of all the Tribes: For they could neither expel the old Inhabitants of their Country, nor make them Tributaries, nor ſo much as poſſeſs it together with them: But the *Amorites* diſtreſſed them ſorely, by penning them up in the Cities that were in the mountainous Parts of their Country, not ſuffering them to dwell below in the Plain.

For they would not ſuffer them to come down into the Valley.] Being very ſtrong, it is likely, in Chariots of Iron, (which were of uſe, I obſerved,

obſerved in the flat Country, tho' they could do no Service in the Mountains) which the *Danites* ſo dreaded, that they durſt not venture to encounter them.

Ver. 35. *But the Amorites would dwell in Mount Heres, in Aijalon, and Shaalbim.*] And to add to their Affliction, would not let them enjoy all the mountainous Country, but poſſeſſed theſe three Cities there: Which conſtrained the *Danites* to ſeek for larger Quarters in other Parts; and ſeems to have been the Occaſion of that Expedition mentioned *Joſh.* xix. 47. where, *ver.* 41. we read of the two laſt mentioned Cities. See my Notes there.

Yet the Hand of the Houſe of Joſeph.] That is, the *Ephraimites*, who were next Neighbours to the *Danites*, in one Part of their Country.

Prevailed.] Againſt the *Amorites*, as the LXX expound it, Ἐβαρύνθη ἡ χεὶρ οἴκου Ἰωσὴφ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀμορῥαῖον, *The Hand of the Houſe of Joſeph was heavy upon the Amorite*; for they came to the Aſſiſtance of their Brethren, when they were grievouſly diſtreſſed.

So that they became Tributaries.] They brought the *Amorites* ſo much under, that they made thoſe three Cities before mentioned pay Tribute to the *Danites*, if not all the low Countries which they inhabited; for he ſaith in general, *They became Tributaries*, ſpeaking of all the *Amorites* thereabouts.

Ver. 36. *And the Coaſt of the Amorites, was from the going up to Akrabbim, from the Rock, and upward.*] We find mention of the going up to *Akrabbim* in *Joſh.* xv. 3. See my Notes there. And the *Vulgar* by the *Rock* (in *Hebrew*, *Selah*) underſtand the City called *Petra*, which was upon the Borders of *Edom*, and by *Amaziah* called *Jockteel*, in 2 *Kings* xiv. 7. Some take theſe Words to ſignify the large Extent of the Country which the *Amorites* inhabited; but I take them rather to denote, that the Children of *Ephraim* gave ſuch a Check to their Inſolence, that they were confined to this Country, which reached from *Akrabbim* and *Selah*, to the Mountains here mentioned. By this it appears, the *Iſraelites* let ſo many of the old Inhabitants remain in *Canaan*, that they ſettled themſelves among them; inſomuch, that in the Days of *Solomon*, we read of a Remnant of the *Amorites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Hivites*, and *Jebuſites*, 1 *Kings* ix. 20, 21. and in far latter Ages, as I have often obſerved, the *Gergeſens* remained in the Days of our Saviour, *Math.* viii. 28. tho' it is likely they were all become Proſelytes ſo far as to worſhip the God of *Iſrael*, tho' not entirely of their Religion.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. AND *an Angel of the* LORD.] The *Jews* by an *Angel* here underſtand a Prophet, who was ſent by God as his *Meſſenger*; which the word *Angel* imports: And they commonly take it to have been *Phineas*, who was employed on this Meſſage. But I ſee no Reaſon to depart from the natural Signification of the Word, when there is no Abſurdity in it, and it is not uſual to ſpeak in this Metaphorical Style: For there can no Inſtance be given, that I remember, of a Prophet, called *an Angel of the* LORD; which I take to ſignify more than an Angel, which appeared from Heaven on this Occaſion; that is, *the Angel of the Covenant.*

Came up from Gilgal.] Angels are not commonly ſaid to *come up*, but to *come down*; which is one Reaſon, I ſuppoſe, why this Angel hath been taken for a Prophet. But if we conſider whence he was ſeen to come, and why from *Gilgal*, this Phraſe will appear to be moſt proper; of which I ſhall give an Account preſently.

To Bochim.] This was not the Name of the Place before, but was given it on this Occaſion, *ver.* 5. In all Probability it was *Shiloh*; for there was no other Place where all the People of *Iſrael* were wont to aſſemble, as they were now when this Angel appeared to them, *ver.* 4.

And ſaid, I made you to go out of Egypt.] Theſe Words evidently ſhew, this was not a created Angel, but an uncreated; even that very Perſon who appeared to *Joſhua* hard-by *Jericho*, *Joſh.* v. 13, 14. which I have ſhewn there was God himſelf: For who but God could ſpeak in this Style, *I made you to go out of Egypt?* No Prophet, nor any created Angel, durſt have been ſo bold; but would have prefaced to this Speech in ſome ſuch Words as theſe, *Thus ſaith the* LORD, *I have made you to go*, &c. Suppoſing then this Angel to be the ſame with him that then appeared, it was fit for him to appear now as coming from *Gilgal*, to put them in mind of that illuſtrious Appearance of God near that Place, and the Aſſurance he then gave them of his Preſence with them in the Conqueſt of the Land, and the ſolemn Covenant they made with him, by the renewing of Circumciſion in that Place: Which upbraided them with their baſe Ingratitude to God, and their Sloth in not endeavouring to expel the *Canaanites.*

And have brought you into the Land which I ſware to your Fathers.] Of which he had given them Poſſeſſion.

And I ſaid, I will never break my covenant with you.] If they proved not falſe to him, he aſſured them they ſhould always find him preſent with them, to make good his Promiſes to them. This *Joſhua* told them they knew very well, that not one good Thing had failed which he promiſed; and bad them be confident he would ſtill continue the ſame faithful God. See *Joſh.* xxi. 45. xxiii. 14.

Ver. 2. *And ye ſhall make no League with the Inhabitants of this Land.*] Or rather, *but* ye ſhall make no League, &c. For this was the Condition of the Covenant on their part, *Deut.* vii. 2. and long before that, *Exod.* xxiii. 32. xxxiv. 12. and again more lately, *Joſh.* xxiii. 12.

Ye ſhall throw down their Altars.] *Exod.* xxxiv. 13. *Deut.* vii. 5. xii. 3.

But ye have not obeyed my Voice, Why have you done this?] That is, you can give no Account of your Diſobedience, to ſuch plain, and expreſs, and repeated Commands.

Ver

Ver. 3. *Wherefore I alſo ſaid, I will not drive them out from before you.*] God therefore reſolved to make good the Threatnings pronounced in his Covenant; as hitherto he had performed his Promiſe. See *Joſh.* xxiii. 13.

But they ſhall be Thorns in your Sides.] To vex and gall them, as *Joſhua* there told them.

And their Gods ſhall be a ſnare unto you.] As *Moſes* had foretold them, *Exod.* xxiii. 33. xxxiv. 12. For they were taken, by their Converſation with Idolaters, as Beaſts are in a Toil; and drawn to the Worſhip of their Gods, which was their Ruin.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs, when the Angel of the* LORD *ſpake all theſe Words unto all the Children of Iſrael.*] By this it appears they were all met at ſome ſolemn Feſtival, as they were bound to do three times every Year, (for otherwiſe it cannot be conceived what ſhould occaſion ſuch an Aſſembly of the whole Congregation) and conſequently, the Place where the Words were ſpoken to them, was *Shiloh*.

That the People lift up their Voice, and wept.] They made doleful Lamentations; ſome, it is likely, when they reflected on their Sin; others, when they thought of their Danger.

Ver. 5. *And they called the Name of that Place Bochim.*] Which ſignifies *Weepers*. It's poſſible the Place where the Angel, or where they ſtood, was called by this Name, in Memory of this great Goodneſs of God; which, for the preſent, mightily wrought upon their Hearts, as appears by what follows.

And they ſacrificed there unto the LORD.] This ſhews it was the Place of publick Worſhip where they now were, and offered upon this Occaſion whole Burnt-offerings unto God, by Way of Supplication and Prayer to him, with Thankſgiving for his Goodneſs in calling them to Repentance. Some think indeed, that they offered expiatory Sacrifices to make Atonement for their Sin: But they would not have been called ſimply *Sacrifices*, which commonly are meant of whole Burnt-offerings, or Peace-offerings, by which they acknowledged him to be the LORD, and promiſed to ſerve no other God.

Ver. 6. *And when Joſhua had let the People go.*] Or, *now* when *Joſhua* had broke up that laſt great Aſſembly which he held before his Death, xxiv. 28; ſo ſome expound it. But the next Words ſeem to direct us rather to underſtand it of his Diſmiſſion of them, after he had caſt Lots, and divided the Land among them, *Joſh.* xix. 15. xxi. 43.

The Children of Iſrael went every Man unto his Inheritance, to poſſeſs the Land.] To take Poſſeſſion of that Land which fell to their Share, and ſettle themſelves in it. And they went with a Reſolution, no doubt, to ſerve the LORD only; as, we cannot but think, he exhorted them before they parted: For the Lots were caſt in *Shiloh* before the LORD, as we are often told in the Book of *Joſhua*, xviii. 6, 8, 10. xix. 51. From whence they going to take Poſſeſſion of their Lot, it is reaſonable to think he did not diſmiſs them without his Bleſſing, and with a ſolemn Charge to obſerve the Laws of God, ſuch as he gave to the two Tribes and half, xxii. 5, *&c.* And this is the Reaſon why the Author of this Book repeats this out of the Book of *Joſhua*, to ſhew when their Apoſtacy began, and how it came about: For tho' they went to their Poſſeſſions well diſpoſed, yet their Love of the World, and Study of their own private Advantages, ſo increaſed, that they made them forget the publick Good, and take little Care of their Religion.

Ver. 7. *And the People ſerved the* LORD *all the Days of Joſhua.*] According to his Exhortation, and their ſolemn Promiſes a little before he died, *Joſh.* xxiv. 14, 15, 16, *&c.*

And all the Days of the Elders that out-lived Joſhua.] Such as *Eleazar*, and the reſt mentioned, *Joſh.* xix. 51. who were Men of great Authority, as well as Piety: and often, no doubt, admoniſhed them of their Duty, and put them in Mind of their Promiſes made to *Joſhua* in *Shechem*, where he made a Covenant between God and them, and wrote it in the Book of the Law of God, xxiv. 25, 26, *&c.*

Who had ſeen all the great Works of the LORD *that he did for Iſrael.*] Both among the *Egyptians*, and in the *Wilderneſs*, and in *Canaan*; which *Joſhua* had repreſented to them as a Motive to fear the LORD, and ſerve him in Sincerity, *Joſh.* xxiv. 5, 6, *&c.* 14, 15. Of theſe Things the *Elders*, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, frequently reminded them, and thereby kept them ſtedfaſt in their Religion. See *Joſh.* xxiv. 21. For whatſoever bad Inclinations they had in them, they were reſtrained, by the Reverence they bare to theſe great Men, from breaking looſe from God while they lived.

Ver. 8. *And Joſhua the Son of Nun, the Servant of the* LORD, *died*, &c.] After he had made that excellent Speech to them before-mentioned, and engaged them in a ſolemn Covenant to be God's People. See *Joſh.* xxiv. 29.

Ver. 9. *And they buried him in the Border of his Inheritance in Timnath-Heres*, &c.] This is mentioned only to ſhew that they honoured him after his Death, by attending his Funeral, as they had done in his Life. See *Joſh.* xxiv. 30.

Ver. 10. *And alſo all that Generation were gathered unto their Fathers.*] I ſuppoſe he means, not only all thoſe who had ſeen the Works of God in *Egypt*, and the *Wilderneſs*, but thoſe alſo who had ſeen *Jordan* dried up, the Walls of *Jericho* fall down, and the Sun ſtand ſtill at *Joſhua*'s Word, and their Enemies ſmitten down with Hailſtones, *&c.* Which had made ſuch Impreſſions on their Hearts, that they generally continued in the Service of God while they lived; and kept others in Obedience to him.

And there aroſe another Generation after them, which knew not the LORD.] But the next Generation did not regard the LORD, nor mind their Religion; but only ſtudied to ſettle themſelves, on any Terms, in their Poſſeſſions, by making Peace with the *Canaanites*, whom they ſhould have driven out.

Nor yet the Works which he had done for Iſrael.] Which they did not keep in Mind, as they ought to have done; being wholly intent to their earthly Concerns, in building Houſes, planting Vineyards, and improving their Lands.

Unto which they were invited by the Peace they enjoyed; by which Mens Minds are wont to be corrupted; as the *Greeks* and *Romans* were in future Ages. According to thoſe known Words of the *Roman* Satyriſt,

Nunc patimur longæ pacis mala.——

Ver. 11. *And the Children of Iſrael did Evil in the Sight of the* LORD.] By this Forgetfulneſs of God, and of his Works, and by their Familiarity with the People of *Canaan*, they ſoon learned to do as they did, and that openly and publickly, not fearing the dreadful Sentence of God againſt ſuch Evil-Doers, who were moſt odious to him, whatſoever Excuſes Men make for them. So that Phraſe, *in the Sight of the* LORD, may be interpreted.

And ſerved Baalim.] The Gods of the Nations whoſe Land they poſſeſſed, who were called by this general Name, which ſignifies Lords. For among the Heathen, as St. *Paul* obſerves, there were *Gods many, and Lords many*. In *Hebrew* he would have ſaid *many Baalim*, who were their deified great Men, as Mr. *Mede* hath ſhewn. (P. 776. of his Works) For *Baal* (in *Chaldee*, *Bel*) the King of *Babel* next after *Nimrod*, was the firſt that was deified, and reputed a God after his Death; from whence they called all other Dæmons by the Name of *Baalim*; as from the firſt *Roman* Emperor who was called *Cæſar*, all that followed him were ſtiled *Cæſars*. *Baalim* therefore being the general Name of the Gods of *Syria*, *Palæſtine*, and the neighbouring Countries, there was as many *Baals* as there were Nations: For Example, *Baal* of the *Sidonians*, and *Baal* of the *Amorites*, of the *Moabites*, and *Ammonites*, and the reſt of the People thereabouts, who had their *Baalim*. See alſo *Selden*, *de Diis Syris. Syntagm.* 2. C. 1.

Ver. 12. *And they forſook the* LORD *God of their Fathers, which brought them out of the Land of Egypt, and followed other Gods of the People that were round about them.*] By *other Gods* may be meant the Gods of the People of *Canaan*; which did not content them, but they worſhipped alſo the Gods of other neighbouring Nations; none of which had beſtowed any Benefit upon them. This was a very high Aggravation of their Sin; that when all other Nations made to themſelves ſuch Gods as they thought had done them good, or could be helpful to them, they forſook the greateſt Benefactor to their Nation, who had made them a free People, and worſhipped ſuch Gods as had done nothing for them, nor had been able to preſerve thoſe that worſhipped them from Deſtruction.

And bowed themſelves unto them.] They did not only own them for Gods, but publickly adored them.

And provoked the LORD *to Anger.*] Who had told them he was a jealous God, and could not bear any Rival, *Exod.* xx. 1, 2. It is not eaſy to give an Account what moved them to forſake their God, after ſuch wonderful Things as he had done for them, and their moſt ſolemn Engagements to him. It is not unlikely that one Reaſon was, the unuſual Rites preſcribed in his Divine Service, much different from all other Nations; and ſeveral Laws that made them unlike all the reſt of the World, who hated them upon this Account. This they could not bear, deſiring to be conformable to other People, and gain their Friendſhip. For *Hoſea* ſaith, viii. 12. they looked upon the great Things of the Law *as a ſtrange Thing*.

Ver. 13. *And they forſook the* LORD, *and ſerved Baal and Aſhtaroth.*] Eſpecially they worſhipped the *Sun*, and the *Moon*, or *Venus*; which ſome underſtand by *Aſtarte*. In the next Chapter it is ſaid they worſhipped *Baalim and the Groves*, iii. 7. For in thoſe Groves ſeveral Goddeſſes, under the Name of *Aſhtaroth*, were worſhipped, as Mr. *Selden* conjectures in his *Syntag.* 2. *de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2. where he ſhews there were many *Aſtartes* among the Heathen, as there were *Baals*; and therefore the Scripture ſpeaks of them in the Plural Number, (as the LXX here doth ταῖς Ἀσταρταις) becauſe of the Multitude of Images repreſenting *Juno*, or *Venus* or *Diana*, which had the Name of *Aſhtaroth*, ſignifying (as ſome think) as much as *Beata*'s, bleſſed.

Ver. 14. *And the Anger of the* LORD *was hot againſt Iſrael.*] Brake out in very dreadful Effects upon them.

And he delivered them into the Hands of the Spoilers that ſpoiled them.] Carried away their Cattle and their Goods.

And he ſold them into the Hands of their Enemies round about.] Who carried away their Perſons, as well as their Goods, and made them Slaves. For that ſeems to be the Meaning of *ſelling them*, which is a Phraſe often uſed in this Book, iii. 8. iv. 2. and other Places, *Deut.* xxxii. 30. *Pſal.* xliv, 12, *&c.* This was a juſt Puniſhment of God upon them, that as they ſerved the Gods of the People *round about them*, *ver.* 12. ſo they ſhould be Slaves to all thoſe Nations round about them.

So that they could not any longer ſtand before their Enemies.] Being ſo far from being able to make any further Conqueſts, that they could not defend themſelves.

Ver. 15. *Whitherſoever they went out, the Hand of the* LORD *was againſt them for Evil.*] They had ill Succeſs in all their Affairs, whether private or publick Buſineſs.

As the LORD *had ſaid, and as the* LORD *had ſworn unto them.*] *Deut.* xxviii. xxx. 17, 18. xxxi. 16, 17. and many other Places.

And they were greatly diſtreſſed.] As ſoon as they ſlackned their Endeavours to drive out the *Canaanites*, and made Leagues with them, (as we read in the foregoing Part of this Chapter) God began to withdraw himſelf from them, and would not drive out their Enemies from before them, *ver.* 3. But when by this means they were enſnared to worſhip their Gods, (as he foreſaw they would, *ver.* 4.) then he gave them up into the Hands of thoſe Enemies, with whom they had made Friendſhip, and ſuffered them to tyrannize over them, and uſe them cruelly.

Ver. 16. *Nevertheleſs, the* LORD *raiſed up Judges*, &c.] Extraordinary Rulers and Governors, whoſe Authority, I take to have been

chiefly in the time of War; they being raiſed up (by a particular Inſpiration and Excitation from God) as it here follows, *to deliver them out of the Hands of thoſe that ſpoiled them.* So that commonly, when they had wrought Deliverance for the People, and their Army was diſmiſſed, they became private Men again; as appears by the Story of *Jephthah*, who would not undertake to lead them againſt the *Ammonites*, unleſs he might be their Governor when the War was done, *Judg.* xi. 9. and of *Gideon*, who refuſed to rule over them, when they offered the Government to him, after the Conqueſt of the *Midianites*, viii. 22, 23. Their Buſineſs therefore principally was to preſerve the People's Liberties, to reſtore them, together with God's true Religion, and to preſcribe what was to be done in ſuch Caſes; being a kind of *Dictators*, whoſe Power continued as long as there was Occaſion for it. Yet it muſt be acknowledged that ſome of them had an eſtabliſhed Authority for their Life over thoſe whom they had reſcued from Slavery, (not over the whole Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, part of which was ſome time in Peace, when another Part was oppreſſed) and managed Political Matters, when they were too hard for the ordinary Judges to divide them. (See *Deut.* xvii. 9.) Thus we read that *Deborah* a Propheteſs, *judged Iſrael*, and that the People *came to her for* Judgment, before ſhe excited *Barak* to vindicate their Liberties: But commonly they ſeem to have contented themſelves with this, not minding Judgment; as *Samuel*, the laſt of them, chiefly exerciſed his Authority in Matters of Juſtice, 1 *Sam.* vii. 15, *&c.* where he is ſaid in his Houſe at *Ramah* to have judged *Iſrael*, and ended their Controverſies, and done Right to every Man: And when, by reaſon of Age, he could do this no longer, he committed it to his Sons. See *Corn. Bertram. de Repub. Judaica*, Cap. 9. P. 109, *&c.*

Ver. 17. *And yet they would not hearken to their Judges.*] Not conſtantly; but revolted again, *ver.* 18, 19.

But they went a Whoring after other Gods, and bowed themſelves unto them.] Worſhipped them publickly; which is commonly called going a Whoring from God, who had eſpouſed them to himſelf.

They turned quickly out of the Way.] As ſoon as the Judge was dead, who had wrought Deliverance for them.

Which their Fathers walked in, obeying the Commandments of the LORD.] In the Days of *Joſhua*, and the Elders which ſurvived him, *ver.* 7.

But they did not ſo.] Whom the next Generation would not imitate.

Ver. 18. *And when the LORD raiſed them up Judges.*] This is the conſtant Phraſe wherein he ſpeaks of theſe great Men, whoſe Spirit was ſtirred up by an extrordinary Motion from God, to undertake Things beyond the Reach of human Wiſdom or Power.

Then the LORD was with the Judge.] Endued him with Heroical Courage, and gave him wonderful Succeſs. Here the *Targum* continues the ſame Language, *The WORD of the LORD was the Helper of the Judge.* See Chap. i. 19, 22.

And delivered them out of the Hand of their Enemies all the Days of the Judge.] As long as he ruled over them, and kept them in Obedience to him. This ſignifies, that if they did not exerciſe their Authority, yet the Effects of it remained all the Days of their Life.

For it repented the LORD becauſe of their Groanings, by reaſon of them that oppreſſed and vexed them.] He altered the Courſe of his Providence, when they not only ſighed and groaned under their Oppreſſions, but cried unto him for Help, and promiſed Amendment, as we find they did, iii. 9, 15. vi. 7, 8, *&c.*

Ver. 19. *And it came to paſs, when the Judge was dead they returned.*] To their former Idolatry.

And corrupted themſelves more than their Fathers.] Who lived in the former Judge his Time, and had ſorely ſmarted for this Sin, till God, upon their Repentance, ſent them Deliverance.

In following other Gods to ſerve them, and bow down to them.] They either multiplied more ſtrange Gods, or deviſed ſtill new Rites of Worſhip contrary to God's Law. The common Service they paid to every one of them, was building Temples to their Honour, ſetting up Altars, planting Groves, burning Incenſe, and ſacrificing Beaſts.

They ceaſed not from their evil doings.] In the *Hebrew*, *Would not let fall their own Inventions*; but retained them, notwithſtanding all that God had done, to bring them off from their Idolatry.

Nor form their ſtubborn Way.] But obſtinately perſiſted in their evil Courſes, as if nothing had been done to reclaim them.

Ver. 20. *And the Anger of the LORD was hot againſt Iſrael.*] This highly incenſed the Divine Diſpleaſure, and provoked him to puniſh them more grievouſly.

And he ſaid, Becauſe the People hath tranſgreſſed my Covenant which I commanded their Fathers, &c.] By making Leagues with the *Canaanites*, and not throwing down their Altars, *&c. Arias Montanus* very well obſerves, that this Verſe expreſſes what great Reaſon there was for God's being exceeding angry with them. *Firſt*, Becauſe they had forſaken him, to whom they owed their being a Nation. *Secondly*, Becauſe they had violated that Covenant, which was not a new or obſcure Thing, but made long ago with their Fathers, who, it was very well known, had reaped the Benefit thereof. And, *Thirdly*, Becauſe (as this Verſe concludes) *they had not hearkned unto God's Voice, i. e.* tho' he had often admoniſhed them, by his Prophets, of their Duty, and chidden and threatned them; yet they would not mind what he ſaid, but in a moſt rebellious manner gave themſelves up to the Impieties of other Nations.

Ver. 21. *I alſo will not henceforth drive out any from before them.*] That is, not preſently, or ſo ſoon as he intended, if they had pleaſed him. See *ver.* 23.

Of the Nations which Joſhua left when he died.] For God never intended they ſhould be all rooted out at once, as hath been often noted from *Exod.* xxiii. 29, 30. yet their Expulſion had been more ſpeedy, if they had obeyed him, than now he reſolved it ſhould be. Nor could it well be otherwiſe; for by being delivered into their Enemies Hands, to ſpoil and to enſlave them, their Increaſe was hereby hindred; ſo that they were not able to people all the Land, ſo ſoon as they might have done, if they had been obedient: For then God promiſed to multiply them exceedingly, *Deut.* vii. 13, 14, *&c.*

Ver. 22. *That by them I may prove Iſrael, whether they will keep the Way of the LORD to walk therein, as their Fathers did keep it, or not.*] That it might appear whether they would continue firm, as their Fathers reſolved in the Service of God, (*Joſh.* xxiv. 16, 24.) or revolt from him to ſerve other Gods.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the LORD left theſe Nations, without driving them out haſtily, neither delivered he them into the Hand of Joſhua.*] This was one Reaſon they were not all caſt out at once, by the victorious Hand of *Joſhua*; for if none of them had been left remaining, there would have been no Temptation to worſhip their Gods; which would have been all aboliſhed with them. Another Reaſon is given of this, in the Place before mentioned, *Exod.* xxiii. 29, 30. and *Deut.* vii. 22.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *NOW theſe are the Nations which the LORD left, to prove Iſrael by them.*] Having ſaid in general, that God thought fit not to drive out all the *Canaanites*, that he might try the Care and Fidelity of his People in his Service, (ii. 22.) he now names the particular Nations, that remained unſubdued.

Even as many of Iſrael as had not known all the Wars of Canaan.] Such as were born ſince the War was ended; and had ſeen none of the wonderful Works of God in the Conqueſt of the Land; God intended to prove them, whether they would worſhip him, when they ſaw what they muſt expect, if they did not; *viz.* that he would let the *Canaanites*, their mortal Enemies, looſe upon them.

Ver. 2. *Only that the Generation of the Children of Iſrael might know to teach them War.*] There was another Reaſon why they were left remaining, as was obſerved before in the laſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter: But this had been ſufficient, if there had been no other; that the *Iſraelites* might not grow ſluggiſh for want of ſome to awaken and exerciſe their Courage and keep up Martial Diſcipline among them; and that they might, by having powerful Enemies ſo near them, betake themſelves to God conſtantly, and depend upon his Help and Succour, by whoſe Power their Fathers had brought them under.

At the leaſt ſuch as before knew nothing thereof.] If this was not needful for all, it was at leaſt for ſuch as had never handled Arms; that they might be trained up to be ready upon Occaſion to fight with their Enemies. For they being wholly bred to Husbandry, and feeding of Cattle, would have had no Military Diſcipline among them, if they had not had the *Canaanites* ſo near to them.

Or this may be the Meaning of this Verſe, *They ſhall know what it is to be left to themſelves:* For their Fathers fought by a Divine Power, but now they ſhall learn what it is to fight like other Men, without God to go along with them.

Ver. 3. *Namely, the five Lords of the Philiſtines.*] See upon *Joſh.* xiii. 2, 3. and *Judg.* i. 18. where it appears, that *three* of them had been, in ſome meaſure, conquered; but it ſeems had recovered their Country again, by the Sloth of the *Iſraelites*.

And all the Canaanites.] Theſe were a particular People of that Country, (as hath been often ſaid) near to the Mid-land Sea, many of which ſtill remained ſcattered up and down the Land.

And the Sidonians.] Who lived in the Territory belonging to the famous City of *Sidon*; who was one of the Sons of *Canaan*, *Gen.* x. 15.]

And the Hivites that dwelt in Mount Lebanon.] A famous Mountain in the North Part of *Canaan*.

From Baal-Hermon, unto the entring in of Hamath.] See in *Joſh.* xi. 3. xiii. 5.

Ver. 4. *And they were to prove Iſrael by them, to know whether they would hearken to the commandments of the LORD, &c.*] That *their* Vertue might appear, if they did not imitate theſe People: or their Baſeneſs, if they did.

Ver. 5. *And the Children of Iſrael dwelt among the Canaanites, Hittites, and Amorites, and Perizzites, and Hivites, and Jebuſites.*] The *Iſraelites* ſoon diſcovered their bad Diſpoſition, in ſuffering all Sorts of the wicked People of this Land to remain and dwell with them; as if they were ſtill the Poſſeſſors of this Country, and the Children of *Iſaael* but Intruders among them.

Ver. 6. *And they took their Daughters to be their Wives, and gave their Daughters to their Sons.*] Which was not only directly contrary to the Law of God, (*Deut.* vii. 3.) but an higher Breach of their Covenant with him, than the mere making Leagues with them.

And ſerved their Gods.] As *Moſes*, in the ſame Place, foretold they would, (*Deut.* vii. 4.) if they contracted ſuch Marriages with them.

Ver. 7. *And the Children of Iſrael did Evil in the Sight of the LORD, and forgat the LORD their God.*] They grew in time ſo very wicked, that they not only worſhipped other Gods, together with the LORD; but quite forgot him, and worſhipped them alone.

And ſerved Baalim and the Groves.] Some here take *Groves*, literally, for the Trees themſelves that compoſed thoſe ſhady Places, which were anciently conſecrated to *Heroes*; being, ſome time, the Place of their Sepulchre; where their *Manes* were ſuppoſed to haunt. For *Baalim* were the ſame with *Heroes*; and Trees were accounted ſacred Things by the ancient Heathen, who conſecrated them to this or that

Deity, and trimmed them up with Ribbands, and adorned them with Lights, and made Vows to them, and hung the Spoils of their Enemies upon them. Insomuch that Travellers were wont to stop when they were to pass by them, as if they had been the Habitation of some God. But Mr. *Selden* thinks, that by Groves are to be here understood the *Images* of their Gods in the Groves; as it is certain they must signify in some Places. See upon Chap. vi. 25. And he probably conjectures, that there were several Goddesses, under the Name of *Ashtaroth*, worshipped in them. See the Place mentioned above, in his *De Diis Syris. Syntag.* 2. cap. 2.

And it is evident, that these Deities, whatsoever they were, were different from *Baalim*; for the Prophets of *Baal*, and the Prophets of the *Groves*, were distinct Persons, in 1 *Kings* xviii. 19.

Ver. 8. *Therefore the Anger of the* LORD *was hot against Israel.*] This Expression we had twice before. See Chap. ii. 14, 20.

And he sold them.] See in the same Place.

Into the Hand of Cushan-rishathaim King of Mesopotamia.] Of that Country, which lay between the two great Rivers of *Euphrates* and *Tigris*. So the first Enemy that oppressed them were the *Syrians*; who either out of Hatred, or Desire to enlarge their Dominions, came over *Euphrates* and invaded them.

And the Children of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight Years.] He forced them to buy their Peace upon hard Terms, and brought them under Tribute to him; but did not impose Garrisons upon them; so that they more easily recovered their Liberty, when one appeared to head them. When these *eight* Years began, (that is, how long after the Death of *Joshua*) is variously disputed; but it is certain it was in the next Age (which in Scripture signifies about Three and Thirty Years) after *Joshua* and the Elders that survived him (during whose Time they served God, and lived in Freedom.) For *Caleb*'s younger Brother, as it here follows, was the first Judge whom God raised up to them.

Ver. 9. *And when the Children of Israel cried unto the* LORD.] Returned to him, and acknowledged him to be their only God, of whom they earnestly begged Pardon, and implored Help with fervent Prayer; beseeching him to deliver them from this cruel Servitude; as he did *Jacob* their Fore-father, from the Bondage of *Laban* the *Syrian*.

He raised a Deliverer to the Children of Israel, who delivered them.] All the Judges are called by the Name of *Saviours*, or *Deliverers*, in *Nehemiah* ix. 27. because they rescued them from the Oppression of their Enemies, when they could not help themselves.

Even Othniel the Son of Kenez, Caleb's younger Brother.] So he is called, i. 13. concerning which, see *Josh.* xv. 17.

Ver. 10. *And the Spirit of the* LORD *came upon him.*] He had an extraordinary Motion from God to take upon him the Government of the People; which none durst presume to do but such as were appointed by God, who was their King. *Josephus* thinks that God appeared to them, or some way revealed his Will to them in these Matters; so that they were sure they acted by his authority. The *Chaldee* Paraphrast seems to favour the latter Opinion, who calls this Spirit *The Spirit of Prophecy*. Certain it is, that they had not only an inward Incitement to undertake the Deliverance of God's People; but were endowed with extraordinary Courage and Conduct; and it is likely with a singular Gift of Divine Eloquence, to persuade the People to forsake their Idolatry, and vindicate their Liberty.

And he judged Israel, and went out to War.] This was the first Part of the Office of a Judge, to plead their Cause, and avenge them of their Oppressors; as this Phrase of *Judging* is used, *Deut.* xxxii. 35, 36. and other Places. Tho' here being set before going to War, it may be thought that he first rectified what was amiss among them, and especially reduced them to the Worship of the LORD alone; and then went to fight against their Enemies.

And the LORD *delivered Cushan-rishathaim, King of Mesopotamia, into his Hand.*] They overthrew and entirely routed all his Forces, and, as the Words seem to import, took or slew the King himself.

And his Hand prevailed against Cushan-rishathaim.] So that he could not recover his Strength to oppress them any more.

Ver. 11. *And the Land had Rest forty Years.*] It doth not suit with my Design to enter into Chronological Disputes; and therefore I remit the learned Reader to the *Canon Chronicus* of Sir *J. Marsham*, Lib. 2. where he supposes the idolatrous Generation to have risen in the *Thirty-fourth* Year after the Death of *Joshua*; who lost their Liberty, and fell under the Oppression of *Cushan*, for the Space of *Eight Years*, and after their Deliverance from it, lived happily *Forty Years*. Which will appear in the Sequel to be more reasonable, than to interpret these Words as if they signified, *The Land rested in the Fortieth Year, after Joshua first settled them in Peace and Quiet*. So our great *Primate* of *Ireland*: Vide A. M. 2599.

And Othniel the Son of Kenez died.] It is not certain in what Part of these Forty Years of Rest he died; nor is it material whether in the Beginning, Middle, or End of it.

Ver. 12. *And the Children of Israel did Evil again in the Sight of the* LORD.] Fell into the Sin of Idolatry, after *Othniel* was dead.

And the LORD *strengthned Eglon the King of Moab against them, because they had done Evil in the Sight of the* LORD.] As he raised up Deliverers to *Israel*, when they were penitent; so he stirred up Enemies to them, and gave them Power also to oppress them, when they revolted from him. And the next Enemy to the *Syrians* were the *Moabites*; for since they worshipped the Gods of the People *round about them*, (Chap. ii. 12.) it was fit they should be punished by those very People.

Ver. 13. *And he gathered unto him the Children of Ammon and Amalek.*] Persuaded these two Nations, who were his near Neighbours, (*Moab* lying between them) to associate themselves with him in this War. Unto which they were

were eaſily inclined; eſpecially *Amalek*, who had an old Grudge to the *Iſraelites*.

And went and ſmote Iſrael.] Either by a ſudden Invaſion, or in a pitched Battle.

And poſſeſſed themſelves of the City of Palm-Trees.] That is, *Jericho*, as appears from *Deut.* xxxiv. 3. *Judg.* i. 16. Which tho' it was deſtroyed by *Joſhua*, yet the Place where it ſtood remaining, it is likely they made Fortifications, and placed a ſtrong Garriſon there, that they might the better keep the whole Country in Subjection. For, as the Country thereabouts was very fertile (of which they deprived the *Iſraelites*, and ſent the Riches of it to their own Country, which was not far off) ſo they hindered all Communication between thoſe on this ſide *Jordan*, and thoſe on the other ſide, but what they pleaſed to allow; and maintained a Correſpondence with their own People, from whom they could receive more Forces, if there were need, by having the Command of the Paſſages over *Jordan*. By which means alſo they thought to ſecure their Retreat, if there ſhould be Occaſion, to their own Country.

Ver. 14. *So the Children of Iſreal ſerved Eglon the King of Moab eighteen Years.*] He ruled all this time as an abſolute Maſter over them, and impoſed what Burdens he pleaſed upon them; of which, it is likely, the *Ammonites* and *Amalekites* had a Share, as a Reward of their Help and Aſſiſtance.

Ver. 15. *But when the Children of Iſrael cried unto the LORD.*] Humbled themſelves before him, acknowledged their Offence, begged his Pardon, and beſeeched his Help; as before, *ver.* 9.

The LORD raiſed them up a Deliverer.] As he had done before. See *ver.* 9.

Ehud the Son of Gera, a Benjamite.] Which Tribe was the moſt immediately oppreſſed, (the Country of *Jericho* being in it) and therefore one of them was very proper to be their Deliverer.

A Man left-handed.] The *Hebrew* Words *itter jad jemini* are very obſcure, being uſed no where elſe but here, and xx. 16. In both Places the LXX tranſlate them ἀμφοτεροδέξιος, whom the Vulgar follows, *qui utraque manu pro dextra utebatur*, who could uſe both Hands, as we do our Right. This the *Hebrew* Phraſe will bear, which literally ſignifies, as we tranſlate it in the Margin, *ſhut of his Right Hand, i. e.* who did nothing with it, but uſed his Left though he could uſe both alike: Or, as *Joſephus* will have it, τῶν χειρῶν τὴν ἀριστερὰν, ἀμείνων, *who of the two could uſe his Left Hand beſt.*

And by him the Children of Iſrael ſent a Preſent unto Eglon King of Moab.] Some underſtand by this the Tribute that was laid upon them; but it rather ſignifies a voluntary Preſent, above their ordinary Payments; whereby they hoped to mollify him, and make him favourable to his loving Subjects: For *Mincha* is uſed for ſuch Offerings as were preſented to God to obtain his Favours.

Ver. 16. *But Ehud made him a Dagger.*] Privately prepared this Weapon, intending to make uſe of this Opportunity for their Deliverance.

Which had two Edges, of a Cubit Length.] Therefore *Joſephus* calls it ξιφίδιον, *a little Sword*; which was long enough to do Execution, but ſo ſhort as to be eaſily concealed.

And he did gird it under his Raiment.] Which the LXX and the *Vulgar* take to have been a Military Garment; but the *Hebrew* Word *Mad* ſignifies any Sort of Raiment.

Upon his Right Thigh.] To avoid all Suſpicion, (for Men uſe to wear their Swords on their left Side) and that he might more readily draw it out, and uſe it with his Left Hand, when he ſhould find Occaſion.

Ver. 17. *And he brought the Preſent to Eglon King of Moab.*] Was admitted into his Preſence and delivered the Preſent with his Right Hand, as Men uſually do; which he could uſe, I ſuppoſe, as well as his Left, though not, perhaps, with ſo much Strength.

And Eglon was a very fat Man.] Which made him unwieldy, and leſs able and ready to riſe up, and avoid or defend himſelf from a ſudden Stroke. The LXX tranſlate it ἀνὴρ ἀστεῖος σφόδρα, an exceeding civil or courteous Man; which made it the more eaſy for *Ehud* to give the Blow when he embraced him perhaps, or ſtooped, when he roſe out of his Seat to receive his Meſſage in an obliging manner.

Ver. 18. *And when he had made an end to offer the Preſent.*] Which was done (as appears by this) with ſuch Ceremony as was in uſe in thoſe Days.

He ſent away the People that bare the Preſent.] It was brought by ſome of his Retinue, (conſiſting, it is likely, of ſeveral things) who being all withdrawn, and gone ſome part of their Way homeward with him, he bad them go forward, and leave him to diſpatch ſome private Buſineſs which he pretended: For ſuch Deſigns, as he had in his Mind, ſeldom ſucceed where many are engaged in them.

Ver. 19. *And he himſelf turned again.*] As if he had forgotten ſomething, or had met with ſome new Inſtructions by the Way.

From the Quarries that were by Gilgal.] Some underſtand by the Word we tranſlate *Quarries*, a Place where they digged or hewed Stones; others, the Twelve Stones which *Joſhua* placed in *Gilgal*. But the LXX, and the *Vulgar* take it for *Graven Images*; for ſo indeed the Word *Peſil* commonly ſignifies in Scripture; and ſo we tranſlate it in the Margin of our Bible: Which when *Ehud* beheld, his Spirit was mightily ſtirred within him, (as *Conradus Pellicanus* explains this Paſſage) and he proceeded no further in his Return home, but went back with a Reſolution to revenge this Affront to God, as well as the Oppreſſion of his People. For it is to be ſuppoſed, the *Moabites* had ſet up theſe *Graven Images* in this Place, rather than any other; which had been famous for the Preſence of God for a long time in it.

And ſaid, I have a ſecret Errand unto thee, O King.] Being admitted again into the King's Preſence, he deſired a private Audience of him.

Who ſaid keep Silence.] He bad *Ehud* ſay no more till all his Attendants were withdrawn, whom he would not have to hear the Meſſage.

And

And all that ſtood by him went out from him.] It may ſeem ſtrange, that a Prince ſhould truſt himſelf alone with one of that Nation, who he knew groaned under his Yoke; but his Mind was blinded by the Preſent, and by the Compliments wherewith it was delivered; and God deprived him, at this Time, of his wonted Prudence. For, as *Solomon* obſerves, *There is no Wiſdom, nor Underſtanding, nor Counſel againſt the LORD:* Who intended he ſhould be deſtroyed, *Prov.* xxi. 30.

Ver. 20. *And Ehud came unto him.*] Approached nearer to his Perſon.

And he was ſitting in a Summer Parlour.] In a cool Room, (as the *Hebrew* Word imports) where he was defended from the Heat of the Sun, and enjoyed the freſh Air.

Which he had made for himſelf alone.] Where he was wont to retire from all Company, when he had a mind to ſleep, perhaps in the Heat of the Day, or to diſpatch Buſineſs with which he entruſted no body.

And Ehud ſaid, I have a Meſſage from God unto thee.] Which in ſome Senſe was true, but not in that wherein the King underſtood it; who thought he had met with ſome Divine Apparition in the Way, or been at ſome Oracle; for he doth not ſay he had a Meſſage from *Jehovah* the God of *Iſrael*, (whom he would have deſpiſed, perhaps, as *Pharoah* did) but from *Elohim*, which was a common Name to all Gods, xxiv. 2, 15.

And he roſe out of his Seat.] Out of Reverence as to God, whoſe Words, he ſuppoſed, he was to hear. A remarkable Inſtance of the ancient Veneration Men paid to whatſoever carried the Name and Authority of God in it, and reproaches thoſe who now behave themſelves irreverently, even in his Worſhip and Service. See *Numb.* xxiii. 18. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 3.

Ver. 21. *And Ehud put forth his Left Hand, and took the Dagger from his Right Thigh.*] If the King had his Eye upon his Hands, it was upon the Right, and not the Left, ſo that he might more unobſervedly employ it as he deſigned.

And thruſt it into his Belly.] So that it pierced his Heart, (as *Joſephus* underſtands it) or ſome other Vital Part; upon which he immediately died, without ſpeaking a Word, or making a Noiſe to alarm his Servants who were without. Nothing can juſtify this Fact, but an Order from the LORD, which he not only pretended, but really had. See *ver.* 26.

Ver. 22. *And the Haft alſo went in after the Blade.*] The Thruſt he made was ſo violent, that not only the Blade of the *Dagger*, but the Handle alſo, went into his Bowels.

And the Fat cloſed up the Blade.] And the Haft, ſo that they could not be ſeen.

So that he could not draw the Dagger out of his Belly.] But left it there, becauſe he could take no hold of it.

And the Dirt came out.] All agree that the Word *Parſchedona*, which is no where found but here, ſignifies the Dung or Excrements; which came not out at the Wound, (for that was cloſed) but at the uſual Place; it being common for Bodies to purge after they are dead, eſpecially ſuch corpulent ones as his was, in whoſe Bowels, no doubt, there were violent Convulſions made by this ſudden Stroke.

Ver. 23. *And Ehud went forth through the Porch.*] It is very uncertain what the *Hebrew* Wrod *Miſredona* ſignifies, which we tranſlate *Porch*. Some take it for the Guard Chamber, (as the LXX ſeem to underſtand it) or a Place where the King's Servants ſat; through which he paſſed boldly, that he might give no Suſpicion of any Miſchief he had done; Or, as *Kimchi* explains it, the Place where the People ſat, who waited for Audience.

And ſhut the Doors of the Parlour upon him and locked them.] As he came out of the Parlour, he not only ſhut the Doors after him, and locked them; but, it is likely, took the Key away with him. There ſeem to have been double Doors, an inward and an outward, as is uſual.

Ver. 24. *And when he was gone out, his Servants came.*] Seeing *Ehud* was gone from the King, his Attendants came into the Antichamber, (as we ſpeak) to be ready at the King's Call, to wait his Pleaſure.

And when they ſaw, that behold the Doors of the Parlour were locked, they ſaid, Surely he covereth his Feet in the Summer Parlour.] They concluded he was eaſing Nature, as this Phraſe is commonly underſtood here, and in 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 3. for when they were about that Buſineſs, the long Garments which they wore in thoſe Countries were ſo diſpoſed as to cover their Feet. See *Gataker* in his *Cinnus*, Lib. 2. Cap. 3. But it may be underſtood, I think, of laying himſelf down to ſleep, which they were wont to do in thoſe Countries in the Heat of the Day, (2 *Sam.* iv. 5.) and then lying down in their Cloaths, it was neceſſary to cover their Feet for Decency's Sake, to keep their Garments from ſlipping up, and expoſing thoſe Parts which ſhould not be ſeen. And this ſuits better with the Story than the other; for they thought fit to wait a great while before they entred the Chamber, that they might not diſturb his Reſt; whereas the other Buſineſs being ſoon diſpatched, would not have occaſioned their waiting ſo long. See the *Arabic* and *Syriac* Verſion, both here and upon 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 3.

Ver. 25. *And they tarried.*] Waiting in the Anti-chamber.

Till they were aſhamed.] Till they were in a great Confuſion, not knowing what to think ſhould be the Cauſe that he ſlept longer than ordinary.

And behold, he opened not the Door of the Parlour.] At which it is likely, after tedious Expectation, they knocked, and had no Anſwer.

Therefore they took a Key and opened them.] For in King's Courts, there were more than one who had Keys to the ſame Room.

And behold, their Lord was fallen down dead on the Earth.] Perhaps they did not at firſt perceive that he was killed; which might ſomething retard their Purſuit of *Ehud*.

Ver. 26. *And Ehud eſcaped while they tarried.*] Their long Expectance of the King's awaking out of Sleep, gave him the Advantage of making his Eſcape.

And passed beyond the Quarries.] From whence he returned to do this Exploit, *ver.* 19. which had been Murder, if he had not had a Divine Warrant for what he did: Unto which none can pretend now, without blaspheming God as the Author of Sin; but then was evident by the wonderful Gifts of Wisdom, and Courage, and Might, wherewith such Men were divinely inspired. See *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 1. Cap. 4. Sect. 19. N. 4.

And escaped unto Seirath.] *Gilgal* was so near to the Garrison which the *Moabites* had in those Territories, that he did not think himself safe till he was got out of the Tribe of *Benjamin* into the mountainous Country of *Ephraim*, where this Town was, upon the Confines of the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 27. *And it came to pass, when he was come.*] To *Seirath*.

That he blew a Trumpet in the Mountain of Ephraim.] To summon those who were dispos'd to recover their Liberties, to take Arms and follow him.

And the Children of Israel went down with him from the Mount.] A considerabe Body of Men, no doubt, presently met together, (being before prepared, it is likely, by his Emissaries) and marched after him into the Country of *Benjamin*, where the *Moabites* were settled.

And he before them.] He led them on as their Captain; and had many more, in all Probability, joined him as he marched further into the Country.

Ver. 28. *And he said unto them, Follow after me.*] Be not afraid to venture your Lives, as I will do, for the Liberty of your Country.

For the LORD hath delivered your Enemies the Moabites into your Hand.] He was assured that God, who had succeeded his Enterpize, and deprived the *Moabites* of their supreme Head (whereby no doubt they were in great Confusion) would accomplish what he had begun, and give them a perfect Deliverance: With this Belief he endeavoured to possess their Souls, as if the thing was already done, which he knew would inspire them with such Courage as could not be withstood.

And they went down after him, and took the Fords of Jordan.] He proceeded prudently, as well as courageously; and therefore led them directly to the Fords of *Jordan*, of which they possessed themselves; that the *Moabites* who had settled themselves in that Part of *Judæa* (*ver.* 13.) might not be able to save themselves by retreating into their own Country, nor they in *Moab* be able to come to their Assistance.

And suffered not a Man to pass over.] To carry or bring any Intelligence.

Ver. 29. *And they slew of the Moabites at that Time about ten thousand Men.*] Who had taken Possession of the City of Palm-trees, (*ver.* 13.) and posted themselves thereabouts, to keep the *Israelites* in Subjection.

All lusty Men.] In the *Hebrew* it is, *all fat Men*; that is, (as some understand it) Men of Estates, or very wealthy Persons: Men of Quality, or of the better Sort, (as others expound it) who chose to transplant themselves hither, because of the Richness and Deliciousness of this Country; but it may be interpreted *strong Men*, as our Translation imports, who were called out from among the *Moabites*, to keep the *Israelites* in greater Awe.

And all Men of Valour.] Who had given Proof of their undaunted Spirit in War.

And there escaped not a Man.] But they were all cut off, either by those that guarded the Fords, and intercepted their Passage into their own Country; or by the other Part of the Army of *Israel* who fell upon them, and drove them thither.

Ver. 30. *So Moab was subdued that Day under the Hand of Israel.*] This doth not signify that they brought the Country of *Moab* under their Subjection, as the *Moabites* had brought theirs, but that they freed themselves from the Yoke they had laid upon them, and served them no longer. See *ver.* 14.

And the Land had Rest fourscore Years.] Which the same great Man, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, thus interprets, *ad A. M.* 2679. *Et quievit terra anno octuagesimo, post quietem priorem ab Othniele restitutam.* And the Land had Rest in the Eightieth Year, after the former restored to it by *Othniel:* But there is another Way which some learned Writers among the *Jews* suggest, of bringing the Years of Servitude and of Peace, mentioned in this Book, into such a Compass, as may agree with what is said in 1 *Kings* vi. 2. concerning the Number of Years that passed from the Deliverance out of *Egypt* to the Building of *Solomon*'s Temple: For they suppose that there was scarce any of the Judges who ruled over the whole Country of *Israel*, but some in one Part, and some in another; so that at the same time there were several Judges in several Parts of the Land; and Peace in one Part, when there was War in another. Accordingly our learned Chronologer Sir *J. Marsham* (who follows this Opinion) understands here by *the Land* which had Rest fourscore Years, not the Whole Land of *Israel*, but the Eastern Part of it, which had shaken off the Yoke of *Moab*; but in the mean time the *Philistines* invaded the Western Parts, as it here follows, and were repulsed by *Shamgar*, while the Eastern Countries enjoyed perfect Peace. This I take to be the clearest Account of these Words, *the Land had Rest forty Years*; that is, the Eastern Part of the Country, which had shaken off the Yoke of *Moab*, not the whole Land of *Israel:* For as the *Philistines* invaded the Western Parts, so *Jabin* afflicted the Northern (as it follows in the next Chapter) while the Oriental Tribes remained in Peace.

Ver. 31. *And after him was Shamgar the Son of Anath.*] It is not said of what Tribe he was, and it is in vain to enquire about it; but it is probable he was one of those Tribes that bordered upon the *Philistines*; because what he did was against them, and those were *Judah*, *Dan*, and *Ephraim*: Nor is there the least Signification how long he judged them; but he succeeding *Ehud*, his Government was in some Part of the fourscore Years before mentioned: And perhaps it was not long before that time wherein *Jabin* oppressed *Israel* in the Northern

nern Parts, as may be probably gathered n *ver.* 6.

Which ſlew of the Philiſtines ſix hundred Men.] Now ſome of the People of *Canaan* made an Attempt upon the *Iſraelites* in the Weſtern Parts, to bring them under their Power. And theſe Words ſound as if *Shamgar* alone made Oppoſition to them, and ſlew the Number mentioned; being excited by the mighty Power of God, which gave him unwonted Courage and Strength; for he was raiſed up as the two foregoing great Men had been, by a Divine Inſpiration, to be their Judge, as appears by the laſt Words of this Verſe.

With an Ox-goad.] The *Vulgar* takes the *Hebrew* Word *Malmad* for a Plough-ſhare, and the LXX favour this Interpretation: But if we may judge by the Derivation of the Word, our Tranſlation is more probable; wherein we follow *Kimchi*, and other learned *Jews*, who take it for the Inſtrument whereby Oxen are provoked (and, as it were, put in Mind of their Duty) when they draw the Plough lazily. And thus *Lycurgus* is ſaid to have overthrown the Forces of *Bacchus*, without any other Arms but Βαπλῆγι, an Ox-goad. So *Homer* deſcribes the *Bacchæ* as put to flight ἀνδροφόνοιο Λυκόργε Βαπλῆγι. See *Bochartus*, L. 1. *Canaan*, Cap. 18.

And he alſo delivered Iſrael.] From hence it appears, that he was a Judge as well as the two former, though ſome both ancient and modern have queſtioned it; for this is the very Phraſe whereby they are deſcribed, ii. 9, 15. And the firſt Words of this Verſe ſignify as much; which ſay, that *after him* (i. e. *Ehud*) was *Shamgar*, who ſucceeded him; that is, in the Office of a Judge, as the Words naturally ſignify: And the great Slaughter he made of the *Philiſtines* argues the ſame; for it manifeſtly was an heroical Act, like that of *Samſon*, who ſlew a Thouſand with the Jaw-bone of an Aſs: Neither of which could have been performed, but by a Divine Power wherewith they were poſſeſſed. It is not ſaid here indeed how long he continued to judge them, nor from what Oppreſſions he delivered them; but he is a Deliverer who preſerves a Nation from being oppreſſed, as well as he who reſcues them from Oppreſſion when they groan under it: And that it is likely was the Caſe of *Shamgar*, who, when the *Philiſtines* came to invade his Country, gave them a Repulſe with the Loſs of ſix hundred of their Men; which, it is probable, diſcouraged them from further Attempts. And this being done without any Weapon but an Ox-goad, it is likely he was at Plough when the *Philiſtines* made this Inroad to plunder and ſpoil the Country; feeling a ſtrong Impulſe upon him to oppoſe them, though he had no other Arms, nor any to aſſiſt him, but ſuch of his Servants as were perhaps at Plough with him. Thus ſome great Men among the ancient *Romans* were called from the Plough to be their *Dictators*. But I will only add a ſtrange Paſſage out of the *Midraſh* upon *Levit.* xvii. 3. who mentioning theſe Words, *and he alſo delivered Iſrael*, ſaith, *Thus he ſaved them by the Hand of other Judges who being but Fleſh and Blood, yet fell into Slavery again; but in the Age to come*, (i. e. of the *Meſſiah*) *I in my own Subſtance will redeem you, and ye ſhall not be reduced into Servitude any more. According to what Iſaiah ſaith*, xlv. 17. *But Iſrael ſhall be ſaved by the* LORD *with an everlaſting Salvation*, &c. See *Raymund* in his *Pugio Fidei*, P. 510.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Children of Iſrael again did Evil in the Sight of the* LORD.] See iii. 12.

After the Death of Ehud.] And of *Shamgar*. Concerning whom there is no further Mention made, becauſe he did nothing more than this one memorable Act; Religion being reformed by *Ehud*, who left it ſo at the time of his Death; when, it is likely, the *Philiſtines* ſeeing their Chieftain gone, made the forenamed Inroad upon the *Iſraelites*; but they being not yet openly fallen into Idolatry, God was pleaſed to raiſe up *Shamgar* to give them a Repulſe, before they could poſſeſs themſelves of any Part of the Country, as the *Moabites* had done. After which Blow given them by this ſingle Champion, it was a long time before we read of any Diſturbance they gave them; though *Shamgar*, it is probable, lived but a ſhort time after this noble Atchievement. And then, when *Ehud* and he had been ſome time dead, the *Iſraelites* forgot the wonderful Works of God, and returned to their old Sin: For ſo the Words in the *Hebrew* are to be underſtood, which run thus, *and Ehud was dead:* For that Particle *ve*, which we tranſlate *and*, oft-times ſignifies *becauſe*; and here makes theſe Words the Reaſon of their Relapſe, *becauſe Ehud was dead*, who had been the great Inſtrument of bringing them back to God, and keeping them, while he lived, in his Service.

Ver. 2. *And the* LORD *ſold them.*] Delivered them up to be made Slaves. See iii. 8.

Into the Hands of Jabin King of Canaan.] Of that Part of the Country, where the People properly called *Canaanites* now dwelt under his Government.

Who reigned in Hazor.] In the Region belonging unto *Hazor*; for the City itſelf was burnt by *Joſhua*, *Joſh.* xi. 10. and the King of it alſo ſlain, as we read there, xii. 9. whoſe Name alſo was *Jabin*, *Joſh.* xi. 1. of whoſe Poſterity it is probable this *Jabin* was; whoſe Name was common to all the Kings of that Country, as *Pharaoh* was to the Kings of *Egypt*. It is poſſible, indeed, that *Hazor* might be rebuilt, as ſome other Cities were, and poſſeſſed by the ancient Inhabitants; but there is no need to ſuppoſe that; for he might reign in *Hazor*, juſt as the *Moabites* poſſeſſed *Jericho*; that is, the Region appertaining to it. And, according to the Opinion I mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 30. *Jabin* is ſuppoſed to have invaded and brought under only the Northern Tribes; thoſe in the Eaſt remaining at the ſame time in Peace, after the Expulſion of the *Moabites*: Twenty Years after which (Sir *John Marſham* makes account) *Jabin*'s Dominion

minion over the Northern Tribes began. The Text indeed makes no ſuch Diſtinction, *the Children of Iſrael* in general being repreſented as ſold under *Jabin* for their Sins; yet it is ſaid, *Ver.* 10. that *Barak* gathered his Army out of the Tribes of *Zebulun* and *Napthali*, which are the Tribes ſuppoſed to be alone oppreſſed by *Jabin*. Other Tribes indeed joined with them, and they that did not, are very much blamed for it by *Deborah* in her Song, (even the *Reubenites*, and they beyond *Jordan*, *Ver.* 14, 15, 16.) for it might very well be expected, that they who lived in Peace and Eaſe, ſhould be ready to aſſiſt their Brethren, who were heavily oppreſſed.

The Captain of whoſe Hoſt was Siſera, who dwelt in Haroſheth of the Gentiles.] If we ſuppoſe that *Hazor* lay in its Ruins, then *Haroſheth* was the Royal City wherein *Jabin* dwelt, as well as *Siſera*. Which is called *Haroſheth of the Gentiles*, becauſe People of ſeveral Nations fled hither under his Protection, when they heard that he had poſſeſſed himſelf of that Country, and kept the *Iſraelites* out of it.

Ver. 3. *And the Children of Iſrael cried unto the* LORD; *for he had nine hundred Chariots of Iron.*] His Power was ſo increaſed, that they had no Hope to redeem their Liberty, but by the Help of the LORD. It may ſeem ſtrange that in this petty Kingdom, they ſhould be ſo ſtrong in Chariots; when *Mithridates* had but an hundred in his Army, and *Darius* no more than two hundred, as good Authors inform us. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* I. *Lib.* II. *Cap.* 9. *p.* 156. I ſuppoſe they placed their chiefeſt Strength in theſe; being not able to ſet out a great Number of Horſemen.

And twenty Years they mightily oppreſſed the Children of Iſrael.] Who groaned under a long Servitude; during which time, *Jabin* ſqueezed them, I ſuppoſe, by heavy Exactions; which enabled him to raiſe greater Forces than he had at firſt, when he brought them under his Power. For GOD's Anger increaſed by their frequent Revolts from him; and he puniſhed them more ſeverely than he had done before by the *Moabites*; the *Canaanites* being the old Inhabitants of the Land, who hated them mortally, and kept them under a ſorer as well as a longer Oppreſſion, than the *Moabites* had done.

Ver. 4. *And Deborah the Propheteſs.*] Such an one as *Miriam*, endued with divine Gifts of Wiſdom to inſtruct, direct, and govern others. For ſhe was not only inſtructed with the Knowledge of divine Things; but alſo was excited by the holy Spirit (as *Kimchi* here notes) to declare the Will of GOD to the People (which was the proper Office of a Prophet) as appears by the following Part of this Hiſtory. Her Name in *Hebrew* ſignifies a *Bee*; which hath been given (as learned Men have obſerved) by other Nations, to illuſtrious Women. As among the *Greeks*, the Nymph ſaid to be the Nurſe of *Jove*, is called *Meliſſa*; and the Wife of *Periander* King of *Corinth*, had the ſame Name.

The Wife of Lapidoth.] Or, as others tranſlate it, *a Woman of Lapidoth*; taking this Word to ſignify a Place, not a Perſon. But our Tranſlation ſeems the moſt natural, and is to be preferred to that of *R. Solomon* and others, who tranſlate it *a Woman of Splendors*; that is, an illuſtrious Woman.

She judged Iſrael at that time.] Had the Supreme Authority over them; being ſo well known to be divinely inſpired, that it procured her univerſal Reverence, and Submiſſion to her Judgment.

Ver. 5. *And ſhe dwelt under the Palm-Tree of Deborah.*] Or, as the LXX, and the *Vulgar* underſtand it, *ſhe ſat* under the Palm-Tree, when ſhe adminiſtred Judgment. Whence the Tree was called by her Name; becauſe it was the Place where all reſorted to her.

Between Ramah and Beth-el.] That is, in the Confines of the Tribes of *Benjamin* and *Ephraim*. For *Ramah* was a City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and *Beth-el* in the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

In Mount Ephraim.] In one of the Mountains in the Borders of that Country; for tho' the Tree was near both Tribes, yet it ſtood in the Tribe of *Ephraim*. The *Jews* (as appears by the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe) from hence conclude, ſhe was a very great Woman, who had noble Plantations in *Jericho*, *Ramah*, *Beth-el*, and other Places; that is, of Palms, ſaith *R. Solomon*, in *Jericho*, of Vineyards in *Ramah*, and of Oliveyards in the Plain of *Beth-el*. And from her dwelling in a Mount, and being a Propheteſs, and a Governeſs, and other Things, ſome learned Men image the Story of the *Theban Sphinx* was invented by the *Greeks*. See *Bochartus*, Lib. I. *Canaan*, Cap. 16.

And the Children of Iſrael came up to her for Judgment.] For Direction and the Ending of Differences, by deciding Cauſes; which none could do with ſuch Satisfaction as ſhe did. By which it appears, that tho' *Jabin* oppreſſed them ſorely, yet it was rather by rigorous Taxations, than infringing all their Laws; the Courſe of which he did not ſtop, but ſuffered to be adminiſtred by their own Officers. And he took the leſs Notice of it, perhaps, becauſe the Supreme Judicature was exerciſed by a Woman; from whoſe Power and Authority he thought there was no Reaſon to apprehend any Danger. It may be probably hence gathered, that there was no ſuch *Sanhedrim* in theſe Days, as the *Jews* conceive there always was in the moſt early Times: For why ſhould they go to her for Judgment, if there were a Court of LXX eminent Perſons then ſitting at *Shiloh*?

Ver. 6. *And ſhe ſent and called.*] A plain Act of Authority, which was owned by the whole Nation.

Barak the Son of Abinoam.] Concerning whom we know no more (for that he was *Deborah*'s Huſband, or, as others ſay, her Son, are ungrounded Conceits of ſome of the *Jews*) but that he was born or dwelt in a famous City in the Tribe of *Napthali*, as it follows in the next Words.

Out of Kedeſh Napthali.] There were ſeveral Cities of this Name. One in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 72. another in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 23. and therefore for Diſtinction ſake, this is called *Kedeſh Napthali*; which

was a City of great Note, in the upper *Galilee*, belonging to the *Levites*, and a City of Refuge.

And ſaid unto him, Hath not the LORD GOD *of Iſrael commanded, ſaying.*] She could not think he doubted of the Commiſſion ſhe now gave him from GOD; which he received as an Oracle.

Go, and draw.] The *Vulgar* take the Word *draw* to ſignify gathering Forces together: But the LXX take it to be of the ſame Import with the foregoing Word; ſignifying that he ſhould go till he drew near to Mount *Tabor*.

Towards Mount Tabor.] A noble Mountain in *Galilee*, not far from *Kedeſh*, in the Tribe of *Zebulun*; and in the Confines of *Iſſachar* and *Manaſſeh*: Which had a very large Plain at the Top of it (as *Joſephus* tells us, who calls it *Staburium*, L. 4. *de Bello Jud.* C. 2.) where he might draw up an Army, and exerciſe them very conveniently.

And take with thee ten thouſand Men.] Who were moved to liſt themſelves under him, by the Proclamation of this Commiſſion, which he brought with him from GOD.

Of the Children of Napthali, and of the Children of Zebulun.] She thought he need go no further than theſe two Tribes, which were neareſt to him; but others alſo offered their Service out of *Manaſſeh* and *Iſſachar*, as appears from *ver.* 14, 15.

Ver. 7. *And I will draw unto thee.*] Theſe are the Words of GOD, (which *Deborah* pronounced in his Name) ſignifying, as *Arias Montanus* underſtands the Word *draw*, that he would, by his ſecret Providence, incline *Siſera* to come within his Power to deſtroy him; as Hunters (unto whom Warriors are compared) entice wild Beaſts to fall into their Toils.

To the River Kiſhon.] Which was near Mount *Tabor*; having its Beginning at the Foot of it.

Siſera the Captain of Jabin's Army, with his Chariots and his Multitude.] Wherewith he intended to encompaſs this Mountain; and block up *Barak* till he forced him to yield up himſelf unto him.

And I will deliver him into thine Hand.] This ſhews *Deborah* to have been endued with the higheſt Gift of Prophecy; which was to foretel certainly Things to come.

Ver. 8. *And Barak ſaid unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then will I go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go.*] He is commended for his Faith in GOD by the Apoſtle, *Heb.* xi. 32. as well as other great Worthies in antient Time; tho' it was ſo weak and imperfect, that he made Conditions with GOD's Meſſenger, and abſolutely refuſed to obey, unleſs they were granted. He had great Reaſon, he thought, for it; becauſe he might want her Advice in doubtful Matters, and her Authority alſo, both to gather Soldiers, and to keep them together in good Order, and to inſpire them with Courage. The LXX here add a great many Words, which make this the Reaſon of his Backwardneſs; that without her he ſhould not be able to know the beſt Time of giving *Siſera* Battle.

Ver. 9. *And ſhe ſaid, I will ſurely go with thee.*] She ſaw he had Faith enough to undertake the Enterprize, and therefore conſented to his Propoſal.

Notwithſtanding the Journey that thou takeſt.] In the Hebrew it is, *the Way that thou takeſt.* Which may ſignify the Courſe which he had reſolved upon, not to go without her.

Shall not be for thine Honour.] Tho' his Faith was accepted; yet the Weakneſs of it ſomething eclipſed his Glory.

For the LORD *ſhall ſell Siſera into the Hand of a Woman.*] It is a great Part of the Glory of a Conqueror, to take the General of the Enemy's Army, or to kill him with his own Hand; which ſhe tells him ſhould be denied him, as a ſmall Puniſhment of his Backwardneſs to do as he was bidden; and as he would not go without a Woman, ſo a Woman ſhould take away this Honour from him.

And Deborah aroſe and went with Barak to Kedeſh.] She made no Delay, but immediately accompanied him to his own City; where he began, I ſuppoſe, his Levy of Men.

Ver. 10. *And Barak called Zebulun and Napthali to Kedeſh.*] He cauſed Proclamation to be made of God's Command, and his own Intentions, in theſe two Tribes; who reſorted to him in great Numbers.

And went up with ten thouſand Men.] He picked, I ſuppoſe, Ten thouſand Men out of thoſe who flocked to him; and went up with them to Mount *Tabor*.

At his Feet.] That is, they followed him as their Leader. Tho' it may ſignify that they were all *Footmen*; there being no Horſes in *Judæa*, which they brought out of other Countries. This made the Victory the more glorious, by the Overthrow of a great many Chariots and Horſes, in the oppoſite Army.

And Deborah went up with him.] To encourage him and his Forces, now they were gathered.

Ver. 11. *Now Heber the Kenite, who was of the Children of Hobab, the Father-in-Law of Moſes.*] See *Numb.* x. 29. This is interpoſed to explain what follows, concerning *Jael* who was *Heber*'s Wife.

Had ſevered themſelves from the Kenites.] Who went along with the Children of *Judah*, to ſettle among them, *Judg.* i. 16. What the Reaſon was of *Heber*'s leaving them, as they all left the Plain of *Jericho*, is not known; but there was a ſpecial Providence of GOD in it.

And pitched his Tent.] The *Kenites* lived after the Manner of the *Midianites* (from whom they deſcended) in Tents, not in Houſes.

Unto the Plain of Zainaim.] A Place in the Tribe of *Napthali*, *Joſh.* xix. 33. Where there was a Plain, or (as the LXX expounds the *Hebrew* Word *Alon*) a Grove of Oaks, under the Shadow of which their Tents were pitched.

Which was by Kedeſh.] Tho' they loved to live in the open Fields, yet not far from a City.

Ver. 12. *And they ſhewed Siſera, that Barak the Son of Abinoam was gone up to Mount Tabor.*] They could not want Intelligence of a Thing done ſo publickly as this was; and the Words ſeem to import, that *Siſera* had *many* who informed him of all that paſſed.

Ver. 13. *And Siſera gathered together all his Chariots, even nine hundred Chariots of Iron.*] In which (as I ſaid, *Ver.* 3.) their main Strength conſiſted. But they being unfit for Service in mountainous Countries, as I have often obſerved; it is probable they placed them ſo below the Mountain, as to coop up *Barak* there; by ſeizing all the Avenues, and hindring all Proviſions from being brought to him.

And all the People that were with him.] As great a Number of Footmen, as came to him upon the Summons he ſent forth, to require them to appear on this Occaſion. For ſo the Word *gathered together* ſignifies in the *Hebrew* (as we obſerve in the Margin of our Bibles) *gathered by Cry or Proclamation.*

From Haroſheth of the Gentiles, unto the River Kiſhon.] With whom he marched from that City to this River; which deſcended, as I ſaid, from the Foot of Mount *Tabor.*

Ver. 14. *And Deborah ſaid unto Barak, Up.*] Make no Delay.

For this is the Day in which the LORD *hath delivered Siſera into thine Hand.*] She ſpeaks of the Victory as already gained, that ſhe might work in him a full Aſſurance thereof. This doth not contradict what was ſaid *Ver.* 9. that GOD would *ſell Siſera into the Hand of a Woman:* For both were true; he and his Army were delivered into the Hand of *Barak*, to be routed by him; but he, in his Flight, fell into *Jael*'s Hands to be killed. How long this was after *Siſera* encamped at the River *Kiſhon*, we have no Means to know; but it was upon ſome Day, when *Deborah* knew the Army of *Siſera* lay ſecure in their Quarters, or were about fortifying the Paſſages more ſtrongly; or were to be joined with greater Forces; or ſome other Way might be taken at Advantage.

Is not the LORD *gone out before thee?*] As a General doth before his Army; to animate, and raiſe their Courage.

So Barak went down from Mount Tabor, and ten thouſand Men after him.] It is not ſaid that *Deborah* went with him any further than to Mount *Tabor:* Where it is likely, his Faith was grown ſo ſtrong, that he durſt undertake any thing, without her Preſence with him.

Ver. 15. *And the* LORD.] Who conducted *Barak*, as he did his Army, *Ver.* 14.

Diſcomfited Siſera, and all his Chariots, and all his Hoſt.] They did not expect ſuch a bold Salley as this, which ſtruck ſuch a ſudden Terror into them; for he fell upon them, it is likely, before they were aware, which put them into the greater Confuſion. The LORD alſo ſtruck a Terror into them (as the Word *Hamam* imports) by a Noiſe of Thunder and Lightning; as the Word is uſed 1 *Sam.* vii. 10. and alſo in *Joſh.* x. 10. where we read the *Canaanites* were diſcomfited by great Hail-ſtones falling down upon them: Or he made a terrible Sound of Horſes and Chariots rattling in their Ears, by the Miniſtry of his Angels, in the Clouds; as he did in the Days of *Eliſha*, 2 *Kings* vii. 6. which ſeems to be acknowledged by *Deborah*, in her Song in the next Chapter, *Ver.* 20.

With the Edge of the Sword.] This Terror and Confuſion wherein they were, expoſed them to be ſlain eaſily.

So that Siſera lighted down off his Chariot.] Which he thought did not make Haſte enough to carry him out of Danger; and, beſides, made it known where he was.

And fled away on his Feet.] As a common Soldier, that he might not be diſcovered; and that he might likewiſe ſecure himſelf, by his ſpeedy running: For antiently valiant Men were wonderful ſwift of Foot, as it is noted of *Aſahel*, 2 *Sam.* ii. 18. and every one knows it was the Character of the famous *Achilles* among the *Greeks.*

Ver. 16. *But Barak purſued after the Chariots, and after the Hoſt, unto Haroſheth of the Gentiles.*] He reſolved to follow his Blow, to the very Gates of their own City.

And all the Hoſt of Siſera fell upon the Edge of the Sword.] In the purſuit, he and his Men cut off all they overtook.

And there was not one of them left.] Which was their whole Army; not one eſcaping to carry the News of their Defeat to *Jabin.* Or, there was not one Man to be ſeen, in the Way to *Haroſheth*; but they were all ſcattered to ſhift where they could for themſelves.

Ver. 17. *Howbeit Siſera fled away on his Feet to the Tent of Jael, Wife of Heber the Kenite.*] Only *Siſera*, by his ſwift running, got, as he thought, into a Place of Safety, in the Tent of *Jael*; her Huſband, perhaps, being abroad in the Field, and ſhe only at Home. Women alſo had their Apartments by themſelves, in a Tent of their own, as appears by *Gen.* xxiv. 67. (ſee there and *Gen.* xxxi. 33.) where he imagined no Search would be made for him.

And there was Peace between Jabin King of Hazor, and the Houſe of Heber the Kenite.] It ſeems *Heber* was a conſiderable Perſon, who had a great Family, and many Dependants; like that of *Abraham*, *Gen.* xiv. 14. How he came to eſcape the ſore Oppreſſion under which the *Iſraelites* groaned (being incorporated into their Nation and Religion) and to live at Eaſe in a Time of great Diſtreſs, we can but conjecture. Perhaps their Manner of Life, retired from Towns and Company, made *Jabin* not fear any Danger from them; and if they ſtill kept cloſe to their Religion, when the *Iſraelites* were Apoſtates, GOD inclined the Heart of *Jabin* to be favourable to them, and give no Moleſtation to his harmleſs Neighbours; who, perhaps, purchaſed their Freedom from Vexation, by their frequent Incurſions.

Ver. 18. *And Jael went out to meet Siſera.*] She watched, it is likely, to hear the Event of *Siſera*'s Expedition; and ſeeing him come with great Speed towards her Houſe, went out, to invite him there to repoſe himſelf.

And ſaid unto him, Turn in, my Lord, turn in, fear not.] She aſſured him there was no Body in the Tent to do him any Hurt. Which was true; and it is not certain that ſhe now intended to do, what afterward ſhe did.

And when he had turned in unto her into the Tent, ſhe covered him with a Mantle.] Being weary, he deſired to take ſome Reſt; when it was proper to throw a Covering over him, to

preſerve him, being very hot, from taking Cold. What kind of Covering this was, which the *Hebrews* call *Semicha*, (and we tranſlate *Mantle*) is not very material. They ſay it was a thick Covering, which hath Flocks of Wool on both Sides; ſuch as our double Rugs. See *Bochart*, Lib. I. *Canaan*, Cap. 42.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaid unto her, give me, I pray thee, a little Water to drink, for I am thirſty.*] By the Heat of the Fight, and his long Running.

And ſhe opened a Bottle of Milk.] Out of Reſpect to him, ſhe brought him the beſt Liquor ſhe had, and of the beſt Sort; for it appears by *Ver.* 25. of the next Chapter, that the Cream was not taken off from it. It is poſſible alſo ſhe might deſign, by this Draught, to throw him into a ſounder Sleep; for Milk, when largely drank, flies up into the Head, and cauſes Drowſineſs. But however that be, it is certain Milk was antiently accounted the moſt agreeable Nouriſhment, which *Hippocrates* calls ἀδελφὸν ϰ, συγγενὲς to human Bodies. And therefore the moſt warlike Nations lived upon it, more than any other Food; as *Hermannus Conringius* hath ſhewn at large in his Book *de Habitus Germanorum Corporum cauſis.*

And gave him Drink, and covered him.] He roſe up to drink; and then lying down again, ſhe covered him as before.

Ver. 20. *Again he ſaid unto her, Stand in the Door of the Tent.*] Becauſe he doth not ſay, Stand *I pray thee*, (as he did before when he aſked for Drink) ſome fancy (particularly *Arias Montanus*) that he ſpake this imperiouſly; laying his Commands upon her, as a Confederate of his Maſter: But I ſee no ground to think, that, when he was in ſuch Need of her Friendſhip, he would take upon him ſo much as to give her a Charge to do any thing, but rather intreat it of her.

And it ſhall be when any Man doth come, and enquire of thee, and ſay, Is there any Man here?] Who was not of their own Family.

That thou ſhalt ſay, No.] They imagined there was no Harm in telling an officious Lye, to deceive an Enemy; that they might preſerve a Friend or Ally, as he was.

Ver. 21. *Then Jael Heber's Wife took a Nail of the Tent.*] Or one of the great Pins wherewith the Tent was faſtened to the Ground. For ſhe had no better Inſtrument at Hand (Sword, or ſuch like Weapon, being not uſually kept in Womens Tents) and this ſhe knew how to uſe more readily than any other; being accuſtomed, it is likely, when they removed from one Place to another, to take up her Tent, and to faſten it again by ſtriking ſuch Nails into the Earth.

And took an Hammer in her Hand, and went ſoftly unto him, and ſmote the Nail into his Temples.] Where it would moſt eaſily enter (being the thinneſt Part of the Skull) and moſt ſpeedily diſpatch him.

And faſtened it into the Ground.] Upon which he lay (not on a Bed) with a Carpet, or ſome ſuch Thing under him; as the Manner was in thoſe Countries.

For he was faſt aſleep and weary.] His Wearineſs made him ſleep ſoundly.

So he died.] She might as well have let him lie in his profound Sleep, till *Barak* came, and took him; if ſhe had not felt a divine Power moving her to this, that the Prophecy of *Deborah* might be fulfilled. Nothing but this Authority from GOD, of which ſhe was certain, could warrant ſuch a Fact as this. Which ſeemed a Breach of Hoſpitality, and to be attended with ſeveral other Crimes; but was not ſo, when GOD, the LORD of all Mens Lives, ordered her to execute his Sentence upon him.

Ver. 22. *And behold, as Barak purſued Siſera, Jael came out to meet him.*] As ſhe had done *Siſera*, *Ver.* 18.

And ſaid unto him, Come, and I will ſhew thee the Man whom thou ſeekeſt.] Before he made any Enquiry, ſhe knew he was deſirous, above all Men, to take *Siſera*; and, perhaps, ſhe knew, by an Inſpiration, that he was in Queſt of him.

And when he came into the Tent, behold, Siſera lay dead, and the Nail was in his Temples.] He lay in the Place and Poſture wherein he was killed, that *Barak* might ſee the Prophecy of *Deborah* made good.

Ver. 23. *So* GOD *ſubdued on that Day Jabin the King of Canaan, before the Children of Iſrael.*] So that he was not able to oppreſs them any longer, but they were reſtored to perfect Liberty.

Ver. 24. *And the Hand of the Children of Iſrael proſpered and prevailed againſt Jabin King of Canaan.*] They proſecuted this Day's Victory, with new Succeſſes; wherein his Forces were overthrown in other Battles, and his Cities taken.

Until they had deſtroyed Jabin King of Canaan.] To the utter Ruin of this Kingdom of the *Canaanites* in *Hazor*: For *Jabin* himſelf, as *Arias Montanus* thinks, was ſlain at the Brook *Kiſhon*, *Pſalm* lxxxiii. 9. (tho' it muſt be confeſſed, that may be meant only of his Forces) ſo that we hear of none of his Name, in future Times. And herein the *Iſraelites* ſeem to me to have begun to be ſenſible of their Duty; which was to extirpate the People of *Canaan*, and not merely to bring them under Tribute, *Deut.* vii. 2, 3, 4.

CHAP. V.

Verſe 1. *THEN ſang Deborah, and Barak the Son of Abinoam, in that Day, this Song.*] It was compoſed by *Deborah* (*Ver.* 7.) being a Propheteſs, one of whoſe ſpecial Gifts was to ſing GOD's Praiſes (1 *Chron.* xxv. 1, 2, 3) and commanded to be ſung by the Authority of *Barak*; who was now, I ſuppoſe, become a Judge, upon this great Deliverance GOD had wrought by him. For it is not to be thought, that theſe two Perſons alone ſang this Song; but all the Elders of the People were called together in one Aſſembly, to ſing it with them; and they afterward delivered it to all the People. It was likely it was compoſed and ſung after they had completed their Victory by the Deſtruction of *Jabin*'s Kingdom. For the Prophets were taught ſuch Sublimity of Thought and Speech,

as

as are uſed in their Songs, by theſe Admiration of ſuch wonderful Events as they obſerved.

Ver. 2. *Praiſe the* LORD *for the avenging of Iſrael, when the People willingly offered themſelves.*] It is evident to all, that this Hymn is expreſſed in another kind of Language, than the hiſtorical Part of this Book; and in a Language ſo majeſtick, in ſuch Variety of elegant Figures, and ſuch native Expreſſions of thoſe Affections which the Occaſion required, that none of the ancient *Greek* or *Latin* Poets have equalled; at leaſt it appears, there was a moſt excellent Spirit of Poetry among the *Hebrews*, eſpecially ſuch of them as were divinely moved, when the *Greeks* lay in dark Ignorance.

And firſt ſhe excites all the People to give Thanks unto GOD, and acknowledge his Wiſdom and Power, in taking Vengeance of their Oppreſſors, and in moving the Hearts of ſo many eſpecially in *Napthali* and *Zebulun*, voluntarily to liſt themſelves to fight againſt the LORD's Enemies: Where it is to be noted, that ſhe very wiſely excites them ſo to aſcribe the Victory unto GOD, as not to forget the Inſtruments he uſed to obtain it; for that ſhe knew would be a great Encouragement to others in time to come, to engage themſelves in ſuch Enterprizes, when they ſaw theſe Men ſo highly praiſed, and looked upon as employed by GOD in his Service.

Ver. 3. *Hear, O ye Kings, give Ear, O ye Princes.*] Next, ſhe calls upon all the neighbouring Potentates, to give attentive Heed unto her Song; whereby they might underſtand what GOD had done for *Iſrael*, and learn from thence not to oppreſs them, when it was in their Power; for fear of the ſame Vengeance which GOD had taken upon *Jabin*.

I, even I, will ſing unto LORD, *I will ſing Praiſes to the* LORD GOD *of Iſrael.*] Who ſhe would have the World know, was ſuperior to all in Power, and would defend his People, while they depended on him alone.

Ver. 4. LORD, *when thou wenteſt out of Seir, when thou marchedſt out of Edom.*] This is but a Repetition of the ſame Thing; *Edom* and *Seir* ſignifying the Country where the Poſterity of *Eſau* dwelt, who refuſed to give *Iſrael* a Paſſage through their Land, as the LORD led them into *Canaan*; and therefore he conducted them from thence another Way, and made them encompaſs that Land: (*Numb.* xxi. 4. *Deut.* ii. 1.) And when they had left it behind them (which is here called *marching out of Edom*) then he wrought for them aſtoniſhing Things, as it follows in the next Words.

The Earth trembled, and the Heavens dropped, the Clouds alſo dropped Water.] Theſe are poetical Phraſes, to expreſs the great Conſternation in which all thoſe Countries were, when they ſaw *Sihon* King of the *Amorites*, and *Og* the King of *Baſhan*, overthrown on a ſudden by the *Iſraelites*, and utterly deſtroyed. See *Numb.* xxi. 21, *&c.*

Ver. 5. *The Mountains melted from before the* LORD.] All the Inhabitants of thoſe Mountains. *Even that Sinai, from before the* LORD GOD *of Iſrael.*] Juſt as *Sinai* trembled and quaked at the giving of the Law.

In theſe two Verſes ſhe turns her Speech unto GOD, and commemorates his wonderful Acts in former times, with which ſhe compares the glorious Deliverance he had given them now: As much as to ſay, his Power was not at all decayed, but he was as terrible to his Enemies in her Days, as he had been in former times.

Ver. 6. *In the Day of Shamgar the Son of Anath, in the Days of Jael.*] The Senſe of this Verſe will be very plain, if we tranſlate theſe Words, as I think the *Hebrew* will bear, *from the Days of Shamgar*, &c. After his Death they fell into Sin and great Miſery. And *Jael* is here mentioned, not as a Judge, (as *Raſi* and *Ralbag* fancy) but as a great Woman of a maſculine and valiant Spirit, who yet could do nothing to hinder thoſe Spoils that were committed.

The Highways were unoccupied.] The People being corrupted in their Religion, broke out into all Manner of Violence, and turned Highway Robbers; ſo that Men durſt not travel in the common Road upon their Occaſions, but were fain to ſeek for By-Paths, becauſe the Highways were infeſted by Thieves: Or this may be meant of Robberies, which *Jabin*'s Soldiers committed, after he had brought them in Subjection to him; who took no Care to protect the *Iſraelites*, but ſuffered their Country to be ravaged by his Troops.

The Travellers walked through By-Ways.] In the *Hebrew* (as in the Margin of our Bibles is obſerved) the Words are *the Walkers of Paths*: By which we may underſtand Men accuſtomed to travel, who, tho' they went in great Companies together, yet durſt not venture in the direct Road, but went about through *crooked Ways*, (as the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies, which we tranſlate *By-Ways*) by which means Commerce was very much obſtructed.

Ver. 7. *The Inhabitants of the Villages ceaſed, they ceaſed in Iſrael.*] Men were not ſafe in their own Houſes; which were broken open, if they lived in Villages, and therefore they forſook them, and fled to walled Towns, and fortified Places.

Until that I Deborah aroſe.] This ſome of the *Jews* take to be a proud and arrogant Expreſſion, for which the holy Spirit was taken from her: But *Raſi* (who reports this Conceit) ſoberly acknowledges, that they are not Words of Boaſting, but of Joy and Gladneſs.

That I aroſe a Mother in Iſrael.] A Judge or Ruler of GOD's People. For as Men that governed were called *Fathers* of their Country, ſo it was proper for her, being a Woman, to call herſelf a *Mother in Iſrael*; among whom ſhe did ſuch great Things, and governed with ſo much Prudence, that it made her famous in other Countries. For very learned Men think, as I noted above, that the Story of *Sphinx* among the *Greeks* was made out of the Hiſtory of *Deborah*, ſhe being a Judge among the *Bœotians*, as *Deborah* was in *Iſrael*. See *Bochart* in the Book before named; and *Hermannus Witzius*

zius more lately, in his *Miſcellanea Sacra*, Lib. I. Cap. 23.

Ver. 8. *They choſe new Gods.*] That is, the *Iſraelites*, after the Death of *Ehud*, forſook the LORD, and ſerved *Baalim* and *Aſhtaroth*, (as they had done formerly, ii. 13. iii. 7.) or perhaps they introduced the Worſhip of ſome other Gods, whom they had not ſerved before, fancying they might be more powerful than their former had proved.

Then was War in the Gates.] This was the Fountain of their Calamities; for GOD immediately delivered them into the Hand of ſome Enemy or other, who poſſeſſed themſelves of their Cities and ſtrong Holds, for that's the Meaning of *War in the Gates*. Their Enemies ſeized on their Cities and Fortreſſes; for their Strength was in their *Gates*; where ſat alſo the Courts of Juſtice.

Was there Spear or Shield ſeen among forty thouſand in Iſrael?] They were generally diſarmed, for the ſecuring their Subjection to the *Canaanites*; as afterwards the *Philiſtines* took the ſame Courſe with them, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 19. Here the *Targum* makes a ſtrange Excurſion in muſtering up the many thouſand Commanders, and Sword-men, and Spear-men, and Archers, *&c.* that were in the Army of *Siſera*.

Ver. 9. *My Heart is towards the Governors of Iſrael, that offered themſelves willingly among the People.*] It ſeems there were ſome of the greateſt Men in the Tribes of *Naphtali* and *Zebulun*, who, of their own accord, hazarded their Lives, among the common People, in this Service: Towards whom ſhe expreſſes a ſingular Affection; and with the Praiſes of God, mixes the Commendation of thoſe who were his Inſtruments in this Deliverance.

Bleſs ye the LORD.] This is added like a Propheteſs, who, when ſhe commends the moſt deſerving Men, carries their Thoughts up to GOD, who gave them that Courage and good Succeſs. *Abarbinel* had a Conceit came into his Head, as he tells us, when he was commenting on theſe Words, that by *Chokkee Iſrael* (which *Kimchi* interprets as we do, *the great Men of Iſrael*) are meant the *Scribes*, whoſe Office it was to regiſter all notable Paſſages, particularly the Cauſes of Wars, and their Events; whom *Deborah* exhorts to bleſs the LORD, and when they wrote the Hiſtory of this War, to aſcribe the Succeſs to the divine Favour. But it is not likely they had ſuch *Scribes* in theſe Ages, as it's likely they had in future Times; much leſs ſuch Plenty of them now in theſe confuſed Days, that *Deborah* ſhould make a particular Addreſs to them to do their Duty.

Ver. 10. *Speak.*] *i. e.* Give Thanks to GOD.

Ye that ride on white Aſſes.] She calls upon ſuch Men as the Governors before mentioned, to proclaim aloud the Praiſes of GOD. There were no Horſes in *Judæa*, but what were brought out of other Countries, ſo that the greateſt Perſons rode on Aſſes, as appears by the Scripture Story; but in this Country they were commonly of a red Colour, (whence an Aſs hath the Name of *Chamor*, as *Bochart* obſerves, *Lib.* II. *Hieroz. Cap.* 12.) and therefore white Aſſes, (or, as he tranſlates this Word, *whitiſh*, or that were of a Colour inclining to white) were highly eſteemed for their Rarity, and uſed only by honourable Perſons; who could not appear in any Splendor during their Servitude under *Jabin*, but now were reſtored to their Dignity; for which ſhe would have them praiſe the LORD.

Ye that ſit in Judgment.] With whom ſhe exhorts the Judges to join, who now ſat in the Gates, as they were wont to do, which were not poſſeſſed by their Enemies, *Ver.* 8. Or perhaps this belongs to the foregoing Clauſe, it being probable that theſe Judges rode about the Country on white Aſſes to do Juſtice. See upon x. 4.

And walked by the Way.] All the Merchants, who now travelled ſafely about their Buſineſs, which they durſt not do before this Deliverance, *Ver.* 6. for which therefore they were bound to praiſe the LORD.

Ver. 11. *They that are delivered from the Noiſe of Archers in the Places of drawing Water.*] Together with the Princes, Judges, and Merchants, ſhe would have the Shepherds praiſe the LORD, every time they came to water their Flocks; remembering how they were diſturbed formerly by the Archers, that lurked in Woods or Thickets, and ſhot whole Quivers of Arrows at them and at their Cattle, which now they brought ſafely to the Springs of Water.

There ſhall they rehearſe the righteous Acts of the LORD.] Who had taken a juſt Vengeance on their Oppreſſors, and moſt graciouſly delivered them from their Tyranny; for *Righteouſneſs* frequently ſignifies the great Goodneſs of GOD.

Even the righteous Acts towards the Inhabitants of his Villages in Iſrael.] She would have the meaneſt Peaſants (as we ſpeak) bear them Company in the Praiſes of GOD; for now they lived as quietly in their open Villages, as if they had been in the ſtrongeſt Cities.

Then ſhall the People of the LORD *go down to the Gates.*] She ſums up all in theſe Words; that the whole Country was bound to praiſe the LORD, who had given the Law its free Courſe; every Man having Liberty to go down ſafely to the Gate of his own City, where Judgment was adminiſtred.

Ver. 12. *Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a Song.*] Having called upon all others to praiſe the LORD, ſhe now excites herſelf, with the moſt earneſt and zealous Affection (expreſſed by the Repetition of the ſame Thing four Times) to celebrate his wonderful Works, by compoſing a Song in his Praiſe.

Ariſe, Barak, and lead thy Captivity captive, thou Son of Abinoam.] She calls upon *Barak* to go in Triumph, carrying (as the Manner was in antient Times) his principal Captives and Spoils along with him unto the Houſe of GOD: For one cannot think ſhe meant merely a ſecular pompous Show; ſince the *Romans* themſelves in their Triumphs marched to the *Capitol*, and there offered Sacrifice to *Jupiter*. Some aſk what Captives he had to lead, when the whole Army of *Siſera* was cut off? iv. 16. To which the Anſwer is eaſy, That when *Barak*, after he had

had routed their Army, purſued his Victory as far as *Haroſheth*, he brought ſeveral Perſons, and perhaps of the beſt Quality, Captive with him, out of that Country.

Ver. 13. *Then he made him that remaineth have Dominion over the Nobles among the People.*] Or, *then he ſhall make him that remaineth*, &c. that is, when *Barak* triumphed, that ſmall Remnant of *Iſrael* (as the beſt of the *Jews* interpret *him that remaineth*) who were not utterly diſpirited by the Oppreſſion of *Jabin*, who had ſome Courage left in them, triumphed together with him over the Nobles of *Canaan*.

The LORD *made me have Dominion over the Mighty.*] She, who was but a weak Woman, triumphed alſo over the moſt powerful Enemies.

Ver. 14. *Out of Ephraim was there a Root of them againſt Amalek.*] Now ſhe makes a Catalogue of thoſe who any way aſſiſted in this War, as *Homer* doth of thoſe People who equipped Ships for the War againſt *Troy*: And I find no Senſe of theſe Words ſo plain, as this; that the *Amalekites* coming to aſſiſt *Siſera*, as they had done the *Moabites*, (iii. 13.) a ſmall Party of the *Ephraimites* (called here *a Root*) oppoſed their Paſſage, and hindered them from joining their Forces with the *Canaanites*. *Peter Martyr* by a *Root* underſtands a great Captain among them, as in *Iſa.* xi. 10. the Word is thought to be uſed. But a moſt learned Friend of mine, Dr. *Alix*, admoniſhes me, that *Amalek* doth not only ſignify the People deſcended from *Amalek*, but a Mountain in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, mentioned xii. 15. And if we underſtand it ſo in this Place, it makes this clear Senſe far eaſier and more natural than the other, *out of Ephraim was their Beginning*, (ſo the Word *Root* may be interpreted) *about Amalek*. That is, the *Ephraimites*, who came to the Aſſiſtance of *Barak*, began their Liſting of Men near to this Mountain. And ſo the Particle *beth* (I obſerved upon *Joſh.* x. 10.) ſignifies as well *near* or *about*, as *in* or *againſt*.

After thee, Benjamin, among thy People.] Following the Example of the Tribe of *Benjamin*; who ſeem to have all of them engaged in this Quarrel, with whom a few of the *Ephraimites* joined.

Out of Machir.] An eminent Family in *Manaſſeh*; which is put here for all that Tribe on the other ſide *Jordan*, where *Machir* was ſettled, *Numb.* xxxii. 39. *Joſh.* xiii. 31. Which made their Zeal the more remarkable, in coming ſo far to the Aid of their Brethren; when they heard they were engaged in this Enterprize.

Came down Governors.] Some of the principal Perſons of that Country; who, no doubt, had their Followers, that accompanied them in this Expedition.

And out of Zebulun they that handle the Pen of the ready Writer.] They were nearer to Mount *Tabor*, than any of the forenamed; but are therefore highly commended, that tho' they were better ſkilled in Books than in Arms, yet offered their Service to *Barak* on this Occaſion: For *Scribes* in Scripture ſignify Men of Letters, that ſtudied the Law, and expounded it.

Ver. 15. *And the Princes of Iſſachar were with Deborah.*] Came and offered their Service, when they heard that *Barak*, by her Order, had ſummoned their Neighbours *Zebulun* and *Naphtali* to come to him, iv. 10.

Even Iſſachar.] And the People of that Tribe followed the Example of their Princes.

And alſo Barak.] The *Hebrew chen* (tranſlated here *and alſo*) ſignifies, *as*, or *like unto*; that is, they were as forward as *Barak* to march into the Field, tho' they had no Summons.

He was ſent on Foot into the Valley.] That is, when he was ſent down from Mount *Tabor*, by the Order of *Deborah* (iv. 14.) to fall upon *Siſera* in the Valley; whither he went on Foot, againſt his Chariots and Horſemen: Or, he went with his *Footmen* (as the LXX tranſlate it) and engaged that vaſt Number of Chariots, which were of greateſt Uſe in the Valley.

For the Diviſions of Reuben there were great Thoughts of Heart.] But the *Reubenites* were ſo divided in their Counſels, that they ſtaid at home (as if they were ſeparated from their Brethren in their Affections, as they were in their Situation, beyond *Jordan*) which begat many ſad Thoughts in the Hearts of the reſt of the *Iſraelites*; who could not underſtand the Reaſon of it.

Ver. 16. *Why abodeſt thou among the Sheep-folds, to hear the Bleatings of the Flocks?*] It was a ſhameful and an unaccountable Thing, that they ſhould wholly mind their private Buſineſs (which was feeding Cattle, *Numb.* xxxii. 1.) and neglect the Publick Good.

For the Diviſions of Reuben, there were great Searchings of Hearts.] And therefore ſhe could not ſufficiently bewail it; which ſhe doth, by repeating what a great Trouble it was to all their Brethren; who were not able to diſcover the Reaſon, and give any Account of their being no more concerned than their Beaſts, for their common Religion and Liberties.

Ver. 17. *Gilead abode beyond Jordan.*] She complains alſo of the *Gileadites*, who were Men of Valour; and notwithſtanding ſat ſtill, and would not ſtep over *Jordan* to help their Brethren. Under the Name of *Gilead*, are comprehended the *Gadites*, who had half of *Gilead* (*Joſh.* xiii.) as the other half was given to the Children of *Machir*. Who did come to the Aid of their Brethren; at leaſt their Governors engaged with them, *ver.* 14. Which hath moved ſome to read theſe Words interrogatively, *Did Gilead abide beyond Jordan?* as if ſhe ſtill upbraided the *Reubenites*; who had not this to alledge for themſelves, that they were far off, beyond *Jordan*; for ſo were the *Gileadites* (that is, thoſe deſcended from *Machir*) who they ſuppoſe comprehend the reſt; and yet the beſt and moſt worthy of them, came to join with their Brethren, in the common Cauſe of the Nation.

And why did Dan remain in Ships?] She reproves this Tribe, which was near the Sea, (the famous Port of *Joppa* belonging to it) that they minded nothing but their Merchandize; while their Brethren hazarded their Lives in the Field.

Aſher

Aſher continued on the Sea-ſhore.] This Tribe alſo bordered upon the *Mediterranean*; *Tyre* and *Sydon* being Part of their Portion. Which they did not poſſeſs, yet no doubt they held ſeveral other leſſer Places upon that Sea; from which they would not ſtir in this common Danger.

And abode in his Breaches.] Or, *in his Creeks*, as it is in the Margin; and as the LXX take it, who expound the *Hebrew* Word *Miphratſim* (*Fractures*) by διεξόδοις *Out-lets*, or ſmall Havens; where Veſſels lay, to go out to Sea. Some take the Words to ſignify, that they were buſy in repairing the Breaches made in their walled Towns, by Length of Time, or other ways.

Ver. 18. *Zebulun and Napthali were a People that jeoparded their Lives unto the Death.*] They were the only People (which was much for their Honour) who unanimouſly deſpiſed Life, in Compariſon with the Liberty of their Country and Religion. For the *Hebrew* Word *Charaph* doth not ſignify meerly to expoſe one's ſelf to Danger; but to expoſe one's ſelf to Reproach, as we obſerve in the Margin of our Bibles: And here denotes that they *made no Account* of their Lives, &c.

In the High Places of the Field.] They went down from Mount *Tabor* (where they were drawn up in a large Plain, as I obſerved on iv. 6.) with a Reſolution to conquer or die.

It is obſervable, that in this Narration, there is not a Word ſaid of *Judah*, or *Simeon*, or *Gad*, (unleſs comprehended under *Gilead*, as I ſaid before) and that as *Reuben*, *Dan*, and *Aſher* are taxed for their cowardly Careleſneſs in this Caſe, ſo *Ephraim*, *Benjamin*, Part of *Manaſſeh*, and *Iſſachar* did afford ſome Aſſiſtance; but nothing comparable to what *Zebulun* and *Napthali* did; who, as one Man, engaged to hazard their Lives and Fortunes (as we now ſpeak) for the Regaining of their Liberty; which was the more highly commendable, becauſe they were but an Handful of Men, when they firſt engaged, in Compariſon with the vaſt Army which they undertook to aſſault.

Ver. 19. *The Kings came and fought.*] When the *Iſraelites* conquered *Canaan*, *Hazor* had ſeveral Kingdoms ſubject to it, or depending on it, *Joſh.* xi. 10. And now, it is likely, there were divers Kings, who were, at leaſt, *Jabin*'s Confederates; and came to join their Forces with his, to reduce the *Iſraelites* to his Obedience.

Then fought the Kings of Canaan in Taanach by the Waters of Megiddo.] Theſe were two Cities belonging to the *Manaſſites*; but in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, *Joſh.* xvii. 11. Between which, as *Raſi* underſtands it, the Army of *Siſera* lay; reaching from *Taanach* to *Megiddo*; by which the River *Kiſhon* ran.

They took no Gain of Money.] The ſimple Senſe ſeems to be, that they were Kings of ſuch Bravery, as fought not for Money, but for Glory and Dominion; ſo *Raſi* and *Ralbag* among the *Jews* underſtand it: They fought not for Pay, but came *gratis* (as we ſpeak) to the Aſſiſtance of *Jabin*. But the *Vulgar* takes it otherwiſe; they got nothing but Blows, no Spoil or Prey at all, as they expected. And *Kimchi* ſtill much differently (which the Words will bear) they came ſo enraged againſt the *Iſraelites*, that they would have ſpared no Man's Life, tho' he offered great Sums of Money for his Redemption; becauſe they thirſted only after their Blood.

Ver. 20. *They fought from Heaven.*] But, on the other ſide, God fought for the *Iſraelites*, by ſending Thunder and Lightning, and Hail-ſtones from Heaven upon the *Canaanites* (as he did in the Days of *Joſhua*) and, perhaps, as *P. Martyr* conjectures, raiſing a great Duſt, which a ſtormy Wind blew ſo violently into their Eyes, that they could not ſee. As *Livy* ſaith it fell out to the *Romans*, in the great Battle at *Cannæ*.

The Stars in their Courſes fought againſt Siſera.] Some take theſe Words literally, and render the Words, *not in their Courſes, but in their Exaltations*, i. e. with all their Power and ſtrongeſt Influences: Whence the Saying of *Raſi*, on this Place, *the Head, or Beginning of the Stars is in Heaven; but the Feet, or the End of them is upon the Earth.* That is, hither they ſend their Influences. But others think theſe Words ſignify, that all this was done by the Miniſtry of Angels, who are here called *Stars* (as in the Book of *Job* xxxvii. 7.) becauſe he is ſpeaking of Heaven; from whence they came to raiſe this terrible Tempeſt, and by other Means, which we are ignorant of, to trouble the Hoſt of *Jabin*, as they did that of *Pharaoh* in the Red-Sea: And this they did in ſuch Rank and Order, as is obſerved in that Heavenly Hoſt.

It may be alſo thought, that this Fight laſting till Night, the Stars may be ſaid to fight againſt *Siſera*; becauſe they ſhone brightly to give Light to the *Iſraelites*, to purſue their Victory.

Ver. 21. *The River Kiſhon ſwept them away.*] It ſo ſwelled at this Time, that tho' otherwiſe it was very ſhallow, many of them were drowned in it; being carried away with a rapid Stream; for ſo the Word *Jerapham* ſignifies, which we tranſlate *ſwept them away*. It is no where elſe found; but frequent among *Arabick* Authors, among whom it is commonly uſed in this Senſe; as *Bochart* ſhews, *Lib.* I. *Canaan*, *Cap.* 16, and 42. It is likely there was a great Flood, which was made by that ſudden violent Rain, which fell in the forenamed Tempeſt.

That antient River, the River Kiſhon.] It is an Elegancy uſed by Orators themſelves (as we find in *Cicero*) to repeat the ſame Words, when there is great Occaſion. And here ſhe makes an Addition to the ſame Word; by calling *Kiſhon*, that *antient River*; becauſe of ſome other great Exploit performed there in antient Time; the Memory of which is now loſt. But *Kedumim* ſome take to be a proper Name, and another Name of the ſame River *Kiſhon*.

O my Soul, thou haſt trodden down Strength.] This is an elegant *Apoſtrophe* (or turning of her Speech) to herſelf; whoſe Happineſs ſhe applauds, in beholding the moſt powerful Enemies quite vanquiſhed, by her Commiſſion which ſhe gave from God, and by her Prayers to him: For none can doubt, that ſhe implored

Help from Heaven, while *Barak* fought with *Sisera*.

Ver. 22. *Then were the Horse Hoofs broken.*] They could not save themselves by Flight, their Horse Hoofs being broken in stony Places, when they ran away as fast as they were able.

By the means of their Prancings.] The more Haste they made, the worse Speed, (as the common Saying is) for the running full gallop, (so the *Jews* interpret the *Hebrew* Word *Dabar* [*Prancings*] to signify the *swiftest Course*) they trod the harder on the Ground, and were in the more Danger to break their Hoofs.

The Prancings.] The *Hebrews* wanting a Superlative Degree in their Language, are wont to double a Word, (as *Peter Martyr* here observes) and therefore *Prancings, Prancings*, he thinks, are not here an Ornament of Speech, but signify the most vehement Motion, when a Horse is in his full Speed.

Of the mighty ones.] Of their best and strongest Horses: For the Word *Abbirim* in *Hebrew*, as *Bochart* observes, signifies not only strong Bulls, but Horses also. See *Hierozoicon, P.* I. *Lib.* II. *Cap.* 6.

Ver. 23. *Curse ye Meroz.*] Most Interpreters, both Jewish and Christian, understand by *Meroz*, a City not far from the Place where the Fight was. Which seems to be proved by the following Words, where he speaks of *the Inhabitants thereof.* But *R. Sol. Jarchi* thinks *Meroz* signifies a potent Person in those Parts, who being able to give great Assistance to *Barak*, and living near Mount *Tabor*, refused to do any thing. And this is the Opinion of the *Talmudists*, (whom *Jarchi* is wont to follow) as Mr. *Selden* shews out of the *Gemara Babylon, Lib.* I. *de Synedriis, Cap.* 6. *p.* 123, *&c.* where they fancy that this great Man was excommunicated by *Deborah*, with all his Adherents; and hence they fetch the Ground and Original of the Excommunication in use among them: Which is an idle Conceit; there being no such thing as Excommunication practised among them, till they had quite lost their Civil Government, and it was in the Hands of the Heathen.

Saith the Angel of the LORD.] She would not have it thought that this Curse proceeded from her Anger, but from the Authority of GOD, who, by his Angel, which spake to her, denounced it against *Meroz*. And who should this Angel be, but the Captain of the LORD's Host, mentioned *Josh.* v. 14. See there.

Curse ye bitterly the Inhabitants thereof.] They that take *Meroz* for a Person, by *Inhabitants* understand those that dwelt near him, and were his Dependants or Associates; which is very forced.

Because they came not to the Help of the LORD.] The Battle was the LORD's, as the Scripture elsewhere speaks, and therefore they that refused to engage in it, refused to maintain his Cause: And the People of this Place are so heavily cursed, when all others that came not in to help their Brethren, are only discommended; because they lived so near, that they might easily have joined their Forces with them, whereas some others lived a great Way off, which might something excuse them.

To the Help of the LORD *against the Mighty.*] According to this Translation of the last Word, she means their most powerful Enemies; but the *Hebrew* may as well be translated *with the Mighty*; that is, with other valiant Men, who freely offered their Service in this Enterprize. This aggravated their Guilt, that when they had such noble Examples of Zeal from others, who were less able to help, they would afford no Assistance.

Ver. 24. *Blessed above Women shall Jael the Wife of Heber the Kenite be.*] On the other side she desires *Jael* may be ever praised; or rather, foretells she shall always continue famous, and her Husband too, in future Generations.

Blessed shall she be above Women in the Tent.] This is thought to be a wishing, or promising her all Happiness in her Domestick Affairs. But *P. Martyr* thinks it may be interpreted, *Blessed shall she be for what she did in her Tent.* Which was no less glorious, than what others did in the Field.

Ver. 25. *He asked Water, and she brought him Milk.*] Her Prudence is first commended, in treating him with great Respect, that he might entertain no Suspicion of Danger.

She brought forth Butter.] Milk from which the Cream (of which Butter is made) was not separated.

In a lordly Dish.] The *Hebrew* Word *Sephel* (which we translate *Dish*) is no where else found, but in the Story of *Gideon* in the next Chapter, vi. 38. where we translate it *a Bowl.* From whence *Bochart* rightly concludes, it signifies a large and wide Vessel, (*P.* I. *Hieroz. Lib.* II. *Cap.* 49.) which explains the Word *Lordly* or *Princely*; which doth not signify that she had any Gold or Silver Vessel in her Tent, (which was not agreeable to their Manner of living) but that she brought him Milk in the best Vessel she had, and that very capacious: For out of such great Men were wont to drink, as *Peter Martyr* observes out of *Cicero* against *M. Antony.*

Ver. 26. *She put her Hand to the Nail.*] Next her Courage and Fortitude is celebrated: And by *Hand* is to be understood her Left, wherewith she held the Nail, as with her Right Hand the Hammer.

And her Right Hand to the Workman's Hammer.] A lively Description how she went about this Work; just as if she had been fastening her Tent.

And with her Hammer she smote Sisera.] The *Hebrew* Word *halam*, which we translate *smote*, signifies such a Blow as makes a Contusion.

She smote off his Head.] The Word *Machak*, which is commonly translated *cut off*, cannot have that Signification here; because there is not the least Indication in this Story of her cutting off his Head from the Body, but only of *striking it through*, as here it must be understood.

When she had pierced and stricken through his Temples.] Here are two Words more, *Machatz* and *Chalaph*, signifying *penetrating* and boring quite through. And the Place is specified where

his Head was perforated, which was in his Temples, the ſofteſt Part of it, which gave the eaſieſt Entrance to the Nail.

Ver. 27. *At her Feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down.*] In the *Hebrew*, *between her Feet*, &c. which ſome of the *Talmudiſts* have abuſed to a lewd Senſe; juſtly cenſured by *Kimchi*: Who obſerves, that this is according to the Style of the *Hebrew* Language, which reduplicates Words, that they may more ſtrongly affirm what is ſaid; and theſe Words, *he bowed, he fell*, ſignify (he thinks) ſuch a Fall that he never roſe up again. But taking all theſe Expreſſions together, (*he bowed, he fell, he lay down*) they ſeem to me to import, that at the firſt Stroke, he ſtarted and lifted up his Body; but being very much ſtunned, he ſoon laid down again.

At her Feet he bowed, he fell.] Then I ſuppoſe ſhe repeated her Stroke, which perfectly diſabled him to move.

Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.] And at the third Stroke, it is likely, ſhe faſtened his Head to the Ground. But this Repetition doth not certainly argue that ſhe gave ſo many Blows; (tho' it may paſs for a probable Conjecture) for it is an uſual Elegancy in ſuch Compoſures, wherein ſhe intended to ſet out this Fact of *Jael*'s with the higheſt Encomiums. Some may fancy indeed, that it deſerved Reprehenſion, rather than Commendation, upon many Accounts; being a Breach of the Laws of Hoſpitality, and of the Peace which was between her Family and *Jabin*, &c. But this Fact is not to be meaſured by the common Rules which are to govern us, it being an extraordinary, heroick, and divine Work, unto which ſhe was excited by GOD; whoſe People *Jabin* oppreſſed with a cruel Servitude, from which GOD ordered *Barak* to be their Deliverer; who, having defeated all his Forces in a miraculous Manner, *Jael* underſtood there was a Divine Hand in this Victory, and was moved by the ſame Spirit which ſtirred up *Deborah* and *Barak*, to help, by this Act, to compleat their ſhameful Overthrow. For nothing could be more diſhonourable, than for a great Captain to fall thus by the Hand of a Woman.

Ver. 28. *The Mother of Siſera looked out at a Window.*] Was in earneſt Longings and Expectations to ſee him return victorious.

And cried through the Latteſs.] Either Fear of ſome Miſcarriage, or impatient Deſire, made her cry out with a lamentable Voice; as the Word *Jabab* in the *Hebrew* ſignifies.

Why is his Chariot ſo long in coming? Why tarry the Wheels of his Chariot?] Having ſuch numerous Forces, they promiſed themſelves an eaſy and ſpeedy Victory over a Handful of the *Iſraelites*; and therefore wondered what retarded his coming back, with all his Chariots, in Triumph.

Ver. 29. *Her wiſe Ladies anſwered her.*] The *Vulgar* takes the *Hebrew* Words to ſignify, *one of the wiſeſt of his Wives* (who was not ſo apt to deſpair as his Mother) replied to her. For it is well obſerved by *Terence*, in his *Adelphi*, (as *Pet. Martyr* here notes) *Multò ſatius eſt, ea evenire nobis quæ de abſentibus ſuſpicantur uxores, quàm ea quæ parentes.* It is much better that thoſe Things ſhould happen to their abſent Huſbands, which their Wives ſuſpect, than thoſe which their Parents fear. But I ſee no Reaſon to depart from our Tranſlation, which is the ſame with the LXX, αἱ σοφαὶ ἄρχουσαι, the prudent noble Women that attended her, &c.

Yea, ſhe returned Anſwer to herſelf.] Upon better Conſideration, her Hopes exceeded her Fears.

Ver. 30. *Have they not ſped?*] She did not think it poſſible they ſhould miſcarry.

Have they not divided the Prey?] She was willing to be confident they had got the Victory; and therefore imputed their Stay to the Time that muſt needs be taken up in making an equal Diviſion of the Spoil. For thoſe Days were not like to ours, wherein every Man keeps to himſelf what he can lay his Hands upon; but after the Battle, they were obliged to bring all that they had gotten to the General of the Army; who conſidered every Man's Quality and Deſert, and accordingly diſtributed the Prey among them.

To every Man a Damſel or two.] Young Virgins are by all Hiſtorians and Poets, reckoned as a principal Part of the Soldiers Prey. And ſhe puts here an unuſual Word for a *Damſel*, which is *Racham*; for it properly ſignifies *a Womb*, and ſeems here to be ſpoken by Way of Contempt, as if they were good for nothing but to ſerve their filthy Appetites.

To Siſera a Prey of divers Colours, a Prey of divers Colours of Needlework, of divers Colours of Needlework on both Sides.] Theſe were the richeſt Part of the Spoil, being highly eſteemed by all People, as *Pliny* obſerves, *Lib.* VIII. *Cap.* 48. where he mentions great Variety of them both in his own, and in antient Time: For he takes Notice, that *Homer* mentions *Pictas Veſtes*, as he calls them, *Painted Garments*, which ſhined with Flowers and Trees in beautiful Colours; which the *Phrygians* afterwards wrought with Needles; and *Attalus* invented the interweaving Gold in them: But for divers coloured Garments, *Babylon* was above all Places famous; from whence they had the Name of *Babyloniſh Garments*, which were much valued even in thoſe early Times, as appears by the Story of *Achan*, *Joſh.* vii. 21. and they were of ſuch account in After-times, that every one was not permitted to wear them, but only the greater Sort of Perſons, (as *Pet. Martyr* obſerves out of the *Roman* Laws) which may be the Reaſon that here they are appropriated to *Siſera*, as his Part of the Spoil.

Meet for the Necks of them that take the Spoil.] That is, of the chief Commanders, to whom the Spoil, as I ſaid, was brought to be divided. In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *for the Necks of the Spoil*; which *Kimchi* expounds, *the Head of the Prey.* As if ſhe had ſaid, Theſe are to be put in the Head of the Prey; and therefore fit to be given only to the General of the Army.

Ver. 31. *So let all thy Enemies periſh, O* LORD.] From hence ſhe takes Occaſion to convert

convert her Speech to God, beſeeching him, that all his Enemies may be thus diſappointed of their vain Hopes.

But let all them that love him, be as the Sun when he goeth forth in his Might.] Increaſe in Power and Force, as the Sun doth from the Time of its Riſing, till it come to its Meridian Height.

And the Land had Reſt forty Years.] Theſe forty Years are to be computed from the Time of *Ehud*, as our great Primate thinks, who thus tranſlates theſe Words, *The Land reſted in the fortieth Year*, after the former Reſt which was reſtored to it by *Ehud*. See him *ad M. A.* 2719. But it is far more reaſonable to compute them from the Conqueſt of *Jabin* by the Northern Tribes; after which, the whole Country lived in Peace for the Space of forty Years, till the *Midianites*, as it follows, ſorely oppreſſed them.

I conclude this Chapter, as *Conradus Pellicanus* doth; *Let ſome* Homer *or* Virgil *go now, and compare his Poetry, if he be able, with the Song of this Woman. And if there be any one that excels in Eloquence and Learning, and hath more Leiſure than I, celebrate the Praiſes and Learning of this Panegyrick more copiouſly.*

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Children of Iſrael did Evil in the Sight of the* Lord.] After the Death of *Deborah* and *Barak* (who kept them, I ſuppoſe, in the true Religon) they relapſed to Idolatry.

And the Lord *delivered them into the Hand of Midian ſeven Years.*] Becauſe it is not ſaid, That *the Anger of the* Lord *was hot againſt Iſrael*, (as in *Chap.* ii. 14. iii. 8, *&c.*) nor that he *ſold them* into the Hand of *Midian*, (which is the Expreſſion, iv. 2. and other Places) *Peter Martyr* thinks they were not altogether ſo bad as they had been formerly; and therefore God was pleaſed to ſhorten the Tyranny of the *Midianites* over them; who being their old Enemies, as they came through the Wilderneſs, and having been, in a Manner, utterly deſtroyed by the *Iſraelites*, (*Numb.* xxxi.) were very much diſpoſed to take a ſharp Revenge: For that thoſe *Midianites* who were Neighbours to *Moab*, are here meant, is evident from their Situation, which was beyond *Jordan*, (vii. 24, 25. viii. 4.) and by the People that joined with them, who were the *Children of the Eaſt*, *Ver.* 3. whereas the other *Midianites*, where *Jethro* lived, were in the *South*, near the Red Sea. Some fancy, indeed, that the *Midianites*, Neighbours to *Moab*, being cut off by *Moſes*, there was no ſuch Nation. But it muſt be conſidered, that ſome of them ſaved themſelves by Flight into other Countries, and, after the *Iſraelites* were ſettled in *Canaan*, returned again; and, in near two hundred Years time, may well be thought to have repeopled their Country, eſpecially by the Help of other People, who came, it is likely, and planted among them; and being ſeated in the ſame Country, are all called *Midianites*.

Ver. 2. *And the Hand of Midian prevailed againſt Iſrael.*] They brought the *Iſraelites* in Subjection to them, and were the *fourth* Nation that oppreſſed them, after the *Meſopotamians*, *Moabites*, and *Canaanites*.

And becauſe of the Midianites, the Children of Iſrael made them Dens that are in the Mountains, and Caves, and ſtrong Holds.] They betook themſelves to theſe Places for Safety; for, I ſuppoſe, they did not now make them, but made them their Retreat. And by the firſt Word *Minhareth*, is meant thoſe hollow Places in the Rocks upon the Mountains, where Men might hide themſelves, and make them their Habitation; there being Cracks and Holes in them here and there, to let in Light, as the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies. And the ſecond Word *Maharoth* denotes ſuch Caves as were in the Fields, made either by Nature, or by Art and Labour; which being dark, were fit only to hide their Goods and Proviſion in them. And the third Word *Mitzaroth* ſignifies ſuch Fortreſſes, as ſecured themſelves, and Families, and Cattle, and all they could carry thither. But this ſhews their Condition was very lamentable, in that they were driven from their Houſes in the Villages, and Cities too; at leaſt the Richeſt of them durſt not truſt themſelves there, but fled to ſtrong Holds for Safety.

Ver. 3. *And ſo it was, that when Iſrael had ſown.*] They did not diſturb them in Seed-time, but let them be quiet till they had ploughed and ſowed their Land.

Then the Midianites came up, and the Amalekites, and the Children of the Eaſt.] This ſhews, that ſome of the ſame People joined with the *Midianites*, that did formerly with the *Moabites*, when they oppreſſed *Iſrael*, iii. 13. For by the *Children of the Eaſt*, are meant, ſome of the People of *Arabia*, as *Procopius* notes, who obſerves *Joſephus* to be of the ſame Mind: For *Arabia* lay Eaſt of *Egypt*, where the *Iſraelites* learnt to ſpeak in this Manner.

Even they came up againſt them.] Entered the Land of *Iſrael* with ſuch Armies as might deſtroy the Fruits of the Earth; as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 4. *And they encamped againſt them.*] The *Vulgar* tranſlate it, *They pitched their Tents among them*; which ſignifies them to have been an *Arabian* People, or ſuch as lived after their Manner.

And deſtroyed the Increaſe of the Earth.] Having formed a Camp, they ſent out Parties from thence well armed, to deſtroy all the Corn, and the reſt of the Fruits of the Earth.

Until thou come unto Gaza.] That is, they made an univerſal Devaſtation from one End of the Country to the other; for they came from the Eaſt, and deſtroyed all till they came to the Weſtern Coaſt, where *Gaza* was.

And left no Suſtenance for Iſrael.] Whom they intended to famiſh.

Neither Sheep, nor Ox, nor Aſs.] Their Camels, and other Cattle, which they brought along with them, having eaten up all; for they were ſo numerous, as we are told in the following Verſe, that they overſpread the whole Country.

Ver. 5. *For they came up with their Cattle.*] Not merely an Army of Men, but of Cattle of all Sorts, came on purpoſe to make this Deſtruction.

And their Tents.] With their whole Families, that they might be able to conſume the more.

And they came up as Graſhoppers for Multitude.] Or, as *Locuſts*, (as the Word *Arba* is commonly tranſlated) which have their very Name from the vaſt Numbers wherein they were wont to come, and were moſt devouring Creatures.

For both they and their Camels were without Number.] No Country more abounded with Camels than *Midian* (as I obſerved before out of *Bochart* his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* I. *Lib.* II. *Cap.* 2.) and they are only peculiarly mentioned, becauſe the *Midianites* were more famous for them, than for Horſes, or other Beaſts.

And they entered into the Land to deſtroy it.] Their very Deſign was to depopulate the Country by this Means.

Ver. 6. *And Iſrael was greatly impoveriſhed becauſe of the Midianites.*] For the Fruits of their Land being thus deſtroyed, their Money was drained from them to purchaſe Corn from other Countries.

And the Children of Iſrael cried unto the LORD.] Who never failed to help them, when they truly turned to him.

Ver. 7. *And it came to paſs, when the Children of Iſrael cried unto the* LORD, *becauſe of the Midianites.*] Though the Poverty which pinched them, was that which moved them to cry unto GOD for Relief, yet he was ſo gracious as to ſend one to make them ſenſible of their Sin.

Ver. 8. *That the* LORD *ſent a Prophet unto the Children of Iſrael.*] Whom the *Jews* fancy to have been *Phineas*, which is not probable, Men not commonly then living to the Age of two hundred Years, which he muſt be of, and more, if he were the Prophet now ſent to them. It is far more likely, that GOD ſtill continued other Prophets among them, beſide the High-Prieſt, to put them in mind of their Duty, and to call them to Repentance when they forſook him. And it appears by the foregoing Story, that there was a Woman who had the Spirit of Prophecy; which ſhews that, at leaſt, upon ſpecial Occaſions, he raiſed up ſuch Perſons among them.

Which ſaid unto them.] At ſome great Feſtival, it is likely, when they were all aſſembled.

Thus ſaith the LORD GOD *of Iſrael.*] This is the Style in which the Prophets commonly ſpake.

I brought you up from Egypt, and brought you forth out of the Houſe of Bondage.] All the Prophets put them in Mind of this, as the greateſt Obligation upon them, to be entirely devoted to GOD's Service. See *Exod.* xix. 4, 5, 6. where GOD himſelf tells them for what Purpoſe he had delivered them from that Bondage. And ſee *Joſh.* xxiv. 5, 6.

Ver. 9. *And I delivered you out of the Hand of the Egyptians.*] Who, when they purſued them, to bring them back into Slavery, were all drowned in the Red Sea.

And out of the Hand of all that oppreſſed you.] That endeavoured to oppreſs them; ſuch as the *Amalekites*, *Sihon*, and *Og*, who oppoſed their Paſſage to *Canaan*.

And drave them out from before you, and gave you their Land.] By the Hand of *Joſhua*, who ſettled them in the Land which GOD promiſed to them. All this is ſaid, to put them in mind how faithfully GOD had performed his Covenant with them, and to upbraid them with their own Infidelity.

Ver. 10. *And I ſaid unto you, I am the* LORD *your* GOD.] *Exod.* xx. 1. *Deut.* v. 6. vi. 4.

Fear not the Gods of the Amorites, in whoſe Land ye dwell.] Do not worſhip them, nor imagine they can do you any Harm, *Deut.* vii. 12, 13, 14. *Joſh.* xxiv. 14, 15.

But ye have not obeyed my Voice.] Which was the Cauſe of all the Evil that had befallen them, and would ſtill continue, if they did not now hearken unto him, as they deſired him to hear their Cry. This, no doubt, the Prophet preſſed upon them, in more Words than are here ſet down, theſe being only the Heads of his Speech.

Ver. 11. *And there came an Angel of the* LORD.] The *Iſraelites* laid the Application of the Prophet's Speech to their Heart (it is to be ſuppoſed) and began to reform their Ways, which moved him to ſend an Angel to appoint them a Deliverer; for he is called, *An Angel of the* LORD, both here and Verſe 12, 20, 21, 22.

And ſat under an Oak.] In a Grove of Trees (as *Arias Montanus* underſtands it) where there was one great well-ſpread Oak, in which there was a Seat.

Which was in Ophrah.] The City where *Gideon* was born and lived, viii. 27.

That pertained unto Joaſh the Abiezrite.] This is added to ſhew what *Ophrah* he means; for there was another in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, *Joſh.* xviii. 23. whereas the Family of *Abiezer* belonging to the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, *Joſh.* xvii. 2.

And his Son Gideon threſhed Wheat.] The *Hebrew Chabat*, in this Place, ſignifies to *threſh* out with a Stick or Rock, as *Kimchi* here obſerves. And ſo the LXX. ῥαβδίζων. But the common Way of threſhing Corn out of the Ear, was by treading it with Oxen, which they called *Daſh*, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 20. This *Gideon* did not uſe, partly for Privacy, but chiefly becauſe he had but a little to beat out.

By the Wine Preſs.] Where none would ſuſpect his threſhing of Corn.

To hide it from the Midianites.] Who watched narrowly all the Threſhing-floors of the *Iſraelites*, who might have bought Sheaves of their Neighbours, or, perhaps, ſown and reaped a little Corn, in ſome private fenced Places, where the Cattle of the *Midianites* did not come to eat it up.

Ver. 12. *And the Angel of the* LORD *appeared unto him.*] *Gideon*, I ſuppoſe, turning his Face that Way, beheld him ſitting under the Oak.

And ſaid unto him, The LORD *is with thee.*] He did not take him to be one of the *Midianites*,

Midianites, by his Poſture, and Manner of Appearance, and was made more certain of it by this Salutation. Wherein he doth not pray GOD to be with him, but declares him to be with him (as appears by *Gideon*'s Anſwer) that is, to aſſiſt him to be the Deliverance of his People. The *Targum* here tranſlates it, *The WORD of the* LORD *is thy Help*. Whereby it appears, the antient *Jews* did not look upon this Angel merely as an heavenly Meſſenger ſent from GOD, but as the LORD himſelf, as he is called, *Ver.* 14, 16, 23, 24, 25, 27. Which is confirmed by the following Verſe, as the ſame *Targum* tranſlates it.

Thou mighty Man of Valour.] He was naturally couragious, but made more ſo, by a divine Inſpiration, and yet did not diſdain to mind Huſbandry, as the greateſt Perſons did in antient Time. Inſomuch that *Pliny* ſaith, The Earth brought forth its Fruit more happily and abundantly, *cum Imperatorum clariſſimorum manibus tractaretur*, when it was cultivated by the Hands of the moſt famous Commanders: For they had more Skill and Induſtry in their Management, than the ordinary People.

Ver. 13. *And Gideon ſaid unto him, O my Lord.*] The *Hebrew* Word *bi* (which we tranſlate, *O*, or, *I beſeech thee*) may literally be tranſlated, *with me*; by way of Interrogation: As much as to ſay, *How can that be?* It appears by the Word *Adonai* (*Lord*) which is uſed to all great Men, that he did not yet think him to be an Angel, but ſome Perſon of extraordinary Quality, who wiſhed well to the *Iſraelites*.

If the LORD *be with us, Why then is all this befaln us? And where are all the Miracles which our Fathers told us of, ſaying, Did not the* LORD *bring us up from Egypt?* &c.] He thought their preſent Condition ſufficiently ſhewed, that their whole Nation was forſaken by GOD; who had thrown them into that Slavery, out of which he delivered their Fathers, and did not appear, by any miraculous Works, to be preſent among them as he was in *Egypt*, but left them to be devoured by the *Midianites*.

Here the *Targum* makes *Gideon*'s Anſwer to have been this, *Is the SCHECHINAH of the* LORD *our Help? Whence then hath all this happened unto us?* Which Paraphraſe ſhews that they took the WORD of the LORD to be the ſame with the SCHECHINAH of the LORD, who had moſt glorioufly appeared for their Help. See *Ver.* 16. and *Joſh.* xiv. 12.

Ver. 14. *And the* LORD *looked upon him.*] This ſhews it was not a mere Angel, but the ſame *Jehovah*, who appeared to *Joſhua* (v. 13, 14.) in the Likeneſs of an Angel, and now caſt a gracious Aſpect upon him: For to have Reſpect unto a Man, or unto his Sacrifice, is graciouſly to accept him, and to be favourable to him; as the LORD now declared he was, by his very Countenance, which had great Kindneſs in it.

And ſaid, Go in this thy Might.] This ſeems to intimate that *Gideon* was immediately inſpired with a great Courage, by that gracious Aſpect of the LORD upon him.

And thou ſhalt ſave Iſrael from the Hand of the Midianites.] See theſe Wonders renewed, which appeared in the Deliverance of their Fathers out of *Egypt*, of which *Gideon* ſaid there was no Token, *Ver.* 13.

Have not I ſent thee?] Is not this a ſufficient Authority, that thou haſt a Commiſſion from GOD? Great Care is taken throughout all this Book, to ſhew that the Judges all acted by a divine Warrant.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid unto him, O my* LORD.] Still he took him to be only ſome extraordinary Man.

Wherewith ſhall I ſave Iſrael?] He doth not reject the Commiſſion, but modeſtly declines it (as *Theodoret* obſerves) conſidering his own Meanneſs, in Compariſon with many others.

Behold, my Family is poor in Manaſſeh.] And conſequently of little Power to raiſe Forces, to oppoſe ſo potent an Enemy: The Word we tranſlate, *my Family*, is in *Hebrew*, *my Thouſand:* For the *Iſraelites* were diſtributed, by *Jethro*'s Advice, into Hundreds and Thouſands; and the Thouſand to which *Gideon* belonged, was the meaneſt of all the reſt in that Tribe. The *Jews* will have it, that *Gideon* was the *Chiliarch*, or chief Commander of this Thouſand; others ſay, his Father *Joaſh*, who, it appears by the Story, was a conſiderable Perſon; but it is uncertain whether he had ſuch a Government.

And I am the leaſt in my Father's Houſe.] This ſhews that *Gideon* had no ſuch Command as the *Jews* imagine.

Ver. 16. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto him, Surely I will be with thee.*] Do not conſider thy Poverty, but the Power of GOD, which ſhall accompany thee: Here the *Targum* thus paraphraſes, *My Word ſhall be thy Help*; who was the ſame that appeared to *Joſhua*, with a Sword in his Hand.

And thou ſhalt ſmite the Midianites as one Man.] Defeat them as eaſily, as if he had but one Man to deal withal.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid, If now I have found Grace in thy Sight.*] Am ſo highly favoured, as to have this Honour.

Then ſhew me a Sign.] He doth not ſo much as make a Doubt, but deſire to be confirmed in his Belief.

That thou talkeſt with me.] That thou haſt brought this Commiſſion from GOD, and that I ſhall be able to deſtroy the *Midianites*. He ſaid this (as *Conr. Pellicanus* thinks) not becauſe his Faith wanted Confirmation, but that he might make others believe, who would require a Sign before they joined with him.

Ver. 18. *Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee.*] Stay here till I go home, and return.

And bring forth my Preſent.) So we rightly interpret the *Hebrew* Word *Mincha*; which tho' it ſignify *a Meat Offering* (as we obſerve in the Margin) yet there was nothing of a Sacrifice intended here, nor was *Gideon* a Prieſt, or this a Place of Sacrifice.

And ſet it before thee.] He intended to entertain him, by making a Feaſt for him.

And

And he ſaid, I will tarry till thou come again.] It was a great Thing he was to undertake, and ſo God graciouſly condeſcended to give him all manner of Satisfaction about it.

Ver. 19. *And Gideon went in, and made ready a Kid, and unleavened Cakes of an Ephah of Flour.*] For Expedition ſake he made ſuch Cakes, they being ſooneſt prepared: For it is a mere Fancy of the *Jews*, that this was done about the Paſſover in the Days of Unleavened Bread.

The Fleſh he put in a Baſket, and he put the Broth in a Pot; and brought it unto him under the Oak, and preſented it.] Set it before him on a Table, and deſired he would be pleaſed to eat: In which he followed the Example of *Abraham* and *Lot*, and ſeems to have entertained him nobly, according to the Way of Feaſting in thoſe Days; for a whole Kid (Part of which was boiled, and the other Part, perhaps, otherwiſe prepared) and ſo many Cakes, as an *Ephah* of Flour would make, was enough for ſeveral Gueſts; and therefore ſo much ſet before one Man, was to ſhew his great Reſpect to him.

Ver. 20. *And the Angel of the* Lord *ſaid unto him, Take the Fleſh, and the unleavened Cakes.*] He did not taſte of them, intending to turn them into a Sacrifice unto God.

And lay them upon this Rock.] Which was near the Grove of Oaks, in the higher Part of the City of *Ophrah*, as *Bertram* conjectures, in his Book *de Repub. Judaica*, Chap. xv.

And pour out the Broth.] As *Elijah*, in after-times, bad them pour Water upon his Sacrifice.

And he did ſo.] He obeyed him; though it is likely he thought it ſtrange he ſhould command him thus to diſpoſe of the good Cheer he had prepared for him.

Ver. 21. *Then the Angel of the* Lord *put forth the End of the Staff that was in his Hand.*] For he appeared, I ſuppoſe, in the Form of a Traveller, who were wont to walk with a Staff in their Hand.

And touched the Fleſh, and the unleavened Cakes, and there roſe up Fire out of the Rock.] He did not ſmite the Rock with his Staff, (by which Stroke the Fire might have been thought to be ſtirred up) but only gently touched the Fleſh and the Cakes with it.

And conſumed the Fleſh and the unleavened Cakes.] Together with the Broth, that was poured on them; which was as great a Miracle (if not greater) as if Fire had come down from Heaven, as in the Sacrifices which *Moſes*, and *Elijah*, and others offered: By which the Faith of *Gideon* was mightily ſtrengthned, that the Miracles done in ancient Times (which he enquired after, *Ver.* 13.) were not ceaſed, and that God would be as good as his Word to him, for this was a Token of God's Acceptance of him.

And the Angel of the Lord *departed out of his Sight.*] Went up into Heaven, as the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe interprets it.

Ver. 22. *And when Gideon perceived that he was an Angel of the* Lord.] He was convinced, by this Wonder, that he was not a mere Prophet that appeared to him.

Alas, O Lord God, *for becauſe I have ſeen an Angel of the* Lord *Face to Face.*] He ſpeaks as a Man in a Fright, and cuts off Part of his Words; for his Meaning was, *I ſhall die:* Such was the Opinion of good Men in thoſe Days, that if they ſaw apparently an Inhabitant of the other World, he came to call them away from this: As appears more fully in the Story of *Manoah* and his Wife, in the thirteenth Chapter of this Book: And this Opinion was very ancient, as may be gathered from the Words of *Jacob*, *Gen.* xxxii. 30. and they were confirmed in it, perhaps by the Words of God to *Moſes*, *Exod.* xxxiii. 20.

Ver. 23. *And the* Lord *ſaid unto him.*] Tho' the Angel diſappeared, and nothing was to be ſeen, yet the Lord, who appeared in that Form to him, made him know he was ſtill preſent with him, by ſpeaking the following Words, in an audible Voice.

Peace be unto thee, fear not; thou ſhalt not die.] He bids him fear no Harm, but, quite contrary, expect all manner of Good, (which is comprehended in the Word *Peace*) and that in this World, where he ſhould ſtill continue, to work that Deliverance which he promiſed by him: From ſuch Places as this the ancient Chriſtians rightly gathered, that the Son of God appeared, upon ſome great Occaſions, in old Time; which is not incredible, but a Matter of eaſy Belief, if we be perſuaded that he did really appear in our Fleſh, which he took of the Virgin *Mary*, and dwelt among us for a long Time, and then aſcended in it to Heaven, where he lives for ever: For why ſhould we think it ſtrange, if, for a ſhort Time, he appeared ſometimes in Human Shape, as a *Prælude* to what he intended in the Fulneſs of Time? *Fuit ſane id majus quod nobis præſtitit, &c.* (as *Peter Martyr* ſpeaks.) It was indeed a greater thing which he did for us at laſt; but he that did the greater, may well be granted to have done the leſs, and there is no Reaſon to doubt of it.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon built an Altar there unto the* Lord.] Not for Sacrifice, (which had been directly contrary to the Law of God) but as a Monument of that heavenly Viſion, and of the Mercy promiſed to him, in that Place where he built the Altar, *viz.* Where the Angel ſtood and touched the Fleſh and unleavened Cakes, and conſumed them: Such an Altar the *Reubenites* made, *Joſh.* xxii. 10, *&c.*

And called it Jehovah-Shalom.] That is, The Lord here pronounced Peace to me, *Ver.* 23. or (as we underſtand it, in the Margin) The Lord *grant Peace:* Which he had the greateſt Reaſon to expect, when God had declared it, at that very Time, when he looked for Death.

Until this Day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.] It was remaining when *Samuel* wrote this Book.

Ver. 25. *And it came to paſs the ſame Night.*] After the Angel's Appearance.

That the Lord *ſaid unto him.*] In a Dream, it is moſt likely, becauſe it was in the Night.

Take

Take thy Father's young Bullock.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are two, *Par, Shor*, ſignifying a Bullock full grown; which his Father, it is probable, had fatted up for a Sacrifice to *Baal*.

Even the ſecond Bullock.] Our Tranſlation ſuppoſes there was but one Bullock, which he was ordered to take (becauſe we read in the next Verſe, that this alone was ſacrificed); but in the *Hebrew*, and the LXX, and the Vulgar, (and our Margin alſo) the Words are, *and the ſecond Bullock*; which was next to the firſt in Age.

Of ſeven years old.] Which was calved, as *Arias Montanus* obſerves, when their Oppreſſion under the *Midianites* began; and was now ordered to be ſacrificed, in Token that it ſhould end with this Bullock's Death.

And throw down the Altar of Baal that thy Father hath.] Which was in his Ground, and built, perhaps, at his Charge; but was for publick Uſe, as appears from *Ver.* 28.

And cut down the Grove that is by it.] Or, rather, *upon it*; for ſo the *Hebrew* Word *alau* ſignifies; and ſo the LXX tranſlate it ἐπ' αὐτῷ, upon the Altar before mentioned. And therefore by *Aſhereh*, which we tranſlate *Grove*, muſt be meant the Image in the Grove, which ſtood upon the Altar. And ſo the Word is uſed in other Places, 1 *Kings* xxiii. 6. Which Mr. *Selden* probably conjectures was the Image of *Aſhtaroth*, or *Aſtarte*; for ſhe was worſhipped together with *Baal*, ii. 13. where they are ſaid to have worſhipped *Baal* and *Aſhtaroth* (for there was more than one *Aſtarte's*) which is the ſame with iii. 7. where it is ſaid they worſhipped *Baalim and the Groves*. See *Syntag.* 2. *de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2. There could be no Hope of Deliverance till Religion was reformed; with which therefore God orders him to begin.

Ver. 26. *And build an Altar unto the* Lord *thy God, upon the Top of this Rock.*] Where the Angel appeared to him; from whence *Bertram* thinks the *Iſraelites* learnt to ſacrifice in High Places; if it were not rather a Cuſtom derived from the *Gentiles*.

On the Top of this Rock there was a Fortreſs, as I take it; which it is likely had been built to ſecure them from the *Midianites*. For the Word for *Rock* is not the ordinary one, *viz. tzor*, or *ſela*, but *mahoz*; which ſignifies a ſtrong Hold.

In the ordered Place.] Which St. *Hierom* took to be the Place where the Fleſh and unleavened Cakes were laid in Order upon the Rock, *Ver.* 20. but it may ſignify, as we tranſlate it in the Margin, *in an orderly Manner*.

And take the ſecond Bullock, and offer a burnt Sacrifice.] If there were two Bullocks which he took, it is hard to ſay what became of the firſt. *Arias Montanus* ſuppoſes it was offered for himſelf, and for his Family; but this *ſecond* is only mentioned, becauſe it was the Sacrifice that was offered for the whole Nation, to implore God's Mercy to them; for Sacrifices were a kind of Prayer and Supplication. *Gideon* was no Prieſt, but by God's ſpecial Order, was required to do this; which otherwiſe would have been a preſumptuous Sin.

With the Wood of the Grove which thou ſhalt cut down.] This was alſo an extraordinary Command, whereby Things employed to Idolatry, were converted to a ſacred Uſe. Otherwiſe, God had ordered them all to be utterly deſtroyed, *Deut.* vii. 5. xii. 3.

Ver. 27. *Then Gideon took ten Men of his Servants.*] In whom he could confide; and this Number was as many as was neceſſary, to make a Congregation for publick Worſhip; and was ſufficient alſo to execute what God had commanded.

And did as the Lord *had ſaid unto him.*] Broke down the Altar of *Baal*, cut down the Grove, and built an Altar unto the Lord, and offered the Burnt-Sacrifice.

And ſo it was, becauſe he feared his Father's Houſhold, and the Men of the City, that he could not do it by Day.] Without endangering a Tumult, which might have ended in a Fray.

That he did it by Night.] When he was likely to meet with no Oppoſition. In this he gave an early Proof of his Faith in God, for it was a bold Undertaking: But Prudence is not excluded in the Execution of the Divine Commands: Yet the greater Speed Men make, the more acceptable it is; and ſome think his Zeal moved him to do this, the very ſame Night wherein God appeared to him.

Ver. 28. *And when the Men of the City roſe early in the Morning.*] And came to worſhip *Baal*, before they went about their Buſineſs.

Behold the Altar of Baal was caſt down, and the Grove cut down that was by it.] They were very much ſurprized to ſee ſuch an Alteration.

And the ſecond Bullock was offered.] Which they knew was deſigned for a Sacrifice to *Baal*.

Upon the Altar that was built.] Not upon the Altar of *Baal*, which was thrown down, but on a new one, which was built in another Place; upon which the Fleſh of the ſecond Bullock was ſtill flaming, being not quite conſumed, when they came thither.

Ver. 29. *And they ſaid one to another, Who hath done this Thing?*] Their Superſtition made them very ſolicitous to find out the Author of this Impiety, as they accounted it.

And when they enquired and aſked.] Here are two Words in the *Hebrew*, importing that they made a diligent Inquiſition; examining many Perſons what they knew of it.

They ſaid, Gideon the Son of Joaſh hath done this Thing.] Who gave this Information, we are not told; nor how the Diſcovery was made: Perhaps, ſome had ſeen him that Morning ſtand by the Sacrifice; which it is likely he would not forſake, as long as he durſt attend it. Or ſome of his Servants might let fall ſuch Words as gave Suſpicion: Or, the Altar and Image ſtanding in *Joaſh* his Ground, and his Bullock being offered, they thought that none, without the Knowledge of his Family, could come to attempt it: And, beſides, it is probable that *Gideon* was known to be no zealous Servant of *Baal*; and when all were ſo very much concerned for the demoliſhing of his Altar, he expreſſing

preſſing no Concern at all, they confidently charged him with the Fact.

Ver. 30. *Then the Men of the City ſaid to Joaſh, Bring out thy Son, that he may die, becauſe he*, &c.] It ſeems they were all zealous Idolaters; and thought him worthy of Death who diſhonoured thoſe who were accounted Gods.

Ver. 31. *And Joaſh ſaid unto all that ſtood againſt him.*] That is, againſt his Son; demanding to have him produced, and puniſhed.

Will ye plead for Baal? Will ye ſave him?] *i. e.* Will you take upon you to avenge his Quarrel, and to be his Patrons? Doth it belong to you to be his Defenders and Deliverers? It ſeems to have been a popular Tumult, which he endeavours to repreſs; by repreſenting to them, that ſuch Crimes were not to be puniſhed by them, but by the Magiſtrates of the City; and that they would bring themſelves in Danger of what they intended to do to *Gideon*, if they did not deſiſt; as it follows in the next Words.

He that will plead for him, let him be put to Death.] That is, Let me tell you, he that thus moves Sedition in this Cauſe, by my Conſent, ſhould be put to Death himſelf. And, it is likely, *Joaſh* was a Magiſtrate in the City; who terrified them by declaring what his Opinion would be, if they came to be tried for this Riot.

While it is yet Morning.] That is, immediately. For it was early in the Morning (*Ver.* 28.) when they came in this Manner to *Joaſh*.

If he be a God, let him plead for himſelf, becauſe he hath caſt down his Altar.] If the Magiſtrates neglected to puniſh the pretended Crime, *Baal*, he tells them, in caſe he were a real God, would take Care to do himſelf Right; and therefore they need not be ſo much concerned about it: And ſo ſome underſtand the latter Part of this Verſe, *He deſerves to die preſently, who is an Adverſary to Baal: But let the Execution be done then by Baal himſelf. For if he be a God, he will take Care of his own Honour; and you need not trouble yourſelves about it.* It is likely *Joaſh* had been convinced by his Son, that God had given him a Commiſſion to deliver his People; and to begin it with this Reformation. Which made him appear thus boldly in his Son's Cauſe; becauſe he knew it was the Cauſe of God.

Ver. 32. *Therefore on that Day he called him Jerubbaal.*] In the 2 *Sam.* xi. 21. he is called *Jerubbeſheth*; for ſo ſome called *Baal*, in Contempt, by the Name of *Beſheth*, that is *Shame* and *Confuſion*; which well expreſſes the Nature of ſuch *Idols*.

Saying, Let Baal plead againſt him, becauſe he hath thrown down his Altar.] This is the Reaſon why he gave him this Name; which is as much as to ſay, *the Adverſary of Baal*; or, *him whom Baal hath a Quarrel withal*; upon the Account of the Affront put upon him, in throwing down his Altar. The *Phœnicians* called him *Jerombalus*, as appears by *Sanchuniathon*, whom *Euſebius* often quotes, as he is tranſlated by *Philo Byblius* into *Greek:* And *Porphyry* ſaith, he received certain Commentaries from *Jerombalus*, the Prieſt of the God *Jevo*. Which can be nothing but the Books of *Moſes*, which contain the Laws delivered by *Jehovah*; as *Huetius* juſtly obſerves in his *Demonſtr. Evangel. Propoſ.* 4. Cap. 2. for the Remains which we have of his Writings, plainly taſte of the Doctrine of *Moſes*.

Ver. 33. *Then all the Midianites, and the Amalekites, and the Children of the Eaſt were gathered together.*] As they were wont to do every Year, to waſte the Country, *Ver.* 3, 4, 5.

And went over.] The River *Jordan*.

And pitched in the Valley of Jezreel.] Which alarmed *Gideon*, and gave him Occaſion to execute his Commiſſion; it being not far from *Ophrah*; for *Jezreel* in the Tribe of *Judah* is not here meant, (mentioned *Joſh.* xv. 36.) but *Jezreel* in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, or *Iſſachar*, which is frequently ſpoken of in the Book of the *Kings*, being one of the Royal Seats of the Kings of *Iſrael*; where there was a noble Valley, running from the Eaſt to the Weſt, mentioned *Joſh.* xvii. 16. *Hoſea* i. 5.

Ver. 34. *But the Spirit of the* LORD *came upon Gideon.*] Or, (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*, and as the LXX tranſlate it) *cloathed Gideon:* Which is a Phraſe St. *Paul* uſes to ſignify a Man is repleniſhed with that wherewith he is ſaid to be cloathed; or that he is fully poſſeſſed of it. So was *Gideon* with Courage, and all other Qualities neceſſary in a great Commander.

And he blew a Trumpet, and Abiezer was gathered unto him.] Came and offered their Service to fight under his Banner. This was a wonderful Change, if the City of *Ophrah*, who were lately ſo incenſed againſt him, that they would have killed him for deſtroying their *Idol*, now not only ſubmitted to him, but were ready to join with him againſt all his Enemies: But though this be not incredible, that they were converted from the Idolatrous Worſhip of *Baal*, when they ſaw no Hurt befal *Gideon* for throwing down his Altar, *&c.* yet this may be meant only of the reſt of the *Abiezrites*, and eſpecially thoſe of his own Kindred and Family.

Ver. 35. *And he ſent Meſſengers throughout all Manaſſeh, who alſo were gathered after him.*] That is, the reſt of his Tribe; whoſe Hearts God moved to reſort unto him.

And he ſent Meſſengers unto Aſher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali.] After his own Tribe was come in, he invited theſe three who bordered upon the Tribe of *Manaſſeh* Northward, to come to his Aſſiſtance: But he did not ſend unto the Tribe of *Ephraim*, who were Neighbours to the *Manaſſites* on the South; which afterward begat a Quarrel, as we read Chap. viii.

And they came to meet them.] One of the Copies of the LXX refers this to *Gideon*, that he went up to meet thoſe of the three Tribes before mentioned; but others refer it to them who came up to meet *Gideon*; and ſo the *Hebrew* Words ſeem to import. But which way ſoever we take it, they all joined their Forces together; and from hence Sir *J. Marſham* infers, that the Oppreſſion fell only on this Part

of the Country; tho' the whole Story repreſents all the *Iſraelites* as in a miſerable Condition, and as ſubmitting to his Government, after he had delivered them.

Ver. 36. *And Gideon ſaid unto* God.] In a Prayer, which, I ſuppoſe, he made unto him.

If thou wilt ſave Iſrael by my Hand, as thou haſt ſaid.] He did not doubt of God's Intentions, who had promiſed to be with him: For in Purſuit of his Commands he had done one great thing already, in throwing down *Baal*'s Altar; and had alſo blown a Trumpet and liſted Soldiers; and had likewiſe ſeen wonderful Effects of God's Power, in conſuming the Fleſh and the Cakes that were laid upon the Rock, by Fire coming out of it: Therefore he deſired only a Confirmation of his Faith; and that, perhaps, for the Sake of thoſe who were to go with him, who might poſſibly be timorous: Or he might deſire by ſome Sign to know, whether at this time he would make him victorious over the *Midianites*, or he was to wait for ſome other Opportunity.

Ver. 37. *Behold, I will put a Fleece of Wool in the Floor.*] Where they were wont to threſh Corn; which was done in the open Air, not in Barns, as we do now.

And if the Dew be on the Fleece only, and it be dry upon all the Earth beſide, then ſhall I know that thou wilt ſave Iſrael by my Hand, as thou haſt ſaid.] He ſuppoſed that the Dew which diſtilled from Heaven was a divine Gift, (as the Scripture often teſtifies, particularly *Gen.* xxviii. 28.) which he deſires might be ſo governed by God, that though it commonly fall every where, it might now, by his extraordinary Providence, water only his Fleece.

Ver. 38. *And it was ſo; for he roſe up early in the Morning, and thruſt the Fleece together, and wringed the Dew out of the Fleece, a Bowl full of Water.*] When there was not a Drop upon the Earth round about it. The Word *Sephel*, which here we tranſlate *Bowl*, was uſed in the foregoing Chapter, *Ver.* 25. Which ſee.

Ver. 39. *And Gideon ſaid unto God, Let not thine Anger be hot againſt me, and I will ſpeak but this once.*] Though God did not chide him for his former Deſire, nor charge him with any Diſtruſt of his Power and Will to do what he promiſed; yet *Gideon* was afraid leſt he ſhould be very angry at his renewing the ſame Requeſt, becauſe it looked like a Diffidence in God's Word. But if we conſider, that it was for the further and fuller Satisfaction of thoſe that were to go with him, it may be excuſed; and as he promiſes that he will aſk no more Signs, ſo we do not find that the Lord took it ill of him that he aſked this.

Let me prove thee, I pray thee, with the Fleece.] This is a bad Word, when it denotes Men's Infidelity, that no Sign will be given them; but a good one, when it ſignifies an humble Deſire to have ſuch a Sign granted them, as here it doth.

Let it be dry now only upon the Fleece, and upon all the Ground let there be Dew.] Upon theſe Words *Ralbag* hath this Obſervation, *The former Miracle was not ſufficient for his Conviction, becauſe it is in the very Nature of Wool to draw Moiſture to it; and therefore he deſires this ſecond Miracle, which is contrary to the firſt.*

Ver. 40. *And God did ſo that Night.*] For ſome Dew drops in the Morning, other in the Night. And here God was pleaſed not in the Morning, but in that very Night when he aſked this Sign, to ſprinkle all the Floor with Dew, and let none fall upon the Fleece. So ready, ſaith *Bochartus*, is God to hear our Prayers; which his Benefits do not ſo much follow, as go before them, or immediately accompany them.

For it was dry upon the Fleece only, and there was Dew on all the Ground.] Not upon all the Country of *Iſrael*, but upon all the Floor, or the Land thereabout. By theſe quite contrary Signs, his Faith was fully confirmed; and perhaps there was ſome need of it, when he ſaw the Number of his Followers reduced to a ſmall Handful of three hundred Men, vii. 10. There are thoſe, who think he choſe a Fleece of Wool for this Purpoſe, not only becauſe it was ready at hand, but the better to expreſs how the Earth was ſhorn by the *Midianites*, as the Sheep had been by him; and when he begged the Dew (a Sign of the divine Favour) might fall upon the Fleece, it was to repreſent the Kindneſs of God to him; and when he begged it might fall upon the whole Ground, it repreſented his Favour to all the People: And, laſtly, that theſe two Miracles, oppoſite one to the other, do notably ſet forth the State of that Nation, who were moiſtened with the Dew of Heaven (the Knowledge of God) when the reſt of the World were dry; and now are dry, when the reſt of the Earth are filled with the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *THEN Jerubbaal, (who is Gideon) and all the People that were with him, roſe up early.*] The very next Morning, I ſuppoſe, after the laſt Miracle.

And pitched beſide the Well of Harod.] It is but conjectured where this Well was, *viz.* not far from Mount *Gilboa*.

So that the Hoſt of the Midianites were on the North Side of them, by the Hill of Moreh.] The *Vulgar* takes the Word *Moreh* to ſignify high; and then this high Hill can be no other than the forenamed *Gilboa*. Here *Pellicanus* obſerves, that Prudence and diligent Forecaſt is to be uſed, even when we are under the divine Conduct; for he thinks *Gideon* acted like a ſkilful Commander, when he quartered his Army ſo, as to have the Enemy on the North of him, rather than the Eaſt or the South.

In the Valley.] Of *Jezreel*, as was ſaid before, vi. 33. which had *Hermon* on the North, and *Gilboa* on the South of it.

Ver. 2. *And the* Lord *ſaid unto Gideon, The People that are with thee, are too many for me to give the Midianites into their Hand.*] They were but thirty-two thouſand, againſt an innu-

merable Army of the Enemies, *Ver.* 3, 12. which was a vaſt Diſproportion; and yet God would not uſe the Service of ſuch a Company, leſt it ſhould obſcure his Glory; as it follows in the next Words.

Leſt Iſrael vaunt themſelves againſt me, ſaying, Mine own Hand hath ſaved me.] He knew their Humour, and foreſaw they might be ſo vain, as to aſcribe the Victory to their own Power and Proweſs, and not to him who intended to ſhew to all the World it was his miraculous Work.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore go to, proclaim in the Ears of the People.*] According to the Command of *Moſes*, *Deut.* xx. 8.

Whoſoever is fearful and afraid.] The Word which we tranſlate *afraid*, is in the *Hebrew Harod*: From whence ſome have conjectured the Well where they pitched (*Ver.* 1.) was called by the Name of *Harod*, becauſe here a great Fear came upon moſt of *Gideon*'s Army.

Let him return and depart early.] As ſoon as he can: Or, as a great many underſtand it, *make what haſte he can to his Home*; it being a Metaphor, they think, from the flying of a Bird.

From Mount Gilead.] Not that Mountain which is ſo often mentioned in Scripture; for that was on the other Side of *Jordan*, and in the moſt Eaſtern Part of their Country, (as appears from the Story of *Jacob*, when he returned from *Padan Aram*) but another Mountain on the Weſt Side of *Jordan*, in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*: The Name of whoſe Grandſon *Gilead* (from whom all the Tribes deſcended) was given, it is probable, in Memory of him, to ſome Mountain in this Country; which was called *Mount Gilead*; juſt as another Mountain in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, was called *Mount Ephraim*. This ſeems to me a far more rational Account of theſe Words, than theirs who tranſlate them *towards Mount Gilead*, or *about it*; or deviſe ſome other ſuch like Explication of the Particle *Min*, (which we rightly tranſlate *from*) as may conſiſt with their Opinion, that the Mount on the other Side *Jordan* is here intended. *Gataker* hath collected many Interpretations of this Kind in his *Cinnus*, Lib. 2. Cap. 18.

And there returned of the People twenty and two thouſand.] As God thought there was too many, ſo they thought there were too few, to fight with ſuch an Hoſt as came againſt them: And therefore, though they were at the firſt forward to liſt themſelves under *Gideon*, yet when they ſaw no greater Number come in, as they expected, their Hearts failed them; for they truſted not in God, but in their own Strength.

And there remained ten thouſand.] Who had more Courage, and were reſolved to venture their Lives in the Cauſe. *Ralbag* thinks the greater Number that went away were Men of bad Lives, whoſe Conſciences made them afraid; and that theſe who remained were better Men, which made them valiant and undaunted. And they were juſt the ſame Number that went down with *Barak* from Mount *Tabor*, in their laſt Deliverance, iv. 10.

Ver. 4. *And the* Lord *ſaid unto Gideon, The People are yet too many.*] The more valiant they were, the more they might be apt to aſcribe to themſelves.

Bring them down unto the Water.] Which, it is likely, ran from the Well or Fountain of *Harod*, and made a Brook.

And I will try them for thee there.] Give thee a Proof who are fit for the Service. The *Hebrew* Word *Tzaraph* ſignifies to ſcour, purge, and purify; as Fullers do Cloth from its Filthineſs, or as Refiners do Gold and Silver from their Droſs. So God intended to purge *Gideon*'s Army, from all ſuch Perſons as he judged unmeet for the Undertaking.

And it ſhall be, that of whom I ſay unto thee, This ſhall go with thee, the ſame ſhall go with thee; and of whomſoever I ſay unto thee, This ſhall not go with thee, the ſame ſhall not go.] He intended by ſuch a Voice as now ſpake unto him, to declare who ſhould go with him, and who ſhould not.

Ver. 5. *So he brought down the People unto the Water.*] Where it was proper to purge them.

And the Lord *ſaid unto Gideon, Every one that lappeth of the Water with his Tongue, as a Dog lappeth, him ſhalt thou ſet by himſelf; likewiſe every one that boweth down upon his Knees to drink.*] They were thirſty, we may well ſuppoſe, by the Heat of the Weather, and by their March, which made them greedily betake themſelves to the Water: Where he bid *Gideon* obſerve the different Poſtures which they uſed in quenching of their Thirſt. The LXX here tranſlate it πᾶς ὃς ἂν λάψῃ τῇ γλώσσῃ αὐτοῦ, Whoever licketh upon the Water with his Tongue. Which is the very Word the great Philoſopher uſes in his Hiſtory of *Animals*, Lib. 8. Cap. 6. where he ſaith, Thoſe Creatures whoſe Teeth are continued cloſe together, ſup up Water as Horſes and Oxen do; but ſuch as he calls καρχαροδόντα, that have Teeth like a Saw, do λάπτειν, which is of the ſame Signification with our *Engliſh* Word *lap*, and the *French laper*, as *Bochart* obſerves.

Ver. 6. *And the Number of them that lapped, putting their Hand to their Mouth, were three hundred Men; but all the reſt of the People bowed down upon their Knees to drink Water.*] Some aſcribe it to the Sloth and Lazineſs of theſe three hundred Men, that they would not ſtoop down to drink, as the reſt did; others, to their Timorouſneſs, and the great Fear they were in of being ſuddenly ſurprized by their Enemies, which is the Opinion of *Joſephus* and *Theodoret*; both which great Authors think, that God choſe theſe three hundred Men, on purpoſe becauſe they were poor-ſpirited, that the Victory might be acknowledged to be entirely owing to himſelf: And *Grotius* is of this Mind, who thinks they lapped, juſt as the Dogs do at the River *Nile*, as they run, for fear of the Crocodiles. See *Sixtiri Amama* his *Antibarbarus*, Lib. 3. P. 385. But it is evident that all the fearful Perſons were diſmiſſed before; and it is not likely that courageous Men were lazy; therefore I take it, as others do, (particularly *Procopius Gazæus*) to be a Token of their Temperance, and of the Nobleneſs of their Spirit, which made them ſo deſirous to engage the Enemy

Enemy, that they would not ſtay to drink; but though they were very thirſty, contented themſelves to moiſten their Mouth with a little Water; whereas the reſt indulged themſelves ſo far, as to drink their Belly full. And it is the Opinion of *Ralbag*, among the *Jews*, that their lapping ſtanding, was a Sign of their Alacrity and Fortitude. *R. Solomon*, and *Kimchi*, alſo think, that the reſt had been Worſhippers of *Baal*, and by bowing their Knees to drink, were diſcovered, which is a far-fetched Conceit.

Ver. 7. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Gideon, By the Three hundred Men that lapped, will I ſave you, and deliver the Midianites into thine Hand.*] It was ſufficient to let all the World ſee, GOD ſaved them, and not Men, that he employed only three hundred Perſons in this Service, yet it was neceſſary theſe three hundred ſhould be Men of extraordinary Faith and Courage (ſuch as *Gideon* had) to embolden them to this Enterprize.

And let all the other People go every Man unto his Place.] He had ſent away above two Thirds of his Army before, and now of that third Part, he keeps only the thirtieth.

Ver. 8. *And the People took Victuals in their Hands.*] They that returned Home, left ſo much Proviſion, as would ſerve to maintain three hundred Men for ſome time.

And their Trumpets.] If we ſuppoſe every thouſand Men to have ten Trumpeters belonging to them, it was eaſy to furniſh three hundred Men with every one a Trumpet, which we read (*Ver.* 16.) they had, that they might, when they ſounded, make a Noiſe, as if they were a greater Number than really they were. It is hard to ſay, how *Joſephus* came to ſay, that they carried in their Hand, ἀριᾶ κέρας a *Ram's Horn*, which they uſed ἀντὶ σάλπιγγος inſtead of a Trumpet (*Lib.* V. *Antiq. Cap.* 8.) for Rams Horns are not hollow: And the LXX only call them κερατίνας, not ſaying of what they were made. It may be ſuppoſed, indeed, that Rams Horns were made hollow for this Uſe, as the *Jews* make them at this Day.

And he ſent all the reſt of Iſrael, every Man unto his Tent.] Who, it is probable, did not go ſo far, but that they were ready to join with thoſe who purſued the *Midianites* after their Defeat, *Ver.* 23, 24.

And retained thoſe three hundred Men.] Kept no more with him than this Number whom GOD had choſen to accompliſh his Promiſe.

And the Hoſt of Midian was beneath him in the Valley.] It ſeems his ſmall Handful of Men lay encamped upon an Hill, where the *Midianites* thought it not ſafe to aſſault them, not knowing what Number they were, nor how intrenched, and therefore they lay ſtill in the Valley of *Jezreel*.

Ver. 9. *And it came to paſs the ſame Night.*] After he had reduced his Forces to this ſmall Number.

That the LORD *ſaid unto him, Ariſe, get thee down unto the Hoſt of the Midianites.*] Who lay in the Valley below him.

For I have delivered it into thy Hand.] There, he means, he ſhould underſtand, and be fully ſatisfied by what he ſhould hear, that his Victory over them was as ſure, as if he had already obtained it.

Ver. 10. *But if thou fear to go down.*] As he had ſome Reaſon, having now ſuch a ſlender Company with him.

Go thou with Phurah thy Servant down to the Hoſt.] Every Man is more afraid alone, than when he hath a truſty Companion with him; yet it was not fit to carry more than one, whoſe Fidelity was known to him; for ſecret Deſigns are not to be committed to many.

Ver. 11. *And thou ſhalt hear what they ſay.*] Hear the Diſcourſe that ſome of them would have with one another.

And afterward ſhall thine Hand be ſtrengthened to go down unto the Hoſt.] Whereby he ſhould be encouraged to attack that great Army, with ſo ſmall a Number as he had remaining with him. This ſhews how exceeding acceptable his Faith and Obedience was to GOD, in ſending away as many of his Army, as he bad him diſmiſs; for now he gives him a further Confirmation of his Faith, without aſking.

Then went he down with Phurah his Servant. Faith had quite expelled all his Fear.

Unto the Outſide of the armed Men that were in the Hoſt.] To the Out-guards, as we now ſpeak, who ſeem to have conſiſted of *fifty* Men, as the LXX think the *Hebrew* Word *Chamuſchim* ſignifies; for they tranſlate it τῶν πενηκονλα.

Ver. 12. *And the Midianites and Amalekites, and all the Children of the Earth.*] who joined with them in this Invaſion.

Lay long in the Valley.] Of *Jezreel* before mentioned, into which *Gideon* now went down.

Like Graſhoppers for Multitude.] See vi. 5.

And their Camels were without Number.] Both *Midian* and *Amalek*, and the Countries about them, abounded with Camels, which were ſerviceable to them in their Wars, as well as in carrying Burdens. See *Bochart*, in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* I. *Lib.* II. *Cap.* 2. And in them they placed their principal Riches, as he obſerves out of *Leo Africanus*, who ſaith, That when the *Arabians* would expreſs the great Wealth of their Prince, they do not ſay, he hath ſo many thouſand Pounds of Gold or Silver, but ſo many thouſand Camels.

As the Sand by the Sea Side for Multitude.] So the *Hebrews* are wont to expreſs a vaſtly great Number. The certain Knowledge of their Number, it is likely, never came to the Knowledge of the *Iſraelites*; but we read of an hundred and twenty thouſand Men that were ſlain, and fifteen thouſand that eſcaped, with their two Princes, viii. 10. And how many were taken Captive, is not recorded.

Ver. 13. *And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a Man that told a Dream unto his Fellow.*] Which troubled his Thoughts, I ſuppoſe, when he was awake, as the Dream of *Pharaoh*, and his Butler and Baker, and of *Nebuchadnezzar*, in After-times, diſturbed them.

And ſaid, Behold, I dreamed a Dream, and lo a Cake of Barley Bread.] Or, as the *Vulgar* tranſlate it, *A Loaf baked in the Aſhes*, which was the meaneſt of all other Bread, and haſtily prepared.

Tumbled.] Came tumbling down like a Bowl from the Mountain.

Into the Hoſt of Midian.] Through all the Guards, into the very Middle of the Army, which was a Sign that *Gideon* ſhould break thro' all Oppoſition.

And came unto a Tent.] The principal Tent, which was pitched for their Kings, or their General, in the midſt of the Hoſt.

And ſmote it, that it fell.] This ſeemed ſtrange to the Man, that ſo ſmall a Thing as a Cake, or a Loaf of Bread, ſhould throw down a Tent, which was not ſhaken by a ſtrong Wind.

And overturned it, that the Tent lay along.] It not only fell, but was ſo ſhattered that it could not be reared up again; which was a lively Emblem of the utter Overthrow of the *Midianites*, and their numerous Hoſt, by *Gideon*, and his ſmall Company, as his Fellow-Soldier interpreted it.

Ver. 14. *And his Fellow anſwered and ſaid.*] It appears by the Example before mentioned, that GOD ſometimes ſent Dreams into the Minds of *Pagan People*, who were much concerned to find an Interpreter of them: But here, by a ſingular Providence, one of his Comrades was inſpired to tell the Meaning immediately.

This is nothing elſe, ſave the Sword of Gideon, the Son of Joaſh.] The Barley Cake was a fit Emblem of *Gideon* and his Soldiers, who were a ſmall Number, as a Cake is made of a little Flower kneaded together; and was mean alſo, and contemptible, in Compariſon with the *Midianites*, as a Barley Cake is in Compariſon with Wheaten Bread: But the Man could not have underſtood this, unleſs GOD had ſuggeſted it to him, for the Confirmation of *Gideon*'s Faith and Reſolution.

A Man of Iſrael.] *i. e.* A great Commander; for ſo the *Hebrews* truly interpret the Word *Iſch*, who (as *L'Empereur* obſerves out of *R. Schamaja*) called the Governor, or chief Commander of thoſe who guarded the Temple, *Iſch har habeth*, The Man of the Mountain of the Temple. *Cod. Middoth*, Cap. 1.

For into his Hand hath GOD *delivered Midian, and all the Hoſt.*] All their Confederates. Nothing is more vain, than our common Dreams, yet GOD hath ſometimes admoniſhed Men that Way of future Things, as many of the Heathens themſelves acknowledge, (and thoſe, the wiſeſt of them, ſuch as *Hippocrates*.) But that a common Soldier ſhould give ſuch an exact Interpretation of another Soldier's Dream, and that againſt themſelves, and their own Nation, is very extraordinary.

Ver. 15. *And it was ſo, when Gideon heard the Telling of the Dream, and the Interpretation thereof.*] He underſtood the *Midianitiſh* Language, it is likely, having been long a Subject to that Nation; or, perhaps, it did not differ much from the *Hebrew*.

That he worſhipped.] Gave humble Thanks to GOD for his Goodneſs, in giving him new Encouragement to proceed in his Undertaking.

And returned to the Hoſt of Iſrael.] So he calls it, (though it ſcarce deſerved that Name) becauſe GOD intended to do the ſame by this ſmall Number, as if they had been a great Hoſt.

And ſaid, Ariſe, for the LORD *hath delivered into your Hand, the Hoſt of Midian.*] He bids them make no Doubt, nor Delay, for GOD had given freſh Aſſurance of Succeſs.

Ver. 16. *And he divided the three hundred Men into three Companies.*] Under three Commanders in Chief, as the *Hebrew Raſchim* imports, which ſignifies *Heads*.

And he put a Trumpet into every Man's Hand.] That they might make a Sound of a great Army.

With empty Pitchers.] Earthen Pitchers, which had no Water in them; wherein they hid their Lamps, till they ſhould think fit to light them.

And Lamps within their Pitchers.] Or, rather, *Torches*; for, no doubt, they were made of Pitch, or Wax, or Roſin, and ſuch like things as would burn long, and not be blown out by the Wind, as *Lamps* made of Oil only are apt to be.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid unto them, Look on me, and do likewiſe.*] Follow my Example.

And behold, when I come to the Outſide of the Camp.] Where he began the Aſſault.

It ſhall be, that as I do, ſo ſhall ye do.] I ſuppoſe he told them what he would do, *viz.* After they heard him blow the Trumpet, (as it follows in the next Verſe) they ſhould do the ſame, and then break their Pitchers, and light their Torches, *&c.*

Ver. 18. *When I blow with a Trumpet, I, and all that are with me.*] It is likely he commanded one of the three Troops, with whom he began the Attack, as the next Verſe imports.

Then blow ye the Trumpet alſo, on every Side of all the Camp.] By this it appears, that they did not fall upon them all in one Place, but ſome on one Part of their Camp, ſome on another, that they might ſtrike the greater Terror into them, and put them into Confuſion.

And ſay, the Sword of the LORD, *and of Gideon.*] The Word *Sword* is not here in the *Hebrew*, where theſe Words run thus, *For the* LORD, *and for Gideon:* But there being mention of the *Sword*, *Ver.* 20. it moved our Tranſlators to add it here alſo: And it is not to be thought contrary to the Deſign of GOD, (who would have the Victory aſcribed to himſelf, *Ver.* 2.) that *Gideon* here joins his own Name, with GOD's, when they went to fight; for, as he puts GOD in the firſt place, and names himſelf only as his Miniſter; ſo, it is likely, he had Directions from GOD for it; who knew the Name of *Gideon*, of whoſe extraordinary Courage, no doubt, the *Midianites* had heard, would be very formidable to them.

Ver. 19. *So Gideon and the hundred Men that were with him.*] The *Vulgar* took an hundred to be put for the whole Hoſt of *Gideon*, and therefore ſaith, *The three hundred Men that were with him:* But the LXX expreſly follows the *Hebrew*; and it is moſt probable that he led only an hundred Men himſelf, the reſt being commanded by ſome other valiant Captains.

And came to the Outside of the Camp.] It is not said on what Quarter; but it is probable on the East Part of their Camp, as the Second Troop set upon them on the North-East Part, and the Third on the South-East: For this Way they knew they would bend their Flight when they were routed, and endeavoured to escape; their own Country, and the Fords of *Jordan* lying on the East: And if they ran Westward, there were *Israelites* enough to pursue them, and cut them off.

In the Beginning of the middle Watch, and they had but newly set the Watch.] That is, a little after Midnight: For there were three Watches among the *Hebrews* and the rest of the Eastern Nations, as *Bochart* observes out of *Kimchi*, and *R. Solomon*, and others; the Night being divided into three Parts: And when the first third Part was ended, they that had watched went to sleep, and another Company succeeded them, till the Morning Watch. The *Romans* afterward divided the Night into four Parts, from whence we read, in the Gospel, of the *fourth Watch*.

And they blew the Trumpets, and brake the Pitchers that were in their Hands.] Tho' *Gideon* placed his Hope in God alone, yet he did not neglect such prudent Stratagems as are used in War, but made an Appearance of a greater Number of Men than he had with him: For hearing three hundred Trumpets sound, the *Midianites* could not but apprehend a great Army was come to assault them: The breaking of the Pitchers also made a clattering Noise, and the Torches then, on a sudden, flaring in their Eyes, was very amazing, especially when they heard them shout, *for the* LORD, *and for Gideon:* He chose also to make his Attack at Midnight, when they were in a dead Sleep, and expected no Disturbance.

Ver. 20. *And the three Companies.*] The former Words were concerning *Gideon* and his Men, who began the Attack; whose Example the rest of the three Companies followed, as he required, *Ver.* 17, 18.

Blew the Trumpets, and break the Pitchers, and held the Lamps in their left Hand, and the Trumpets in their Right Hand to blow withal.] So that they made no use of their Swords, in the first Onset; both Hands being full of something else.

And they cried, The Sword of the LORD, *and of Gideon.*] But this Stratagem had been of no Efficacy, if GOD had not struck such a Terror into them, when they heard these Words, as quite confounded them: And yet these Words do not import, as I said before, that the Victory was divided between the LORD and *Gideon*; for it is most likely (as *Pet. Martyr* observes) that GOD suggested even this Stratagem to *Gideon*, and made it successful.

Ver. 21. *And they stood every Man in his Place round about the Camp.*] Not one of the Three Hundred Men stirred a Foot from his Place, but stood there without striking a Stroke; as if they had been only Torch-bearers, to give Light to their Army, to see their Way to the Camp, and to do Execution.

And all the Host ran and cried, and fled.] They did not stand in their Ranks to repel the *Israelites*; but brake up their Camp, (as the *Hebrew* Word *Jaratz* may be translated) and cried out with a lamentable Voice, fleeing as fast as they could to their own Country.

Ver. 22. *And the three hundred Men blew the Trumpets.*] That is, continued to blow them without ceasing.

And the LORD *set every Man's Sword against his Fellow, even throughout all the Host.*] Being suddenly awaked out of their Sleep in the Middle of the Night, and hearing such a Noise, as if a vast Multitude were falling upon them, they were in such Disorder, (which was increased by the Clattering of the Pitchers, and the Blaze of the Torches) that they could not distinguish their Friends from their Enemies, but killed one another; every Man falling upon him that was next to him, whom he fancied to be one of *Gideon*'s Army. Thus the *Philistines* were defeated by *Jonathan*, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 16, 20. and the *Ammonites*, *Moabites*, and *Edomites*, in the Days of *Jehoshaphat*, 2 *Chron.* xx. 22, 23.

And the Host fled to Beth-shittah, in Zererath, and to the Border of Abel-Meholah, unto Tabbath.] We find none of these Places mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, but only *Abel-Meholah*, in 1 *Kings* iv. 12. xix. 16. which being in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, not far from the River *Jordan*, may support a Conjecture, that the rest of the Places were in the Way thither.

Ver. 23. *And the Men of Israel gathered themselves together out of Napthali, and out of Asher.*] He had sent to these Tribes at the first raising of his Army, and also to *Zebulun*, who, being Neighbours, came to join him, vi. 35.

And out of all Manasseh.] Who were the forwardest in this Enterprize, being his own Tribe.

And pursued after the Midianites.] Tho' they had been lately disbanded by God's Order, yet it is likely they lay ready, if there should be Occasion, to help to compleat the Victory.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon sent Messengers throughout all Mount Ephraim.*] He was desirous that others should have some Share with him, in finishing this Work; though he alone, with some few, began it, and were exposed to all the Danger. Would to God (saith *P. Martyr* on this Occasion) that we were of this Spirit in the Church of Christ, that when any noble Work is begun, we would call in all to help to perfect it: But alas! such are our Sins, we oft-times do all we are able, to hinder one another.

Saying, Come down against the Midianites.] He invites them to come to his Assistance against the common Enemy; which his small Handful of Men were not sufficient to destroy, though they had entirely routed them.

And take before them the Waters.] He would have them make such haste, as to possess themselves of the Fords, before the *Midianites* could get to them.

Unto Beth-barah, and Jordan.] It is very probable, that *Beth-barah* is the same Place with *Beth-abara* in St. *John*'s Gospel, i. 28.

being

being the Place, where the *Iſraelites* paſſed over *Jordan*, when they firſt entered *Canaan:* And then by *Jordan* muſt be meant all the Fords upon this River, from *Beth-barah* to the Lake of *Geneſaret*.

Then all the Men of Ephraim gathered themſelves together, and took the Waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan.] Poſted themſelves all along the River, from the Lake before-mentioned, unto *Beth-barah*.

Ver. 25. *And they took two Princes of the Midianites.*] Two great Commanders, as the Word *Sarim* ſignifies, which we tranſlate *Princes*.

Oreb and Zeeb.] From hence ſome gather that the *Midianitiſh* Language did not much differ from the *Hebrew:* In which *Oreb* ſignifies a *Crow*, and *Zeeb* a *Wolf*; from which Creatures, and ſuch like, it ſeems very anciently great Men thought fit to take the Names of their Families: As the *Romans* did afterwards (among whom we read of the *Corvini*, and *Gracchi*, and *Aquilini*, *&c.*) either as Omens, or as Monuments of their undaunted Courage and Dexterity in Military Achievements.

And they ſlew Oreb upon the Rock Oreb.] It is likely that there he was taken hidden in ſome Hole; and from his Slaughter there, the Rock had its Name in future Times.

And Zeeb they ſlew at the Wine-preſs of Zeeb.] Where he alſo in like manner being taken and ſlain, gave Name to this *Place*.

And purſued Midian.] Did not content themſelves with this, but purſued them to the other Side of *Jordan*; whither ſome of them had eſcaped, before they would obey *Gideon*'s Summons.

And brought the Heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon.] As the manner was in After-times, when they would gratify a great Conqueror, with a welcome Spectacle: For thus *Pompey*'s Head was offered to *Cæſar*, and *Cicero*'s to *Mark Anthony*.

On the other Side Jordan.] Over which we read (viii. 4.) *Gideon* paſſed, in the Purſuit of the Enemy.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Men of Ephraim ſaid unto him.*] When they preſented the Heads of the two Princes unto him.

Why haſt thou ſerved us thus?] They thought themſelves ſlighted by their Brethren of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*; which they took the more heinouſly, becauſe they looked upon themſelves to be every way ſuperior to them, by the Bleſſing of *Jacob*.

That thou calledſt us not, when thou wenteſt to fight with the Midianites.] As he had done other meaner Tribes, (vi. 35.) who were not ſo able to aſſiſt him as themſelves.

And they did chide with him ſharply.] Spake very angry Words, as if they would have come to Blows.

Ver. 2. *And he ſaid, what have I done now in Compariſon with you?*] Proud Men love to be praiſed; and therefore he magnifies their Service as far ſurpaſſing his own.

Is not the Gleaning of the Grapes of Ephraim, better than the Vintage of Abiezer?] A common Proverb, I ſuppoſe, in thoſe Days, whereby they were wont to commend the ſmalleſt Action of one, as ſuperior to the greateſt of another: And here it is moſt fitly applied; for it is as if he had ſaid, Theſe ſcattered Parties that you have gleaned and picked up (as we now ſpeak) at the Fords of *Jordan*, are far more than thoſe which I and my whole Hoſt (as it is called, vii. 15.) have deſtroyed.

Ver. 3. GOD *hath delivered into your Hands the Princes of Midian, Oreb and Zeeb.*] Which he was content they ſhould think more conſiderable than all the common Men that he had vanquiſhed.

And what was I able to do in Compariſon with you?] To yield unto others the Glory which they affect, wonderfully appeaſes their higheſt Diſpleaſure.

Then their Anger was abated towards him, when he had ſaid that.] According to that of *Solomon*, *Prov.* xv. 1. This is an Argument of the ſingular Modeſty and Prudence of *Gideon*, and no leſs conſpicuous in him than his Courage; which is a Mixture that rarely meets together, but is abſolutely neceſſary to make a truly great Man; who never appears ſo great, as when he treats inſolent Men with Humility, and angry Men with Meekneſs.

Ver. 4. *And Gideon came to Jordan, and paſſed over.*] Or rather, *had paſſed over*; for he was gone over *Jordan* before *Oreb* and *Zeeb* were taken; but it is not related till now, that what concerned the *Ephraimites* might be told all together, without Interruption.

He and the three hundred Men that were with him.] Not one of which was loſt.

Faint, yet purſuing them.] Tired with a long March, and eager Purſuit; which notwithſtanding they continued, being more ſolicitous for the publick Safety than their own.

Ver. 5. *And he ſaid unto the Men of Succoth.*] A City in the Tribe of *Gad*, mentioned in *Gen.* xxxiii. 17. and other Places.

Give, I pray you, Loaves of Bread unto the People that follow me.] A ſmall Requeſt, conſidering their great Merits.

For they be faint, and I am purſuing after Zebah and Zalmunna.] He gives two Reaſons for his Requeſt; becauſe his Men were faint with a whole Night's Labour for the publick Safety, and he had not made his Victory ſo compleat as he hoped to do, if his Men were refreſhed and enabled to purſue the Enemy.

Kings of Midian.] It is no Wonder we read of more Kings than one in this Country, there being *Five* in *Moſes*'s Time, (*Numb.* xxxi. 8.) and more than Five times Five in *Canaan*, which was divided into many petty Kingdoms: And therefore if we take *Oreb* and *Zeeb* alſo to have been Kings, there is no Improbability in it.

Ver. 6. *And the Princes of Succoth ſaid.*] The Rulers and Governors of the City, who had the chief Authority among them; as *Oreb* and *Zeeb*

Zeeb had in the Army of *Midian*, for it is the very ſame Word in the *Hebrew*.

Are the Hands of Zebah and Zalmunna now in thy Hand, that we ſhould give Bread unto thy Army?] They bid him firſt take thoſe Kings Captives, and bring them thither with their Hands bound behind them, before he made any Demands of them. It is a bitter ſort of Taunt or Deriſion, ariſing from Irreligion; which made them think there was nothing of GOD in this Victory, and that he would not be able to perfect it.

Ver. 7. *And Gideon ſaid, Therefore when the* LORD *hath delivered Zebah and Zalmunna into my Hand.*] As he was confident he would.

Then will I tear your Fleſh with the Thorns of the Wilderneſs, and with Briers.] This City was near to a Wilderneſs, in which there were plenty of Thorns and Briers; with which he threatens to *threſh* their Fleſh, as the Word is in the *Hebrew*: Which ſome think ſignifies, that laying Briers and Thorns upon their naked Bodies, he intended to bring the Cart-wheel over them (as the Manner was of threſhing out their Corn) to faſten them deep in their Fleſh, and then cruſh them to Death: Such a Kind of Puniſhment *David* inflicted on the *Ammonites*, 2 *Sam.* xii. *ult.*

Ver. 8. *And he went up from thence.*] He would not ſtay to avenge this Repulſe at preſent, but ſacrificed his private Reſentment to the Publick Service, and therefore went on after the Enemy.

Unto Penuel.] Another City in the Tribe of *Gad*, not far from *Succoth*; unto both which *Jacob* gave their Name, *Gen.* xxxii. 30. xxxiii. 17.

And ſpake unto them likewiſe.] Deſired ſome Proviſion of them, for the ſame Reaſon.

And the Men of Penuel.] *i. e.* The principal Perſons of the City.

Anſwered him as the Men of Succoth had anſwered him.] It is very likely they were Idolaters; and therefore hated *Gideon*, who began to reform Religion: And, truſting to the Strength of their Tower, deſpiſed the ſmall Forces he had with him.

Ver. 9. *And he ſpake unto the Men of Penuel, ſaying, When I come again in Peace, I will break down this Tower.*] In which they confided; and perhaps pointed to it, when they gave him their rude Anſwer.

Ver. 10. *Now Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor.*] We read of this Place no where elſe; and therefore it is but a Conjecture that it was in the Confines of the Tribe of *Gad*, S. *Hierom* ſaith, There was a Caſtle in his Time called *Carcaria*, about a Day's Journey from the City *Petra*, and *Euſebius* ſaith the ſame.

And all the Hoſt with them.] That is, all the Troops or Regiments, as we now ſpeak, that fled with them.

About Fifteen Thouſand Men, all that were left of all the Hoſts of the Children of the Eaſt.] This moved thoſe of *Succoth* and *Penuel* to mock at *Gideon*; that he ſhould think with Three Hundred Men, and they fatigued, (as we now ſpeak) to vanquiſh Fifteen Thouſand, and that he ſhould make Demands to them, as if he had his Enemies already in his Power.

For there fell an Hundred and Twenty Thouſand Men that drew Sword.] Beſides all the People that attended their Baggage.

Ver. 11. *And Gideon went up by the Way of them that dwelt in Tents.*] He fetched a Compaſs, by the Country of the *Arabians* called *Scenitæ*, becauſe they dwelt in Tents: And ſo he came upon the Back of *Zebah* and *Zalmunna*; where they ſuſpected no Danger.

On the Eaſt of Nobah and Jogbehah.] Two Cities, the laſt of which is expreſly ſaid to be in the Tribe of *Gad*, Numb. xxxii. 35. and the former in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, on the Borders of *Gad*, as may be gathered from this Place.

And ſmote the Hoſt, for the Hoſt was ſecure.] He fell upon them, it is very probable, in the Night, as he had done upon their main Army at the firſt: And they having fled as faſt as they could the Day, and Part of the Night before, were gone to take their Reſt; ſuppoſing they had been out of all Danger of Diſturbance, now they were got ſo far from the Place of Battle.

Ver. 12. *And when Zebah and Zalmunna fled, he purſued after them.*] We read of no Refreſhment that he and his Men had all this time; but either they met with ſome by the Way, or GOD miraculouſly ſupported them.

And took the two Kings of Midian, Zebah and Zalmunna, and diſcomfited all the Hoſt.] Having routed their Army, the two Kings could make little Reſiſtance.

Ver. 13. *And Gideon the Son of Joaſh returned from the Battle before the Sun was up.*] The *Hebrew* Words *Milmahaleh Hacheres* are ſo variouſly tranſlated by very learned Men, that it hath made it uncertain whether he returned after Sunriſe, or a little before it ſet, (as *Kimchi* among the *Jews*, and *Mercer* among Chriſtians underſtand it) or, as our Tranſlation, before Sunriſe: So the *Vulgar*, with *Junius* and *Tremellius*, and others. And then it ſhews, both that *Gideon* had ſmote the Army in the Night, and that he made ſuch Haſte to return, that he came to *Succoth* before they were aware, by break of Day.

Ver. 14. *And caught a young Man of the Men of Succoth, and enquired of him.*] Surprized him in the Field, and examined him who were the principal Men of the City.

And he deſcribed to him the Princes of Succoth, and the Elders thereof, even threeſcore and ſeventeen Men.] He wrote down (as the *Hebrew* Word for *deſcribe* ſignifies) the Names, and, perhaps, the Dwellings of the great Men of the City, and of the Judges; who were the Perſons that derided him, and whom alone he intended to puniſh; not all the People, who were not in the Guilt.

Ver. 15. *And he came unto the Men of Succoth.*] Got into the City very early; and called thoſe Men before him, who had put the late Affront upon him.

And

And ſaid, Behold Zebah and Zalmunna, with whom you upbraided me.] He kept theſe two Kings alive on purpoſe that the Princes of *Succoth* might ſee the LORD had delivered them into his Hand; and made their Jeers turn to their own Shame.

Saying, Are the Hands of Zebah and Zalmunna in thy Hand, that we ſhould give Bread unto thy Men that are weary?] He repeats their own Words to them (*Ver.* 6.) that he might reproach them with their inhuman Uſage of him; when he was in Diſtreſs, and had done ſuch Wonders for their Preſervation.

Ver. 16. *And he took the Elders of the City.*] Under this Name of *Elders*, all their great Men are comprehended.

And Thorns of the Wilderneſs and Briers.] Which he had ready at Hand.

And with them he taught the Men of Succoth.] He threſhed or tare them (as he threatened, *Ver.* 7. and as ſome Copies here have it) and by this ſevere Correction, taught them better Manners, and more Wiſdom. It is not ſaid that he tormented them till they expired, (as ſome think he did, ſee *Ver.* 7.) for then it would have been as plainly ſaid, as it is in the next Verſe of the Men of *Penuel.*

Ver. 17. *And he beat down the Tower of Penuel, and ſlew the Men of the City.*] It is not ſaid the *Princes* and *Elders*, and therefore this looks as if the whole City had been guilty of the Affront put upon him, and conſequently puniſhed by him. But the *Men of the City* in this Story hath ſignified only the principal Perſons in it, as I interpreted *Ver.* 8. See *Ver.* 15, 16. and therefore it is probable no other Men are here meant, who fled into the Tower, perhaps, for Safety, (knowing their own Guilt, and the Danger they were in of ſuffering for it) and were there ſlain.

Ver. 18. *Then ſaid he unto Zebah and Zalmunna, What manner of Men were they, whom ye ſlew at Tabor?*] Where *Gideon* brought them before him to be judged, is uncertain: And when it was that they ſlew ſome *Iſraelites* at *Tabor*, we can but gueſs. It is probable he brought them out to receive their Sentence, after he came Home: And that ſome who hid themſelves in Dens and Caves which were in the Mountains, (vi. 2.) being found out, were ſlain by the *Midianites.* And *Gideon*'s Brethren being miſſing, he deſired to find out, whether they were the Perſons whom they ſlew.

And they anſwered, As thou art, ſo were they.] They were very like him, and perhaps reſembled him in their Countenance; as Brethren frequently do one another.

Every one reſembled the Children of a King.] By this it appears, that *Gideon* was of a goodly Preſence; carrying Greatneſs and Majeſty in his Aſpect: And that Kings took Care in thoſe Days to match only with graceful Perſons; by whom they might hope to have Children like to themſelves.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaid, They were my Brethren, even the Sons of my Mother.*] Though, perhaps, not by the ſame Father.

As the LORD *liveth, if he had ſpared them alive.*] As generous Men are wont to do comely and graceful Perſons; who look like Men of Quality, as we now ſpeak.

I would not ſlay you.] For not being of the Race of *Canaan*, he was not bound by the Law to cut them off.

Ver. 20. *And he ſaid unto Jether his Firſt-born, Up and ſlay them.*] It was not unuſual for great Perſons to do Execution upon Offenders in antient Times; no more than it unbecame them to ſentence them Death: And therefore they had not, as now, ſuch as the *Romans* called *Carnifices*, publick Executioners; but *Saul* had ſuch as waited on him kill the Prieſts; and *Doeg*, one of his great Officers, did it, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 17, 18. And *Samuel* himſelf is ſaid to have hewed *Agag* to pieces in *Gilgal*; and *Benaiah*, the General of the Army, to have fallen upon *Joab* at the Horns of the Altar. Accordingly *Gideon* would have had his Son do this Execution, that he might be early animated againſt the Enemies of *Iſrael*; as *Hannibal* is reported, when he was a Boy, to have been incenſed againſt the *Romans.*

But the Youth drew not his Sword; for he feared, becauſe he was yet a Youth.] They were Men, it is likely, of great Stature, and of a fierce and ſtern Countenance, who (as appears by the Story) feared not Death; which made the Youth afraid even to look upon them.

Ver. 21. *Then Zebah and Zalmunna ſaid, Ariſe thou, and fall upon us, for as the Man is, ſo is his Strength.*] They thought it more honourable to die by the Hand of *Gideon*, who was a Man of as great Strength, as Dignity; and would ſooner diſpatch them, than a Strippling could do.

And Gideon aroſe, and ſlew Zebah and Zalmunna, and took away the Ornaments that were about their Camels Necks.] As well as all the Ornaments, which they wore themſelves. The Word *Saharonim*, is found no where but here, and *Ver.* 26. and in *Iſaiah* iii. 18. where we tranſlate it *round Tires like the Moon.* So our Margin alſo in this Place, *Ornaments like the Moon*; following the LXX, who tranſlate it μηνίσκους, *little Moons.* So antient was this Cuſtom of wearing Ornaments of this Figure; which was ſpread afterward over many Nations. *Huetius* thinks it came originally from the *Phœnicians*, who were the Worſhippers of *Aſtarte*, *i. e.* the Moon, and went from them to the *Arabians*, who were very antiently devoted to the Moon, who propagated it to the *Turks*; and the *Brachmans* alſo are wont to adorn their Heads in the ſame Figure; as he obſerves in his *Demonſtr. Evangel. Propoſ.* iv. p. 197.

Ver. 22. *Then the Men of Iſrael ſaid unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou and thy Son, and thy Son's Son alſo.*] They would have made his Dominion over them, Hereditary.

For thou haſt delivered us from the Hand of Midian.] They pretended to make this Offer, out of Gratitude to him; but in Truth, they were diſpoſed now (as their Poſterity were afterward) to throw off the Divine Government; being deſirous to ſet a King over themſelves, like the reſt of the Nations round about them. And now they thought was a fit Opportunity; when ſuch an extraordinary Judge was raiſed

up, as had done Wonders beyond all his Predeceſſors; and might, they thought, be ambitious enough to eſtabliſh the ſupreme Authority in his Family.

Ver. 23. *But Gideon ſaid, I will not rule over you, neither ſhall my Son rule over you.*] He abſolutely rejected their Offer; becauſe he looked upon GOD as their King, who appointed what Deputy he pleaſed to rule them: And therefore he accounted this to be an Attempt to alter the Government of GOD, without aſking his Conſent.

The LORD *ſhall rule over you.*] As he hath done hitherto. This ſhews, that theſe two could not conſiſt together; a ſucceſſive Dominion of Kings, and ſuch Governors as they now had by the divine Appointment. Such a one was *Gideon*, raiſed up by GOD when they needed a Deliverer; and therefore he durſt not accept of the Authority they offered him, becauſe it was a thing ſacred, and proper only to the divine Majeſty to order who ſhould govern: Whence it is, that the Judgment which was adminiſtred among that People, was called GOD's *Judgment*, *Deut.* i. 17. and *Solomon* is ſaid to ſit upon *the Throne of the* LORD, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 23. and the Kingdom of his Poſterity is called *the Kingdom of the* LORD, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 8. becauſe, before Kings were ſettled in *Iſrael*, the LORD was their King; from whom the Government was derived to the Houſe of *David* by a ſpecial Act of God.

Ver. 24. *And Gideon ſaid unto them, I would deſire a Requeſt of you.*] Which he thought, after ſuch a great Offer from them, they would not deny him.

That ye would give me every Man the Ear-rings of his Prey.] He doth not aſk all the Ear-rings they had got; but from every Man one, or as many as he pleaſed.

For they had golden Ear-rings, becauſe they were Iſhmaelites.] The *Chaldee* Paraphraſt well expreſſes it, *becauſe they were Arabians*, who are called the *Children of the Eaſt*, vi. 3. and generally wore ſuch Ornaments, as I obſerved upon *Exod.* xxxii. 2. *Iſhmaelites* alſo, and *Midianites* were ſo near Neighbours, and ſo mixed together, that the Scripture ſpeaks of them as one People. See upon *Gen.* xxxvii. 28.

Ver. 25. *And they anſwered, We will willingly give them; and they ſpread a Garment, and did caſt therein every Man the Ear-rings of his Prey.*] They made no difficulty to grant his Requeſt; but, as we ſpeak, no ſooner ſaid than done.

Ver. 26. *And the Weight of the Golden Ear-rings that he requeſted, was a thouſand and ſeven hundred Shekels of Gold.*] It is eaſy to compute what this makes of our Money, by conſidering the Value of a Shekel, and the Proportion that Silver holds to Gold. Of which ſee the very learned Treatiſe of the Biſhop of *Peterborough*, concerning *Scripture Weights and Meaſures*, Chap. 4.

Beſide Ornaments.] Of which ſee above, *Ver.* 21.

And the Collars.] The *Hebrew* Word *Hanetiphoth*, is thought to ſignify little Pots of precious Ointments. For *Neteph* ſignifies a *Drop* or a *Tear*; the moſt precious of which is Balſam. Among the Spoils of *Darius* (as *Arias Montanus* obſerves) Hiſtorians mention Boxes of Ointments ſet with precious Stones, and curiouſly wrought with elegant Art.

And Purple Raiment that was on the Kings of Midian.] Who were diſtinguiſhed from other Men, as Kings are now, by Robes peculiar to them.

And beſide the Chains that were upon their Camels Necks.] All theſe, I take it, fell to *Gideon's* Share, by the Cuſtom of War, without aſking. For it was the ancient Manner, as *Grotius* obſerves, to give the Commander in Chief the beſt of the Spoils they had taken.

Ver. 27. *And Gideon made an Ephod thereof.*] He would not have them think that he requeſted the Ear-rings, for his own private Gain; but to employ them religiouſly in the Service of GOD, by making a Monument of his Victory, as obtained ſolely by the miraculous Mercy of GOD, for the reſtoring of his true Religion among them. It is commonly ſaid, That ſo much Gold could not be laid out upon an *Ephod*, and therefore ſome take this for a ſhort Expreſſion, to ſignify the Breaſt-Plate, with the *Urim and Thummim*; that he (being now ſupreme Governor) might conſult GOD at his own Houſe, in ſuch Difficulties as might occur: And they think it probable that he made alſo a private Tabernacle with Cherubims: For how elſe could he employ ſuch a Quantity of Gold? An *Ephod* being only fine Linnen embroidered with it, *&c.* which would not coſt much. See *Exod.* xxviii. 6. *Theodoret* and St. *Auſtin* ſeem to incline to this Opinion; for which I refer the Reader to our Dr. *Spencer* in his moſt learned Work, *de Leg. & Rit. Hebr.* P. 881. But I do not ſee how *Gideon* can be excuſed from Apoſtacy from GOD, if he ſet up an Oracle in his own Houſe; nor was there any need of it, *Shiloh* being not far from him, in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, which adjoined to this of *Manaſſeh*. Therefore I take this *Ephod* to have been only a Monument of his Victory, and of GOD's great Mercy, which Conquerors were wont to erect: But he would not follow the common Cuſtom in erecting a Pillar, and hanging up Trophies, or any thing of that Nature; but choſe to make an *Ephod*, as a Token that he aſcribed his Victory only to GOD, and triumphed in nothing, but only in the Reſtoration of the true Religion by his means. As for the Gold that was laid out upon it, the Reader may obſerve, that it is ſaid *he made an Ephod thereof*, that is, out of this Offering; but not that it was all ſpent in this.

And put it in his City, even in Ophrah.] This is to be well noted; becauſe I think it ſhews that *Gideon* did not make this, that he might have reſort to GOD thereby on all Occaſions at home; for he went and dwelt at another Place, *Ver.* 29. It was kept here therefore as a Monument of GOD's appearing to him, and of the Sacrifice the Angel here offered, and of all the Wonders that followed, by the Power of GOD who dwelt in the Sanctuary. There are thoſe who think, that becauſe GOD bad *Gideon* build an Altar, and offer his Father's ſecond Bullock

in *Ophrah*, vi. 26. he thence concluded, he might take upon him to have Prieſtly Garments made, and the High Prieſt came to miniſter at *Ophrah* upon extraordinary Occaſions. But he underſtood Religion better than to make ſuch Concluſions, unleſs he had received a divine Command for this, as he did for the building of an Altar.

And all Iſrael went thither a whoring after it.] This, I ſuppoſe, was after his Death, when the People began to return to Idolatry; and had this Fancy, among others, that GOD would anſwer them here where this *Ephod* was, as well as at his Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, where he dwelt.

Which Thing became a Snare unto Gideon and his Houſe.] Occaſioned the Ruin of him, and of his Family. For tho' they periſhed after his Death, yet he may be ſaid to have ſuffered with them, becauſe his Name and Memory, which is preſerved in Mens Poſterity, was in a manner extinct in *Iſrael*.

Ver. 28. *Thus was Midian ſubdued before the Children of Iſrael, ſo that they lifted up their Heads no more.*] To oppreſs the *Iſraelites*; or, perhaps, to diſturb any of their Neighbours.

And the Country was in Quietneſs forty Years, in the Days of Gideon.] The Country was in Quiet in the fortieth Year after the former Reſt reſtored to it by *Deborah* and *Barak*, as our Primate *Uſher* underſtands it, in his *Annals ad A. M.* 2759. and in his *Chronologia Sacra*, *Pars* 1. *Cap.* xiii. where, in more Words, he thus interprets it: *In the fortieth Year after the Reſt reſtored by Deborah and Barak, the Land began to reſt again in the Days of Gideon, after he had ſubdued the Midianites, who had oppreſſed them ſeven Years.* But the plaineſt Account is, that after ſeven Years Oppreſſion by the *Midianites*, the Country was in Peace forty Years in the Days of *Gideon*, who was their Deliverer; and died, as we read *Ver.* 32. in a good old Age.

Ver. 29. *And Jerubbaal the Son of Joaſh went and dwelt in his own Houſe.*] Having refuſed to be a King, and diſmiſſed his Army, he went from *Ophrah*, (as I underſtand it) and lived not ſo publickly as he had done, but in a private Houſe of his own in the Country.

Ver. 30. *And Gideon had threeſcore and ten Sons, of his Body begotten.*] Theſe laſt Words are added to ſhew, that they were none of them adopted Sons.

For he had many Wives.] According to the Manner of thoſe Times. And this is ſaid to leſſen the Wonder of having ſo many Children; many Women bringing two or three at a Birth, and one Woman having had above twenty Children by one Man.

Ver. 31. *And his Concubine.*] The Difference between a Wife and a Concubine hath been often noted. Their Wives adminiſtred the Affairs of the Family, the Concubines meddled not with them; but, as the Word ſignifies, were only admitted to their Beds: And their Children did not inherit, though they were married to them; for they were not Harlots, but a ſecondary Sort of Wives.

That was in Shechem.] A famous City in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, adjoining to that of *Manaſſeh*; where going frequently to judge the People, he took a Wife of this Sort, who lived conſtantly with her Father in this City, and not in *Gideon*'s Family.

She alſo bare him a Son.] Beſides the Seventy before-mentioned, as *Joſephus* underſtands it.

Whoſe Name was Abimelech.] His Name is here ſet down, when nothing is ſaid of the Names of the reſt, becauſe the following Story depends upon it. And perhaps his Mother gave him this Name (ſignifying, *My Father a King*) out of Pride and Arrogance; that ſhe might be looked upon as the Wife of one who was thought to deſerve a Kingdom, tho' he did not accept it: Which afterwards, it's likely, inflamed the Mind of this Son to affect the Royal Dignity.

Ver. 32. *And Gideon the Son of Joaſh died in a good old Age.*] This is a Phraſe often uſed in Scripture, to ſignify that ſuch Perſons lived long, and in great Proſperity and Happineſs.

And was buried in the Sepulchre of Joaſh his Father, in Ophrah of the Abiezrites.] Which was accounted a great Bleſſing in thoſe Days.

Ver. 33. *And it came to paſs, as ſoon as Gideon was dead, that the Children of Iſrael turned again.*] He preſerved them, it ſeems, in the true Religion while he lived; but they had no great Affection to it, it appears, by their revolting from it as ſoon as he was dead.

And went a whoring after Baalim.] This ſeems to have been a general Name of all the Gods which they worſhipped; particularly of *Dæmons*; which were all called *Baalim* from the firſt *Dæmon*, or deified King in the World, *Belus* or *Baal*, as Mr. *Mede* thinks, Book 3. P. 777.

And made Baal-berith their God.] They worſhipped a new God, which was not known to them before, nor ever mentioned but here, and in the next Chapter: Who was reputed, as ſome think, the God that puniſhed thoſe who broke their Covenants and Contracts; or, as others, was ſo called, becauſe his Servants covenanted to maintain his Worſhip and Service. But *Bochartus*, by a more probable Conjecture, interprets it, *Baal of Berith*, i. e. of *Berytus*. That *Baal* which was worſhipped in that famous City, which had its Name from *Beroe*, the Daughter of *Venus* and *Adonis*, who was there worſhiped, as *Nonnus* tells us. This he takes to be the *Baal* here mentioned; for *Baal* is of the Feminine Gender, as well as of the Maſculine, as appears from St. *Paul*, *Rom.* xi. 4. and many Places of the LXX, which *Bochartus* mentions Lib. 2. *Canaan*, Cap. 17.

Ver. 34. *And the Children of Iſrael remembred not the* LORD *their* GOD, *who had delivered them out of the Hands of all their Enemies on every Side.*] Out of the Hand of the King of *Meſopotamia*, and then of the *Moabites*, and after that of the *Canaanites*, and now lately of the *Midianites*, and the Children of the Eaſt.

Ver. 35. *Neither ſhewed they Kindneſs to the Houſe of Jerubbaal, namely Gideon.*] No wonder they were ſo ungrateful to his Family, when they were ſo forgetful of God: The Fear of whom is the Foundation of all Virtue.

According to all the Goodneſs which he had ſhewn unto Iſrael.] In hazarding his Life freely, and working for them a glorious Deliverance; and in leaving them in their Liberty, by refuſing the deſpotick Power, which they offered to put into his Hands; in governing them ſo prudently many Years, that he left them in Peace, and in the Poſſeſſion of God's true Religion, when he died.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND Abimelech the Son of Jerubbaal went.*] From his Father's Houſe, where it is likely he was educated.

Unto Shechem.] The Place of his Nativity.

Unto his Mother's Brethren.] Tho' the Word *Brethren* have many times a large Signification, yet it is reaſonable here to underſtand it properly, of his Uncles by the Mother's Side; for his other near Kindred are mentioned in the Words following.

And communed with them, and with all the Family of the Houſe of his Mother's Father, ſaying.] Diſcourſed with them, and with all the reſt of his Couſins, and his near Kinſmen, deſcended from his Grandfather.

Ver. 2. *Speak I pray you in the Ears of all the Men of Shechem.*] By the *Men* of this City are to be underſtood, the chief Perſons of Authority in it, as in the foregoing Chapter the *Men of Succoth* ſignify the Princes and Elders of that Place.

Whether is better for you, either that all the Sons of Jerubbaal (which are threeſcore and ten Perſons) reign over you, or that one reign over you?] He wickedly ſuppoſed that the Sons of *Jerubbaal* were ambitious of the Kingdom which their Father refuſed; and therefore prays them to conſider, what horrible Diviſions and Confuſion it would make, if ſo many were permitted to pretend to the Government; and how much better it would be to chuſe one of them from among the reſt; pointing then (in the next Words) to himſelf. He uſes the Argument of *Homer*, mentioned by *Ariſtotle*, ἐχ' ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, *&c.* It is better to be ſubject to the Rule of one Man, than of many.

Remember alſo that I am your Bone, and your Fleſh.] Since there muſt be a King, he repreſents himſelf, as the moſt deſirable to them of all other ſingle Perſons, he being of the ſame Tribe, and their Fellow Citizen.

Ver. 3. *And his Mother's Brethren ſpake of him in the Ears of the Men of Shechem, all theſe Words.*] They were ready enough to promote his Deſign, hoping for Preferment under him. But neither he nor they conſidered, that it did not belong to them to ſet a Judge over the People, much leſs a King, which was to ſhake off the Government of God.

And their Hearts inclined to follow Abimelech, for they ſaid, He is our Brother.] This Conſideration of their Intereſt in him, prevailed with them againſt the cleareſt Reaſon. For if it had been in any Perſon's Power to appoint a King, but GOD alone, the Men of *Shechem* had it not in them, but all the Men of *Iſrael* ought to have been conſulted.

Ver. 4. *And they gave him threeſcore and ten Pieces of Silver out of the Houſe of Baal-berith.*] Out of the publick Treaſury, which was in this Temple. It is uncertain what is meant by *Pieces of Silver*; but, in all Probability, more than *Shekels*; for they would have been but a ſmall Preſent to make a Man a Prince. Therefore the Vulgar tranſlate it ſo many Pound Weight of Silver, which learned Men approve of, particularly *Staniſlaus Grepſius*, in his Book *de Siclo & Talento.* For ſeventy *Shekels* was too little for his Occaſions; and ſo many *Talents* too much for them to give. And thus *Joſephus* interprets *Gen.* xxxvii. 28. where it is ſaid, *Joſeph* was ſold to the *Iſhmaelites* for twenty Pieces of Silver; that is, for ſo many Pound Weight of it.

Wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light Perſons.] The *Hebrew* Word *Rekim*, which we tranſlate *vain*, ſignifies *empty*; that is, poor and needy Perſons: And the other Word *Pochazim*, idle, vagabond Fellows, that could ſettle to no Buſineſs, but wandred about the Country; who being commonly Men of looſe Lives, were fitteſt for his Purpoſe. Therefore *Kimchi* underſtands by them, *light-headed Perſons*, (as we ſpeak) who have no ſettled Principles, but are diſpoſed to do any thing, tho' never ſo wicked. Such *Zephaniah* ſaith the Prophets in his Time were, iii. 4. *light and treacherous.*

Which followed him.] As a conſtant Guard to him.

Ver. 5. *And he went into his Father's Houſe at Ophrah.*] With this wicked Crew to attend him; who, I ſuppoſe, beſet the Houſe, that none might eſcape out of it. I ſuppoſed that he had a Houſe in the Country, viii. 29. for I could not ſee with what Propriety he could be ſaid to go and dwell in his Houſe at *Ophrah*, in which he had always lived. But this was the Houſe of the Family, where all his Children lived.

And ſlew his Brethren the Sons of Jerubbaal, being threeſcore and ten Perſons.] All of them, except *Jotham.* Thus *Romulus* ſlew his Brother *Remus*, as *Tully* obſerves, (Lib. 3. *de Officiis*) *Specie quadam utilitatis*, under the ſpecious Pretence of the publick Good; that the Kingdom would be governed more happily by one, than by two Perſons.

Upon one Stone.] Some underſtand this, as if he intended to make them a great Victim to *Baal*; for a *Stone* was ſometimes uſed for an Altar, 1 *Sam.* vi. 14, 15. And ſo they take this to have been done in Revenge of the Sacrifice of the Bullock prepared for *Baal* upon the Rock, (vi. 25, 26.) which Crime of *Gideon*, as theſe Idolaters accounted it, they deſigned to expiate by the Sacrifice of all his Sons that they could lay hold on. For that the Men of *Shechem* joined in this impious Slaughter, is manifeſt from *Ver.* 18. and 24. of this Chapter.

Notwithſtanding, yet Jotham, the youngeſt Son of Jerubbaal, was left; for he hid himſelf.]

Either he had ſome Notice of their Intention, and ſaved himſelf by Flight, or when they came to ſeize them, got into ſome ſecret Place in the Houſe, where they could not find him; or, by ſome that pitied his Youth, he was preſerved from falling into their Hands. So the LXX. and the *Vulgar* tranſlate it, *He was hid.*

Ver. 6. *And all the Men of Shechem gathered themſelves together, and all the Houſe of Millo.*] None ſeem to have underſtood theſe Words better than *Corn. Bertram*, in his little Book *de Republ. Jud.* Cap. 9. Where by *Col-baale Shechem*, he underſtands all the principal Men or Lords of that City; *Principes Civitatis*, the Princes of the City, by whom it was governed: And by *Col-beth Millo*, All the Citizens, who in a full Aſſembly (for *Millo* ſignifies *Fulneſs*) agreed upon what follows: And ſo we read in the next Chapter, x. 18. that the *People and Princes of Gilead* conſulted together, who ſhould fight for them; that is, All the Citizens met together, with their Elders, (as theſe *Princes* are called, xi. 5.) to adviſe about this Matter: For when the *Canaanites*, and other People, ruled over the *Iſraelites* and oppreſſed them, they contented themſelves with ſetting ſuch a Power over them, as ſhould make them pay what Tribute they impoſed, and other Taxes; but left them to their own Government and Laws, as appears from viii. 14. where we read of the Elders of *Succoth* in the Time of the *Midianites*.

And went.] To the Place where they were wont to meet for publick Buſineſs.

And made Abimelech King.] Voted him their King in full Senate.

In the Plain of the Pillar that was in Shechem.] Or the *Oak* (as St. *Hierom* commonly tranſlates this Word *Elon*) where *Joſhua* ſet up a Pillar as a Token of the Covenant between God and them, *Joſh.* xxiv. 26. That is, in a very remarkable Place, as the Manner was to do ſuch Things: But here, I ſuppoſe, they proclaimed him King, after they had choſen him in the common Hall of the City: And ſome think they intended hereby to declare, that they would not forſake the Worſhip of God, to which they were engaged, but only to join the Worſhip of *Baal* with him: But ſee what I have noted of this Pillar, *Deut.* xxvii. 13. And after all it muſt be confeſſed, that the *Hebrew* Word *Mutzab* doth not certainly ſignify a *Pillar*; for I cannot find it ſo uſed in any other Place of Scripture: And therefore St. *Hierom* tranſlates this Paſſage thus, *By the Oak which ſtood in Shechem*, and the LXX. ἐν βαλάνῳ τῆς ϛάσεως, which ſeems to ſignify as if it was the Place where they had their Stations, or ſolemn Aſſemblies. See Mr. *Mede*'s Diſcourſe xviii.

Ver. 7. *And when they told it Jotham.*] Who had ſome Friends among them, that took care to inform him of what paſſed: But it is an amazing thing, that in all *Iſrael* there ſhould none be found, to revenge the Murder of this noble Family: Of which no Account can be given, but that, with the Senſe of God and Religion, they had loſt all Goodneſs and Virtue. See viii. 34, 35.

He went.] From the Place where he lay hid.

And ſtood on the Top of Mount Gerezim.] Which overlooked the City of *Shechem*. See *Deut.* xxvii. 12, 13.

And lift up his Voice, and cried and ſaid unto them.] This was not on the ſame Day that *Abimelech* was inaugurated, but ſome Time after; when he, it is probable, was abſent, and all the People met (as *Joſephus* ſaith) at a publick Feſtival; which was a fair Opportunity for him to declare his Mind to them.

Hearken unto me, ye Men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.] It is a Form of Adjuration, whereby he not only intreats, but obliges them to be as attentive to him, as they deſired God would be to their Requeſts.

Ver. 8. *The Trees went forth on a Time.*] By this it appears, that ſuch Fictions as theſe, wherein the moſt ſerious Truths are repreſented, were in uſe among the *Jews* (as they are ſtill in the Eaſtern Countries) long before the Time of *Æſop*, or any other Author that we know of. And they made Choice of them for two Reaſons; becauſe Men would ſuffer themſelves to be reprehended this Way, when they would not endure plain Words; and they heard them alſo with Delight and Pleaſure, and more eaſily remembred them than a rational Diſcourſe. So *A. Gellius* obſerves of *Æſop*'s Fables, that they ſlid into the Mind and Affections of Men, *cum audiendi quadam illecebra*, with a certain Enticement to hear them, Lib. 2. Cap. 29.

To anoint a King over them.] This was two hundred Years (as Mr. *Selden* obſerves in his *Titles of Honour*) before the firſt Kings of *Iſrael* (*Saul* and *David*) were anointed. Which ſhews the great Antiquity of this Cuſtom; and that it was the ſame to anoint a Perſon, and to declare him King.

And they ſaid unto the Olive Tree, Reign thou over us.] By this they would eaſily apprehend he meant his Father *Gideon*; to whom all the *Iſraelites* had offered the Kingdom, when he was in a moſt flouriſhing Condition, and had newly triumphed over their Enemies.

Ver. 9. *But the Olive Tree ſaid unto them.*] In this Reply he repreſents his Refuſal of the Offer, and the Reaſon of it.

Shall I leave my Fatneſs, wherewith by me they honour God and Man.] He makes the Trees ſpeak after the Manner of Men; who, when they are in a plentiful Condition, and live at Eaſe, are not willing to take upon themſelves a great deal of Care and Trouble, eſpecially when they think themſelves to have Honour enough already; as *Gideon* had, in being ſuch a glorious Conqueror over mighty Enemies. God and Man are ſaid to be honoured by Oil, becauſe it was offered in Sacrifice to God, and fed the Lamps of his Houſe; and Prieſts were wont to be anointed with it among Men. See *Levit.* ii. 1, 4. *Numb.* xv. 4, 6, *&c.*

And go to be promoted among the Trees?] This is a moſt lively Repreſentation of the Duty of

a

a good Man; who, for the publick Good, denies his own Quiet and Tranquillity. For the *Hebrew* Word we tranſlate *promote*, ſignifies (as is noted in the Margin) Action and Agitation to and fro; ſhewing how a Man muſt beſtir himſelf who executes the Kingly Office; and what Solicitude and continual Carefulneſs is the Concomitant of Authority, when it is duly adminiſtred.

Ver. 10. *And the Trees ſaid unto the Fig-Tree, Come thou, and reign over us.*] He intends to repreſent the ſame Mind to be in all *Gideon*'s Sons, that was in their Father: For as *Gideon* refuſed the Kingdom himſelf, ſo he did for his Poſterity, ſaying, *I will not rule over you, neither ſhall my Son, or my Son's Son* (i. e. any of mine) *rule over you*, viii. 23. Therefore *Abimelech* had moſt vilely ſlandered them, in ſuggeſting, that they affected a Regal Power over the People.

Ver. 11. *But the Fig-Tree ſaid unto them, Shall I forſake my Sweetneſs, and my good Fruit, and go to be promoted over the Trees?*] No Fruit is more luſcious than a Fig, which makes this an apt Repreſentation of the ſweet Content, or rather full Pleaſure, that may be enjoyed in a private Life; which it would be Folly to exchange for the Troubles and Cares which Men meet withal in the Managery of publick Affairs, if they be not drawn to it purely out of Love to the publick Good.

Ver. 12. *Then ſaid the Trees unto the Vine, Come thou, and reign over us.*] All theſe are noble Trees; ſetting forth the ſame thing, that better Men than *Abimelech* had refuſed that of which he was ambitious.

Ver. 13. *And the Vine ſaid unto them, Shall I leave my Wine, which cheareth* God *and Man, and go to be promoted over the Trees?*] The ſame Thing is repeated, for the fuller Illuſtration of the Thing intended, according to the Manner of all ſuch Ways of Speech: For *A. Gellius*, in the Place before named, makes the Birds among the Corn, when it was to be reaped, ſay the ſame Thing more than once to their Dam, before ſhe bad them be gone. As for Wine *chearing* God *and Man*, it is a Form of Speech imitated by the Heathen, particularly by *Virgil*, *Lib.* II. *Georg. Ver.* 101. where ſpeaking of noble Vines, or Wine, he ſaith, they were——— *Menſis & Diis accepta ſecundis.* For Wine, as the *Hebrew* Doctors note, was not only uſed in their Sacrifices, as it was alſo among the Heathen; but *Jarchi* ſaith, Till the Drink Offering was poured out, they did not begin the Hymn that was then ſung to God. See upon *Numb.* xv. 5.

Ver. 14. *Then ſaid all the Trees unto the Bramble*, &c.] The meaneſt of all Trees, good for nothing but to be burnt, aptly repreſenting *Abimelech*, from whom they could receive no Benefit, but much Trouble and Vexation from his ambitious Cruelty.

Ver. 15. *And the Bramble ſaid unto them, If in Truth ye anoint me King over you.*] This well ſets forth *Abimelech*'s Diſtruſt of the Sincerity of the *Shechemites*; for which he had great Reaſon, having no Title to the Kingdom, but the great Atchievements of his Father, and he the baſeſt of all his Sons.

Then come and put your Truſt in my Shadow.] Be aſſured of my Protection, if you live quietly under my Government. This repreſents how ridiculous *Abimelech* was, in imagining, that he ſhould be able to maintain the Authority of a King; for a Bramble doth not ſpread itſelf ſo as to afford any Shelter or Shadow, it being a kind of a Thorn, which the *Hebrews* call *Atad*. From whence, as *Avenarius* obſerves, came the Word *Aphris* among the *Greeks*, and *Dioſcorides*, the Word ἀτραδίμ. And from hence he thinks was derived the Word ἀτάω, and ἀτάζω, which ſignify to wound, as a Thorn doth when it pricks.

And if not, let Fire come out of the Bramble.] It is a Wood that eaſily catches Fire, as *Forſterus* obſerves out of *Joſephus*, Lib. V. Antiq. Cap. 11.

And devour the Cedars of Lebanon.] This repreſents the Vengeance *Abimelech* would take of the greateſt of them, if they proved unfaithful to him.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore.*] Here follows *Jotham*'s Application of this *Apologue*, as the *Greeks* call it, unto his Purpoſe.

If ye have done truly and ſincerely in that ye have made Abimelech King.] If his Preferment was a righteous Act.

And ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his Houſe, and have done unto him according to the deſerving of his Hand.] And if they had requited *Gideon* and his Family, according to his Merits, which were exceeding great.

Ver. 17. *For my Father fought for you, and adventured his Life far.*] Put it in great Hazard.

And delivered you out of the Hand of Midian.] When they were ſorely oppreſſed by them, and could not help themſelves.

Ver. 18. *And ye are riſen up againſt my Father's Houſe this Day.*] This ſhews, the Men of *Shechem* conſented to the Murder, and aſſiſted *Abimelech* in it.

And have ſlain his Sons, Threeſcore and Ten Perſons.] For they intended the Slaughter of *Jotham*, as much as of the reſt, if he could have been found.

Upon one Stone, and have made Abimelech, the Son of his Maid Servant.] For Concubines were often put to do the Work of the Houſe.

King over the Men of Shechem:] who could not pretend to make him King over all *Iſrael*: No, nor over the whole Tribe of *Ephraim*, but only of their City and Territory.

Becauſe he is your Brother.] Without any Title to it, but becauſe he was a Native of their City.

Ver. 19. *If you have done truly and ſincerely.*] Like honeſt and upright Men.

With Jerubbaal and his Houſe this Day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him rejoice in you.] He wiſhes they may be happy in one another.

Ver. 20. *But if not, let Fire come from Abimelech, and devour the Men of Shechem, and the Houſe of Millo.*] This is not a Prediction, but

but an Execration or Curſe, as appears from the Oppoſition to the foregoing Wiſh, and from *Ver.* 57. where it is called *Jotham*'s Curſe. Which was not cauſeleſs, but like that of *Joſhua*'s (*Joſh.* vi. 26.) which was fulfilled, as this was. Not by Fire properly ſo called, breaking forth from *Abimelech*, but by his Rage and furious Revenge, which is fitly compared to Fire, in Alluſion to what is ſaid of the Bramble, *Ver.* 15.

And let Fire come out from the Men of Shechem, and from the Houſe of Millo, and devour Abimelech.] He wiſhes they may mutually deſtroy each other, which came to paſs by the righteous Judgment of GOD, who hears the Cries of the Oppreſſed.

Ver. 21. *And Jotham ran away and fled.*] As he might eaſily do, I have ſhewn upon *Deut.* xxvii. 13. The firſt Word ſignifies, he made what Haſte he could away, as ſoon as he had done ſpeaking; and the ſecond, that he ſtopped not, till he had got to a Place of Safety.

And went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his Brother.] It is not certain where this Place was, whether in the Land of *Iſrael*, or out of it. It is probable, that it was in the Tribe of *Judah*, about eight Miles from *Eleutheropolis*, as both *Euſebius* and S. *Hierom* affirm.

Ver. 22. *When Abimelech had reigned Three Years over Iſrael.*] It is not ſaid, Over *all Iſrael*, who, it cannot be thought, would ſubmit to the ambitious Tyranny of ſo cruel a Man as *Abimelech* was. And if *Beer* was in the Tribe of *Judah*, we may be ſure they did not own him for their King; for then *Jotham* could not have dwelt in Safety there. The Meaning therefore is, That he called himſelf King of *Iſrael*, and reigned over a great Part of them, who were ſo deſirous of a King (it appears by their Offer made to *Gideon*) that they were content with him, rather than have none at all.

Ver. 23. *And* GOD *ſent an evil Spirit between Abimelech, and the Men of Shechem.*] At the three Years End, I ſuppoſe, GOD ordered Things ſo in his Providence, that they grew jealous and diſtruſtful one of another, and fell into Diſſenſions and Diſcords.

And the Men of Shechem dealt treacherouſly with Abimelech.] Conſpired againſt him. So true is the Obſervation of *Grotius* upon theſe Words, that nothing is more unſtable than the popular Breath, which is won by evil Arts, and that Men hate the Wickedneſs which hath done them Service.

Ver. 24. *That the Cruelty done to the Three-ſcore and Ten Sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their Blood be laid upon their Brother Abimelech, which ſlew them.*] By this means GOD intended to puniſh *Abimelech* for the cruel Murder of his Brethren, whoſe Blood cried for Vengeance on him.

And upon the Men of Shechem, which aided him in the killing of his Brethren.] And to puniſh the Men of *Shechem*, who enabled him to commit that Wickedneſs, and helped him in it.

Ver. 25. *And the Men of Shechem ſet Liers in wait for him, on the Top of the Mountains.*] They were not yet broken out into open Hoſtility againſt him; but there being a Miſunderſtanding between them, *Abimelech*, I ſuppoſe, left the City in Anger; but they thought he would return again, and thereupon ſet Men to lie ſecretly on the Top of the Mountains over which he was to paſs, to ſeize his Perſon.

And they robbed all that came that Way by them.] That the Report coming to *Abimelech* his Ears (as *Arias Montanus* underſtands) how inſecure his Subjects were, who paſſed that Road, he might make the more Speed, as Kings are bound to do, to clear the Way from thoſe Thieves which infeſted it, and thereby give them an Opportunity to ſeize him.

And it was told Abimelech.] What Robberies were committed, and, perhaps, that they lay in wait for him.

Ver. 26. *And Gael the Son of Ebed.*] We have no Means to know who this *Gael* was, nor whence he came. *R. Solomon* thinks he was a *Gentile*, and not one of the *Jewiſh* Nation.

Came with his Brethren.] He paſſed accidentally that Way (as *P. Martyr* thinks) with his Brethren, and his Attendants, about ſome Buſineſs they had in that Country: But the common Opinion is, That he was a known Enemy of *Abimelech*'s, who hearing the Men of *Shechem* were at Defiance with him, came to offer them his Service againſt him.

And the Men of Shechem put their Confidence in him.] That is, put themſelves under his Protection.

Ver. 27. *And they went out into the Fields, and gathered their Vineyards, and trod the Grapes.*] Their firſt Action under this new Commander, was to go out of their City, into the Vineyards, which were in the Fields, and gather their Grapes, and preſs them, which they durſt not do before, though the Vintage was ripe, for fear of *Abimelech*; who being told how things ſtood there, had raiſed Forces, I ſuppoſe, againſt them, but durſt not now diſturb them in their Buſineſs, they being defended by *Gael*.

And made merry.] As they were wont to do in Time of Vintage, and now eſpecially, when they were full of Joy, in hope to be rid of *Abimelech*'s Tyranny. The LXX of the *Vatican* Edition, retain the *Hebrew* Word, and tranſlate it they made Ἐλελήλμ, whereby ſome underſtand Songs, as others Dances: Both are expreſſed by the *Vulgar*, and other Copies of the LXX have Χόρους; for their Merriment conſiſted very much in Dances, with Muſick and Songs; which, as *Max. Tyrius* obſerves, were among the *Greeks* firſt uſed, and in Honour of *Bacchus*, when they preſſed out their Grapes. See Dr. *Spencer*, *Lib.* III. Diſſert. 1. Cap. 9.

And went into the Houſe of their God.] It is moſt likely into the Temple of *Baal-berith*; there to offer their Firſt-fruits, or ſuch other Sacrifices as were cuſtomary at that Feſtival.

And did eat and drink.] Upon that Part the Sacrifices which fell to the Share of the People, who, perhaps, engaged in a Covenant againſt *Abimelech*.

And curſed Abimelech.] Some think they only ſcoffed at him with Taunts and Reproaches, as Men uſed to do in their Cups: But the LXX tranſlate it κατηρέσαντο, which ſignifies curſing, as we tranſlate it; that is, they wiſhed their God would confound him. And ſo we tranſlate this Word *Levit.* xx. 9. *Prov.* xx. 20. A marvellous Change, that they who lately gave him a great Sum of Money to advance him to the Throne, ſhould, in that very Houſe from whence they took it, reproach him with Imprecations of the divine Vengeance upon him.

Ver. 28. *And Gael the Son of Ebed ſaid.*] In the midſt of this Jollity, *Gael* (being elevated, I ſuppoſe, with Wine) burſt forth into this inſulting Language.

Who is Abimelech?] That is, he is but the Son of a Maid-Servant, *Ver.* 18.

And who is Shechem?] Some think he means, the City of *Shechem* is as noble as he is baſe: Why therefore ſhould they be ſubject to him? But it ſeems, by what follows, to be rather the ſame thing repeated, *Who, I ſay, is the Shechemite?*

That we ſhould ſerve him?] Suffer him to rule over us, and uſe us as he pleaſes.

Is he not the Son of Jerubbaal?] Who threw down the Altar of that God, whom you worſhip.

And Zebul his Officer.] Hath he not ſet one of his Servants over you, to be your Governor?

Serve the Men of Hamor the Father of Shechem.] If we muſt be Servants, let us reſtore the Dominion of the old Lords of this City, and ſubject ourſelves to thoſe who are deſcended from the antient Stock of *Hamor*; who was the Father, as it were, of the *Shechemites.*

For why ſhould we ſerve him?] But what Reaſon can be given for our Subjection to this Upſtart; who is famed for nothing, but his Ambition and Cruelty to his own Brethren? This ſhews pretty plainly, that *R. Solomon*'s Opinion is true, that *Gael* was a *Gentile*; who would have been glad to ſee the Authority of the *Canaanites* reſtored. For tho' he ſuggeſts it only as comparatively more deſirable than *Abimelech*'s Rule over them, yet, it is likely, he thought they might as well receive their Government, as they had done their Religion.

Ver. 29. *And would to* God *this People were under my Hand.*] He wiſhes they would make him their King, at leaſt their Commander in Chief: Which it ſeems, they had not yet reſolved upon; ſome being ſtill for *Abimelech*, and others not truſting to a Stranger.

Then would I remove Abimelech.] That he ſhould trouble them no more; but flee the Country, as he was driven out of their City.

And he ſaid to Abimelech, Increaſe thine Army, and come out.] Some take this to be only a vapouring Speech, (as if *Abimelech* was preſent) when he knew he might boaſt and inſult without Danger, becauſe he did not hear him: But it may as well be thought that he bid *Abimelech*'s Friends go and tell him what he ſaid; That he wiſhed him to reinfore his Army, and come out (of the Intrenchments wherein perhaps he was) and give him Battle: For he pretended to ſcorn to ſet upon him by Surprize, but deſired to decide the Quarrel in open Field.

Ver. 30. *And when Zebul the Ruler of the City heard the Words of Gael the Son of Ebed, his Anger was kindled.*] It is likely he had carried fair (as we ſpeak) with *Gael* hitherto; thinking it vain to oppoſe a popular Commotion, till their Fury was a little calmed; but he could not bear theſe inſolent *Thraſonical* Words of *Gael*, which perhaps were not ſpoken in his Preſence, but brought to him by ſome that heard them.

Ver. 31. *And he ſent Meſſengers unto Abimelech privily, ſaying.*] He had ſome Wit in his Anger, and did not openly declare his Reſentments; but gave ſecret Intelligence to *Abimelech* how Matters ſtood, with his Advice how to proceed againſt *Gael.*

Behold, Gael the Son of Ebed, and his Brethren, be come to Shechem.] Where, no doubt, he informed him what Entertainment he had found, and in what reviling Terms he had ſpoken of him.

And behold, he fortified the City againſt thee.] This was no Sign that *Gael* deſired, as he boaſted, to meet *Abimelech* in a pitched Battle; but that he rather provided for his own Defence, in caſe he ſhould be aſſaulted.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore, up by Night, thou, and the People that is with thee, and lie in wait in the Fields.*] His Advice is, That for fear of Diſcovery, he ſhould march with all his Forces in the Night, toward *Shechem*; and lurk in the Fields till Morning Light.

Ver. 33. *And it ſhall be, that in the Morning, as ſoon as the Sun is up, thou ſhalt riſe up early, and ſet upon the City.*] Surprize them, before they were better provided.

And behold, when he and the People that are with him come out againſt thee.] As *Gael* had boaſted he would do.

Then thou mayeſt do to them, as thou ſhalt find Occaſion.] He could give him no farther Advice; but that then he ſhould diſpoſe his Forces to the beſt Advantage againſt him.

Ver. 34. *And Abimelech roſe up, and all the People that were with him by Night, and they laid wait againſt Shechem in four Companies.*] He divided his Army into four Battalions, (as they now ſpeak) and diſpoſed them in four Places, as the *Vulgar* underſtands it: Perhaps on the Eaſt, Weſt, North and South Sides of the City.

Ver. 35. *And Gael the Son of Ebed went out,*] Of his Houſe.

And ſtood in the Entring of the Gate of the City.] To ſee, it is likely, if his Soldiers were upon their Guard.

And Abimelech roſe up, and the People that were with him, from lying in wait.] Out of their lurking Places, where they had lain undiſcovered all Night.

Ver. 36. *And when Gael ſaw the People, he ſaid to Zebul.*] Who, it ſeems, accompanied him, or, as Governor of the City, was there to ſee every one do their Duty.

Behold,

Behold, there come People down from the Top of the Mountains.] Which were adjoining to the City, *viz.* Mount *Gerezim* and Mount *Ebal.*

And Zebul ſaid, Thou ſeeſt the Shadow of the Mountains, as if they were Men.] It being early in the Morning, the Trees, and all Things elſe, caſt long Shadows, which being moved by the Breath of Air, which commonly accompanies the Sun-riſing, *Zebul* perſuaded him he took for Men marching down from the Top of the Mountains. Some think he ſpake this in Mockery, that he was afraid of Shadows; but delivered it in ſuch a ſerious Tone, that *Gael* believed he ſpake in Earneſt; by which it is plain that *Zebul* notably diſſembled his Reſentments, and behaved himſelf as if he was on *Gael*'s Side; who was ſtrangely infatuated, to truſt one that was Servant to *Abimelech*, and placed by him as Governor of the City, whoſe Pretences of Friendſhip were reaſonably to be ſuſpected.

Ver. 37. *And Gael ſpake again and ſaid, See.*] Obſerve attentively.

There come down People by the Middle of the Land.] Now it was viſible they were Men; for they were come down to the Middle of the Mountains.

And another Company come along by the Plain of Meonenim.] It is likely the other two Companies of the Four, into which his Forces were divided, appeared in other Places, the more to diſtract the Thoughts of *Gael:* And it is probable that *Abimelech* had ſeized the Ambuſh, which they had laid for him on the Top of the Mountains (*Ver.* 25.) that they could carry no Tidings of his Coming. We read of this Place no where elſe, and ſo I can give no Account of it: But the *Vulgar* takes *Elon* to ſignify not the *Plain*, but *an Oak*; and tranſlates theſe Words, *By the Way which looks towards the Oak*; which, in ſome Copies of the LXX, are rendered, *The Oak of thoſe that look towards*, or *that regard Times*, as we have it in the Margin of our Bibles; as if it were like the Oak at *Dodona*, among the *Greeks*, where they made Divinations.

Ver. 38. *Then ſaid Zebul unto him, Where is now thy Mouth, wherewith thou ſaidſt, Who is Abimelech, that we ſhould ſerve him?*] Now *Zebul* pulls off his Maſk, and puts him in mind of the Brags which he made, *Ver.* 28.

Is not this the People that thou haſt deſpiſed?] But now, he ſuppoſes, was afraid to encounter.

Go out, I pray thee, and fight with them.] He upbraids him with Cowardiſe, unleſs he now ſhewed himſelf a Man with his Sword, as the other Day with his Tongue.

Ver. 39. *And Gael went out.*] It may ſeem ſtrange that he did not firſt leave *Zebul* dead upon the Spot behind him: But he was afraid of him, he ving, as appeared afterward, a ſtrong Party in the City; and it was dangerous to have two Enemies to deal withal, one without, and another within.

Before the Men of Shechem, and fought with Abimelech.] As unprovided as he was, he would not decline the Fight, and was followed by the principal Perſons in *Shechem.*

Ver. 40. *And Abimelech chaſed him, and he fled before him.*] Toward the City.

And many were overthrown and wounded.] Some were killed, and others wounded.

Even unto the Entring of the Gate.] Where the reſt, and *Gael* himſelf, got into the City, and there ſecured themſelves: So the *Vulgar*, for Explication ſake, *He purſued him and drove him into the City.*

Ver. 41. *And Abimelech dwelt at Arumah.*] It appears, by the next Verſe, this Place was not far from *Shechem*; whither *Abimelech* thought fit to retreat, and there watch for an Opportunity to be revenged of the *Shechemites.*

And Zebul thruſt out Gael and his Brethren, that they ſhould not dwell in Shechem.] Becauſe they were not able to defend it againſt *Abimelech. Zebul* had the ſtronger Party on his Side, otherwiſe he could not have expelled him; but *Gael* had ſo many Adherents, that they durſt not put him to Death, for his ill Management, as no doubt they called it, in the late Fight.

Ver. 42. *And it came to paſs, on the Morrow, that the People went out into the Field.*] Finding that *Abimelech* was retreated, as not ſtrong enough, they imagined, to aſſault their City, they went about their Buſineſs into the Field; which, at that Time of the Year, after the Vintage, was to Plough and Sow their Lands, and Dreſs their Vines, and other Trees: Some will have it, that they went out to fight *Abimelech* again, which is not probable.

And they told Abimelech.] He wanted not ſome to carry him Intelligence of it.

Ver. 43. *And he took the People.*] His Forces, which lay in and about *Arumah.*

And divided them into three Companies.] One of which (the next Verſe informs us) he commanded himſelf, and committed the other two to the Conduct of their Commanders.

And laid wait in the Field.] With that Company which he commanded, whom he ordered to lie cloſe, and not diſcover themſelves.

And looked, and behold, the People were come forth out of the City.] He ſet ſome to ſpy when the People were come out, and ſet about their Buſineſs.

And he roſe up againſt them, and ſmote them.] His Men came, on a ſudden, out of their Ambuſh, and killed many of them.

Ver. 44. *And Abimelech, and the Company which was with him, ruſhed forward, and ſtood in the Entring of the Gate of the City.*] Made all the Haſte they could to get between them and home: And accordingly they poſted themſelves at the Entring of the Gate of the City; whereby they hindered thoſe in the Field from getting into it, and likewiſe thoſe in the City from coming out to their Relief: So that they were diſperſed about the Fields, where the other two Companies picked them up, as it here follows.

And the two Companies ran upon all the People that were in the Fields, and ſlew them.] Which was a great diſheartening, no doubt, to thoſe in

the City to ſee ſo many of their Fellow-Citizens cut off.

Ver. 45. *And Abimelech fought againſt the City all that Day.*] Having deſtroyed ſo many of the Citizens in the Morning, he made his Battery againſt the City itſelf, the reſt of the Day.

And took it.] In the Evening, I ſuppoſe, either by an Aſſault, or by Surrender.

And ſlew the People that were therein.] It is not ſaid what became of *Zebul*, who, it is likely, went over to him, and directed him in his Attack upon the City; leaving his own Party, in whom he put no Confidence, to periſh with the reſt.

And he beat down the City.] Laid the Houſes and Walls level with the Ground.

And ſowed it with Salt.] Salt makes Land barren, and therefore *Ralbag* refers this to the Ground about it or in it; that was wont to be employed for ſowing any ſort of Grain, or planting Vineyards, *&c.* for as *Pliny* obſerves, *Omnis locus in quo reperitur ſal, ſterilis eſt & nihil gignit.* Lib. 31. Cap. 7. *All Places in which Salt is found, are barren, and bring fourth nothing.* Therefore *Abimelech* endeavoured to make this City a perpetual Deſolation. See *Bochart. Hierozoicon*, Pag. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. xvi. But unleſs the Soil had been ſalt of itſelf, his ſowing Salt there would not have made it barren; but it would have ſoon recovered its Fruitfulneſs: Therefore all he intended was to ſhew his Hatred of them, by wiſhing their City might lie waſte, and be a perpetual Deſolation.

Ver. 46. *And when all the Men of the Tower of Shechem heard that.*] By theſe laſt Words, it is plain this Tower was not in the City, but at ſome Diſtance from it: For otherwiſe, it would not have been ſaid that they *heard* of the Deſtruction of *Shechem*, but that they ſaw it with their Eyes; yet it is likely, that this Tower of *Shechem* was kept by a Garriſon of the *Shechemites*.

They entred into an Hold of the Houſe of the God Berith.] They durſt not truſt to the Strength of the Tower, but took Sanctuary rather in a ſtrong Fortreſs of the Temple of the God mentioned *Ver.* 4. which was built, in all likelihood, (according to the common Cuſtom of the World) upon one of the Mountains hard by, and had near it this fortified ſtrong Hold; wherein they kept their Treaſure, *Ver.* 4. It may be compared to the *Roman* Capitol, and to the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, in After-times; which *Joſephus* deſcribes as an impregnable Place.

Ver. 47. *And it was told Abimelech, that all the Men of the Tower of Shechem were gathered together.*] In the forenamed Fortreſs.

Ver. 48. *And Abimelech got him up to Mount Zalmon, he and all the People that were with him.*] Some think this to be the ſame Mountain which the Pſalmiſt mentions lxviii. 15. and take it to have been near to *Shechem*, which had many Mountains about it, *Ver.* 36.

And Abimelech took an Ax in his Hand, and cut down a Bough from the Trees.] Which grew there in great abundance, for *Zalmon* ſeems to have had its Name from the Shadineſs of the Place.

And took it and laid it on his Shoulders, and ſaid unto the People that were with him, What ye have ſeen me do, make haſte and do as I have done.] He, in ſome meaſure, imitates his Father's Speech to his three hundred Men, before he went to fight, vii. 17.

Ver. 49. *And the People likewiſe cut down every Man his Bough, and followed Abimelech, and put them to the Hold, and ſet the Hold on Fire upon them.*] Which was done with ſuch Expedition, (as he ordered in the foregoing Verſe) that they within had no Time to provide againſt it.

So that all the Men of the Tower of Shechem died alſo, about a Thouſand Men and Women.] Who periſhed in the Fire and Smoak, as the *Vulgar* here adds: But the *Hebrew* and LXX ſay nothing of Smoak, but only of Fire; yet it is highly probable that many were choaked by the Smoak, which was very great and ſmothering, the Wood being green: Here the Prediction, or rather Imprecation of *Jotham*, *Ver.* 20. was exactly fulfilled.

Ver. 50. *Then went Abimelech unto Thebez, and encamped againſt Thebez, and took it.*] This was a City, which, as *Kimchi* obſerves, had revolted from *Abimelech*; but it is uncertain whereabout it lay, though moſt think it in the Territory near *Shechem*.

Ver. 51. *But there was a ſtrong Tower within the City, and thither fled all the Men and Women, and all they of the City.*] It was a Place ſo large, that it could contain not only all the Men of the City and their Wives, but their Servants alſo: Who all betook themſelves hither, as a Place not eaſy to be taken, though the City could make little Reſiſtance.

And ſhut it to them.] Shut to the Gate, and, I ſuppoſe, blocked it up ſo that it could not be opened.

And gat them up to the Top of the Tower.] Which was flat, as their Houſes were, with Battlements round about it: Here the Beſieged thought fit to ſtand in great Numbers, that they might do what they could to beat him off, if *Abimelech* attempted to burn them, as he had done others in a neighbouring Tower.

Ver. 52. *And Abimelech came into the Tower and fought againſt it.*] His Rage was inſatiable; for, not content to have overthrown the *Shechemites*, and beat down their City, and burnt their ſtrong Hold, and taken *Thebez*, he beſet their Tower alſo; where, if he had not periſhed, none can tell how far his Revenge would have proceeded.

And went hard unto the Door of the Tower to burn it with Fire.] Being fluſhed with great Succeſs, he was ſo bold and hardy, as himſelf to make this dangerous Attempt.

Ver. 53. *And a certain Woman caſt a Piece of a Milſtone.*] Which they had carried up among other Stones and Logs, and whatſoever they thought might offend the Enemy: The *Hebrew* Word *Rechab* properly ſignifies the upper Milſtone, which moves (and, as it were, *rides*) upon the Lower.

Upon Abimelech's Head.] Being directed, no doubt, by a ſpecial Providence of God, as the Stone was out of the Sling that killed *Goliah*, and the Arrow wherewith *Ahab* was ſhot.

And all to break his Scull.] Made ſuch a Fracture in it, that he concluded it to be mortal. Thus *Plutarch* relates that *Pyrrhus*, at the Siege of *Thebes*, was killed by a Woman, who threw a Tile upon his Head: But *Abimelech*'s Death by a Stone is the more remarkable, becauſe it carried ſome Stamp of his Sin upon it; for he ſlew all his Brethren on *one Stone*.

Ver. 54. *Then he called haſtily.*] Fearing he ſhould immediately expire.

Unto the young Man his Armour-bearer, and ſaid unto him, Draw thy Sword and ſlay me, that Men ſay not of me, a Woman ſlew him.] Tho' he knew ſhe had given him his Death's Wound, yet he would have Poſterity think otherwiſe; for he thought it diſhonourable to die by the Hand of a Woman: A fooliſh Piece of Vainglory, wherewith he concluded his Life, as he had led it; for ſhe had given him a mortal Blow.

And his young Man thruſt him through, and he died.] Juſt when he imagined he was upon the point of conquering all Oppoſition to him.

Ver. 55. *And when the Men of Iſrael.*] That is, all that were in his Army.

Saw that Abimelech was dead, they departed every Man unto his Place.] Diſbanded themſelves, having none to head them.

Ver. 56. *Thus* God *rendered the Wickedneſs of Abimelech which he did unto his Father in ſlaying his Seventy Brethren.*] Which was as much as in him lay, to root out the Memory of his Father, unleſs it ſurvived in himſelf, who took a Courſe to make his Name infamous.

Ver. 57. *And all the Evil of the Men of Shechem did* God *render upon their Heads, and upon them came the Curſe of Jotham the Son of Jerubbaal.*] Theſe two Verſes conclude this Story with a Divine Admonition, That no Man ſhould think that ſuch Things came to paſs by Chance, but God, the Judge of all, puniſhed both *Abimelech* and the Men of *Shechem* according to their Deſerts, and made them the Inſtruments of each other's Deſtruction: And it is remarkable that this Puniſhment overtook them ſpeedily, within leſs than four Years after their Crime was committed.

It was not the Buſineſs of this Holy Writer to tell us what became of *Jotham*, no more than what became of *Gael* and *Zebul*: But only to ſhew, that *as Men have done, ſo* God *requites them*; with which he ends this Part of his Hiſtory.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND after Abimelech.*] Who was not a Judge, much leſs appointed by God, but an Uſurper, who took upon him to alter the Divine Government, and made himſelf a King.

There roſe up.] It is not ſaid that God ſtirred him up, as he did the foregoing Judges; but it is ſo underſtood, becauſe God would not have ſaved *Iſrael* by one that took upon him this high Office, without his Order: And therefore, as *Peter Martyr* well obſerves, in the Concluſion of the foregoing Chapter, that as after many good Judges God had given them, he ſuffered the cruel Tyrant *Abimelech* to interpoſe himſelf, that their Virtues might ſhine more illuſtriouſly by his Wickedneſs; ſo after he was gone, God was pleaſed to raiſe up to them good Judges again, who learnt Moderation by the Puniſhment of his vain Ambition: And in all likelihood, the dreadful End of *Abimelech*, and his Partakers, who made him King, affrighted the *Iſraelites* from preſuming to make another, of their own Heads.

To defend Iſrael.] Or, *to ſave*, as it is in the Margin: For this was the great Office of a Judge, to deliver the People from the Oppreſſion of their Enemies: We do not find indeed from what Enemies they were delivered by this Judge; but they may be ſaid to *ſave* and *deliver*, who preſerve Mens Liberties from being invaded, as well as they that vindicate and reſtore them, when they are loſt: And therefore we well tranſlate it, *To defend Iſrael.* He may be thought alſo to have delivered them from thoſe Confuſions and Diſorders they were in, by the Diſagreement between *Abimelech* and thoſe that made him King: For both Sides had many Partakers, which made great Diviſions, and dangerous Combinations among the People; but were all happily ended by the prudent Management of this Governor. *Serrarius* alſo adds, That he might be ſaid to *ſave* or deliver them, becauſe he reſtored the Purity of their Religion, by aboliſhing the Worſhip of Idols: For we read, That after the Death of *Gideon they went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their God*, viii. 33. which they continued in the Reign of *Abimelech*; but were now brought back to the Worſhip of the true God, and remained in it, in the Days of this and the following Judges; otherwiſe there would not have been Occaſion to ſay (*Ver.* 6.) that after the Death of *Jair, the Children of Iſrael did Evil again in the Sight of the* Lord: But how far this is true, will appear upon *Ver.* 8.

Tolah the Son of Puah, the Son of Dodo.] So the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt underſtands the Word *Dodo*, to be the proper Name of his Grandfather, as *Puah* was of his Father: But there are thoſe that by *Dodo* underſtand *his Uncle*, viz. *Abimelech* fore-mentioned: Which ſeems to me unreaſonable; for he was of another Tribe, and his Relation to ſuch a Man no good Qualification, one would think, for this great Truſt.

A Man of Iſſachar.] A mean Tribe; which did not hinder his Advancement by God to the higheſt Dignity: And by this Expreſſion, *a Man of Iſſachar*, he ſeems to have been of no great Family, in that Tribe.

And he dwelt in Shamir in Mount Ephraim.] After he was made a Judge, he ſettled in this Place, for the Convenience of the People; it being in the midſt of the Land.

Ver. 2. *And he judged Iſrael twenty and three Years, and died and was buried in Shamir.*] There are no memorable Acts of his recorded; for the principal Intention of the Holy Writer of this Book, was to ſhew what great Calamities befel the *Iſraelites* when they forſook God's Worſhip, and how graciouſly he delivered them in a marvellous manner, when they returned to it: As I ſuppoſe they did, in the Beginning of this Man's Government, and continued ſtedfaſt therein; ſo that they were not infeſted by their Enemies.

Ver. 3. *And after him aroſe Jair a Gileadite, and judged Iſrael twenty and two Years.*] This is the firſt Judge that was raiſed up from among thoſe that lived beyond *Jordan*.

Ver. 4. *And he had thirty Sons that rode on thirty Aſſes Colts.*] For the nobleſt Perſons rode on theſe Beaſts (ſee *Ver.* 10.) and that not only in *Judæa*, but in *Arabia*, and in other Countries, even among the *Romans*, as *Bochartus* hath at large obſerved in his *Hierozoicon*, *Pag.* 1. *Lib.* II. *Cap.* 13. And it is highly probable, that this is here mentioned, becauſe theſe Perſons were ordered by their Father to ride Circuit up and down the Country, to miniſter Juſtice according to the Law; as *Samuel* did when he judged *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.* vii. 16. For the Courts of Judicature appointed by the Law (*Deut.* xvi. 18.) were not yet ſettled; nor, in all Likelihood, ſettled in every City, till the Days of *Jehoſhaphat*, as Mr. *Thorndike* obſerves in his *Rights of the Church*, Chap. iv. Pag. 226.

And they had thirty Cities.] Of which they were the Governors, as the *Vulgar* underſtands it.

Which are called Havoth-Jair unto this Day.] This *Jair*, as our moſt learned Primate of *Ireland* obſerves in his *Annals*, (ad A. M. 3504.) was of the Poſterity of that *Jair* who called the Cities which he took in *Argob*, by his own Name *Havoth-Jair*, the Towns or Villages of *Jair* (*Numb.* xxxii. 41. *Deut.* iii. 14.) After whoſe Example theſe thirty Sons of this younger *Jair* (who to diſtinguiſh him from the Elder, ſeems to be called *Bedan*, 1 *Sam.* xii. 11. 1 *Chron.* vii. 17.) called theſe Cities which they poſſeſſed, by the very ſame Name.

Which are in the Land of Gilead.] In the ſame Country, where the other Cities antiently called by this Name lay: From which, it is likely, they were diſtinguiſhed by ſome ſuch Addition as this, *The new Havoth-Jair*.

Ver. 5. *And Jair died, and was buried in Camon.*] Which, it was probable, was the Place where he dwelt, while he judged *Iſrael*.

Ver. 6. *And the Children of Iſrael did Evil again in the Sight of the* LORD.] Or, as the forenamed *Primate* thinks it muſt be interpreted, *Had done Evil again*, &c. as was ſaid viii. 33. and now is repeated to ſhew the Cauſe, why God delivered them up into the Hands of their Enemies: For he ſuppoſes this was before the Death of *Jair*, as I ſhall note on *Ver.* 8.

And ſerved Baalim and Aſhtaroth.] As they had frequently done in former Times, ii. 13. iii. 7, *&c.*

And the Gods of Syria.] They added to their former Idolatries, the Worſhip of new Gods; particularly thoſe of *Syria*, which were, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, (in his *Prolegomena* to his Book *de Diis Syris*) beſide *Bel*, or *Baal*, and *Aſtarte*, *Dagon*, *Moloch*, and *Thammuz*.

And the Gods of Zidon.] Their ſupreme Gods were *Baal* and *Aſhtoreth*, as the ſame great Man obſerves, (in his 2. *Syntagma de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2.) But it is likely they had more, ſuch as *Aſaroth*, *Aſarim*, and *Aſarah*; being the very ſame with *Aſhtoreth*.

And the Gods of Moab.] The principal of which was *Chemoſh*, 1 Kings xi. 7.

And the Gods of the Children of Ammon.] The Chief of which was *Milcom*, 1 *Kings* xi. 5. where *Aſhtoreth* is mentioned as the Goddeſs of the *Zidonians*.

And the Gods of the Philiſtines.] They had more, it ſeems, beſide *Dagon*; whoſe Names are not mentioned in Scripture.

And forſook the LORD, *and ſerved not him.*] Their Hearts were poſſeſſed with the Love of ſo many Gods, that they quite forgot the LORD, and did not worſhip him at all; though they were wont formerly only to worſhip other Gods together with him. This was ſuch a ſtrange Apoſtaſy, that one cannot but enquire into the Reaſon of it, and (beſides what I have noted upon ii. 12.) one Reaſon may poſſibly have been, That the ſolemn Reading of the Law to all the People, once in Seven Years, was neglected: For we do not read that it was publickly done from the Time of *Joſhua* to the Reign of *Jehoſhaphat*, which was above Five Hundred Years: It doth not follow indeed that it was not done, becauſe it is not recorded; but if we conſider how prone they were to return to Idolatry, after the Death of every Judge, and how ſoon after the Death of *David* (even in the Reign of his Son *Solomon*) it began to appear among them, it may incline one to think there was not ſufficient Care taken about this Matter.

Ver. 7. *And the Anger of the* LORD *was hot againſt Iſrael, and he ſold them into the Hands of the Philiſtines, and into the Hands of the Children of Ammon.*] Two of thoſe Nations, whoſe Gods they choſe to ſerve.

Ver. 8. *And that Year they vexed and oppreſſed the Children of Iſrael.*] That is the *Ammonites* vexed them in the Eaſt, (as we are told in the Concluſion of the Verſe) while the *Philiſtines* vexed them in the Weſt: For their Idolatry being ſtrangely increaſed, ſo was their Puniſhment, by the Invaſion of their Enemies on both Sides, as the foregoing Verſe tells us; which is a Preface to the following Hiſtories of their Oppreſſion by the *Philiſtines* and the *Ammonites*, both at the ſame Time; but, to avoid Confuſion, he firſt relates the Story of the *Ammonites*, who are at laſt named in the foregoing Verſe.

Eighteen Years.] Their Invaſion began in the ſame Year, but they did not end at the ſame Time, for the *Ammonites* domineered over them only Eighteen Years; but the *Philiſtines* Forty, xiii. 1. I muſt not here omit the Conſtruction

ſtruction which our Primate *Uſher* makes of theſe Words, which run thus in the *Hebrew*, and he tranſlates in this manner, *They vexed and oppreſſed the Children of Iſrael that Year*, (viz.) *the eighteenth Year*. For the Oppreſſion, he thinks, began the Fifth Year of *Jair*, and continued till the Twenty-ſecond, which was his laſt. See his *Chronol. Sacra*, Pag. 1. Cap. 13. But this is ſaid only to ſalve a Difficulty, which is, that if we ſuppoſe this Oppreſſion to have begun after the Death of *Jair*, and to have laſted Eighteen Years (as our Tranſlation imports) it will be impoſſible to make the Years of the Government of the Judges agree with what we read 1 *Kings* vi. 1. That *Solomon* began to build the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, in the Four Hundred and Eightieth Year after they came out of *Egypt*: But there is a more eaſy Way of accounting for this Difficulty, by ſuppoſing that ſeveral of the Judges were Contemporaries, as will be apparent in this very Hiſtory, (ſee upon xi. 25.) and if we do not take theſe Words *Eighteen Years* to ſignify the Continuance of the *Ammoniti∫h* Oppreſſion, it is no where mentioned any where elſe; as the Duration of all other Oppreſſions is.

All the Children of Iſrael that were on the other Side Jordan in the Land of the Amorites.] Which belonged to the *Amorites*, till *Moſes* diſpoſſeſſed them, (*Numb.* xxi.) and gave the Land to the two Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and half the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*.

Which is in Gilead.] The principal Part of which was *Gilead*; out of which *Jair* ſprang, being of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*: Who, like a good Man, uſed all his Endeavours to purge the *Iſraelites* from Idolatry; as *Tola*, I ſuppoſe, had done before: But they being, after the Death of *Gideon*, fallen from God, and continuing in their Idolatry all the Reign of *Abimelech*, our fore-named Primate ſuppoſes theſe Judges were not able to reform them; but they rather grew worſe, as is related, *Ver.* 6. And therefore God permitted the *Ammonites* and *Philiſtines* to begin to afflict them, as was ſaid before in the Fifth Year of *Jair*; but not ſo as to make them ſubject to their Power: For *Jair* held the Government Eighteen Years after they began their Inroads, but then their Vexations and Oppreſſions grew intolerable, and they not only afflicted his own Country *Gilead*, but endeavoured to make their Brethren, on the other Side *Jordan*, to feel the Weight of their Power, as it follows in the next Verſe. This is ſaid very plauſibly, but cannot be admitted without ſome Violence to the natural Senſe of the Beginning of the Verſe; and alſo to the Courſe of this Hiſtory, which doth not mention their Departure from God, and theſe Oppreſſions of their Enemies, on both Sides, till after the Death of *Jair*.

Ver. 9. *Moreover the Children of Ammon paſſed over Jordan to fight againſt Judah, and againſt Benjamin, and againſt the Houſe of Ephraim.*] Who were the Tribes that lay next to *Jordan*.

So that Iſrael was ſore diſtreſſed.] For while the *Ammonites* afflicted thoſe Countries in the Eaſtern Part of *Canaan*, the *Philiſtines* made Ravages in the Countries of *Zebulun*, and *Aſher*, and the reſt of the Tribes that lay on the Weſtern Coaſt: For ſo the LXX explain thoſe Words in the foregoing Verſe, *In that Year*, ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, in that ſame Year, the *Philiſtines* in the Weſt, and the *Ammonites* in the Eaſt, vexed and oppreſſed the Children of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 10. *And the Children of Iſrael cried unto the* Lord, *ſaying, We have ſinned againſt thee, both becauſe we have forſaken our* God, *and alſo ſerved Baalim.*] All the reſt of the Gods mentioned *Ver.* 6. are comprehended under the Name of *Baalim*: Which were ſo many and various, that they had quite drawn their Affection from their own God; as they now ſorrowfully acknowledge.

Ver. 11. *And the* Lord *ſaid unto the Children of Iſrael.*] By ſome Prophet, I ſuppoſe.

Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians?] *Exod.* xii.

And from the Amorites.] Who would have hindered their Paſſage to the Land of *Canaan*, *Numb.* xxi.

And from the Children of Ammon.] Who were confederate with the *Moabites* to oppreſs them, *Judg.* iii. 13.

And from the Philiſtines.] In the Days of *Shamgar*, iii. *ult.*

Ver. 12. *The Zidonians alſo.*] We never read of any Invaſion they made upon the *Iſraelites*; but only in general, That God left them, among other People, unſubdued, to prove the Children of *Iſrael*, iii. 3. who took their Opportunities, in all likelihood, to afflict them.

And the Amalekites.] Who joined both with the *Moabites*, and the *Midianites*, to oppreſs them, iii. 13. vi. 3.

And the Maonites did oppreſs you.] *Maon* is the Name of a Nation; the Plural of which, *Meunim*, occurs in many Places, particularly in 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 6, 7. where they are called in *Greek* Μινναῖοι. A People of *Arabia*, both in that which we call *Felix*, and in that called *Deſerta*. Which latter was not far from the *Moabites* and the *Ammonites*; with whom Interpreters are wont to confound the *Meunites*, as if by a Tranſpoſition of Letters, they were the ſame with the *Ammonites*: Which hath miſled us in our Tranſlation of thoſe Words 2 *Chron.* xx. 1. *And with them from the Ammonites*, which make no Senſe; but if we read *with them from Menuim* (as it is in *Greek* ἐκ Μινναίων) all runs clearly, and makes perfect Senſe: And thus we ought to tranſlate that Place, 1 *Chron.* iv. 41. where we take *Meunim* to ſignify Dwellings, and render the Words thus, *The Habitations which were found there*; as if where there were *Tents* (which are mentioned before) there were not *Habitations*, which are the ſame: Therefore *Meunim* is the Name of a People (as the LXX underſtood it) who dwelt in Tents, being *Arabians*: Who being Neighbours (as I ſaid to the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*) joined with them in their Invaſion of the Land of *Iſrael*, and helped to oppreſs them: But they

are plainly distinguished from the *Ammonites* in the Place first mentioned, and 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 6, 7, 8.

And ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their Hand.] When they were utterly unable to help themselves.

Ver. 13. *Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other Gods.*] But all these Deliverances proved ineffectual to keep them stedfast in the Worship of GOD.

Wherefore I will deliver you no more.] He threatens therefore to leave them under the Power of their Enemies, which now sorely distressed them, as they justly deserved; but it was an Intention to awaken them to a more serious and hearty Repentance, otherwise he resolved not to deliver them.

Ver. 14. *Go and cry unto the Gods you have chosen, let them deliver you in the Time of your Tribulation.*] A bitter Reflection, both upon them, and upon their Gods, like to that in the Song of *Moses*, *Deut.* xxxii. 37, 38.

Ver. 15. *And the Children of Israel said unto the* LORD, *We have sinned.*] In worshipping such Gods as could not save them.

Do thou unto us, as seemeth good unto thee.] They submit to such Punishment, as he thought fit to inflict, confessing, they deserved no Favour; which shews, their Hearts were, for the present, very sensible of the Folly wherewith they were reproached in the foregoing Verse.

Deliver us only, we pray thee, this Day.] They acknowledged, that they deserved the severest Punishment, but beseech him to have so much Pity on them, as not to punish them this Way, by letting these cruel Enemies insult over them any longer.

Ver. 16. *And they put away the strange Gods from among them.*] Gave open Proof of their Repentance, by renouncing all Idolatry.

And served the LORD.] And returned to the Worship of the LORD, and of him alone, which is the most remarkable Repentance and Reformation, that we read of hitherto in this History of the *Judges*; and it seems to have been so serious, that for a long time they did not relapse; for we read nothing of their Idolatry, in the Time of those three Judges that followed *Jephthah*.

And his Soul was grieved for the Misery of Israel.] Nor do we read before, of such an Expression of the divine Compassion towards them. Every one knows the divine Nature is not capable of *Grief*, properly so called; but the Meaning is, he quite altered his former Intentions, and in much Mercy resolved, upon their Repentance, to deliver them. So *Maimonides* observes, that the Word *Nephesh*, which we translate *Soul*, signifies his Will, *Jer.* xv. 1. *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, my Soul could not be towards this People*; that is, it could not be his Will to save them. And so here, *his Soul was grieved*; that is, saith he, his Will ceased from afflicting *Israel* any longer; for it was said before, that GOD's Providence had deserted them, and he refused to relieve them, till they called upon him, and seriously repented; and then, their Miseries being very great, by the sore Oppressions of their Enemies, he took pity on them, and willed their cruel Afflictions should not continue. See *More Nevochim*, Pars 1. Cap. 41.

Ver. 17. *Then the Children of Ammon were gathered together.*] In the *Hebrew*, *were cried together*; that is, A Proclamation went out, requiring all their dispersed Troops, which were ravaging the Countries of *Judah*, *Benjamin*, and *Ephraim*, to return back to their Camp, on the other Side of *Jordan*.

And encamped in Gilead.] Or, *Against Gilead*; for both *Arias Montanus*, and *Peter Martyr*, think that they laid Siege to *Gilead*, the chief City in those Parts: By taking which, they hoped to be Masters of all that Country; and then, with greater Forces, go over *Jordan* again, and conquer the other Tribes before-mentioned.

And the Children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpeh.] There were two *Mizpeh's* on the other Side *Jordan*, one in the Tribe of *Gad*, the other in the Half Tribe of *Manasseh*, as I observed upon *Josh.* xi. 3. the latter of which may be probably thought to be the Place where they now assembled, *Jephthah*, who was afterward chosen their Captain, being one of this Tribe. How many of the *Israelites* here encamped, and whether any of those in the Land of *Canaan*, or only those of the two Tribes and a half, cannot now be known; but upon their Repentance, they seem to have recovered their ancient Courage, and to have taken a Resolution to drive the *Ammonites* out of their Country, insomuch that thereupon the *Ammonites* seem to have left the Siege, and to have made a Retreat into their own Land, either to recruit their Army, and raise more Forces, or for some other Reason; for thither *Jephthah* sent Messengers to them, after he was chosen General of the *Israelites*; and there he fought them, when they would not yield to his convincing Arguments, that they unjustly invaded the *Israelites*, as appears in the following Chapter.

Ver. 18. *And the People and Princes of Gilead.*] Who were most nearly concerned in this Matter, their Country lying nearest to the *Ammonites*.

Said one to another.] Entered into a Consultation, in a grand Assembly of all the People, and their Rulers. See ix. 6.

What Man is he that will begin to fight against the Children of Ammon?] Will be our Leader. It seems to me a probable Conjecture of *Peter Martyr*, that they consulted GOD also about this Matter, who directed them, perhaps, to go to *Jephthah*.

He shall be Head over all the Inhabitants of Gilead.] They resolved, whatsoever the Mind of the rest of the Tribes should be, that he should command all the *Gadites* and *Manassites* that inhabited the Land of *Gilead*.

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ſtruction which our Primate *Uſher* makes of theſe Words, which run thus in the *Hebrew*, and he tranſlates in this manner, *They vexed and oppreſſed the Children of Iſrael that Year*, (viz.) *the eighteenth Year*. For the Oppreſſion, he thinks, began the Fifth Year of *Jair*, and continued till the Twenty-ſecond, which was his laſt. See his *Chronol. Sacra*, Pag. 1. Cap. 13. But this is ſaid only to ſalve a Difficulty, which is, that if we ſuppoſe this Oppreſſion to have begun after the Death of *Jair*, and to have laſted Eighteen Years (as our Tranſlation imports) it will be impoſſible to make the Years of the Government of the Judges agree with what we read 1 *Kings* vi. 1. That *Solomon* began to build the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, in the Four Hundred and Eightieth Year after they came out of *Egypt*: But there is a more eaſy Way of accounting for this Difficulty, by ſuppoſing that ſeveral of the Judges were Contemporaries, as will be apparent in this very Hiſtory, (ſee upon xi. 25.) and if we do not take theſe Words *Eighteen Years* to ſignify the Continuance of the *Ammonitiſh* Oppreſſion, it is no where mentioned any where elſe; as the Duration of all other Oppreſſions is.

All the Children of Iſrael that were on the other Side Jordan in the Land of the Amorites.] Which belonged to the *Amorites*, till *Moſes* diſpoſſeſſed them, (*Numb.* xxi.) and gave the Land to the two Tribes of *Reuben* and *Gad*, and half the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*.

Which is in Gilead.] The principal Part of which was *Gilead*; out of which *Jair* ſprang, being of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*: Who, like a good Man, uſed all his Endeavours to purge the *Iſraelites* from Idolatry; as *Tola*, I ſuppoſe, had done before: But they being, after the Death of *Gideon*, fallen from God, and continuing in their Idolatry all the Reign of *Abimelech*, our fore-named Primate ſuppoſes theſe Judges were not able to reform them; but they rather grew worſe, as is related, *Ver.* 6. And therefore God permitted the *Ammonites* and *Philiſtines* to begin to afflict them, as was ſaid before in the Fifth Year of *Jair*; but not ſo as to make them ſubject to their Power: For *Jair* held the Government Eighteen Years after they began their Inroads, but then their Vexations and Oppreſſions grew intolerable, and they not only afflicted his own Country *Gilead*, but endeavoured to make their Brethren, on the other Side *Jordan*, to feel the Weight of their Power, as it follows in the next Verſe. This is ſaid very plauſibly, but cannot be admitted without ſome Violence to the natural Senſe of the Beginning of the Verſe; and alſo to the Courſe of this Hiſtory, which doth not mention their Departure from God, and theſe Oppreſſions of their Enemies, on both Sides, till after the Death of *Jair*.

Ver. 9. *Moreover the Children of Ammon paſſed over Jordan to fight againſt Judah, and againſt Benjamin, and againſt the Houſe of Ephraim.*] Who were the Tribes that lay next to *Jordan*.

So that Iſrael was ſore diſtreſſed.] For while the *Ammonites* afflicted thoſe Countries in the Eaſtern Part of *Canaan*, the *Philiſtines* made Ravages in the Countries of *Zebulun*, and *Aſher*, and the reſt of the Tribes that lay on the Weſtern Coaſt: For ſo the LXX explain thoſe Words in the foregoing Verſe, *In that Year*, ἐν τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ, in that ſame Year, the *Philiſtines* in the Weſt, and the *Ammonites* in the Eaſt, vexed and oppreſſed the Children of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 10. *And the Children of Iſrael cried unto the* Lord, *ſaying, We have ſinned againſt thee, both becauſe we have forſaken our* God, *and alſo ſerved Baalim.*] All the reſt of the Gods mentioned *Ver.* 6. are comprehended under the Name of *Baalim*: Which were ſo many and various, that they had quite drawn their Affection from their own God; as they now ſorrowfully acknowledge.

Ver. 11. *And the* Lord *ſaid unto the Children of Iſrael.*] By ſome Prophet, I ſuppoſe.

Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians?] *Exod.* xii.

And from the Amorites.] Who would have hindered their Paſſage to the Land of *Canaan*, *Numb.* xxi.

And from the Children of Ammon.] Who were confederate with the *Moabites* to oppreſs them, *Judg.* iii. 13.

And from the Philiſtines.] In the Days of *Shamgar*, iii. *ult.*

Ver. 12. *The Zidonians alſo.*] We never read of any Invaſion they made upon the *Iſraelites*; but only in general, That God left them, among other People, unſubdued, to prove the Children of *Iſrael*, iii. 3. who took their Opportunities, in all likelihood, to afflict them.

And the Amalekites.] Who joined both with the *Moabites*, and the *Midianites*, to oppreſs them, iii. 13. vi. 3.

And the Maonites did oppreſs you.] *Maon* is the Name of a Nation; the Plural of which, *Meunim*, occurs in many Places, particularly in 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 6, 7. where they are called in *Greek* Μινναῖοι. A People of *Arabia*, both in that which we call *Felix*, and in that called *Deſerta*. Which latter was not far from the *Moabites* and the *Ammonites*; with whom Interpreters are wont to confound the *Meunites*, as if by a Tranſpoſition of Letters, they were the ſame with the *Ammonites*: Which hath miſled us in our Tranſlation of thoſe Words 2 *Chron.* xx. 1. *And with them from the Ammonites*, which make no Senſe; but if we read *with them from Menuim* (as it is in *Greek* ἐκ Μινναίων) all runs clearly, and makes perfect Senſe: And thus we ought to tranſlate that Place, 1 *Chron.* iv. 41. where we take *Meunim* to ſignify Dwellings, and render the Words thus, *The Habitations which were found there*; as if where there were *Tents* (which are mentioned before) there were not *Habitations*, which are the ſame: Therefore *Meunim* is the Name of a People (as the LXX underſtood it) who dwelt in Tents, being *Arabians*: Who being Neighbours (as I ſaid to the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*) joined with them in their Invaſion of the Land of *Iſrael*, and helped to oppreſs them: But they

are plainly distinguished from the *Ammonites* in the Place first mentioned, and 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 6, 7, 8.

And ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their Hand.] When they were utterly unable to help themselves.

Ver. 13. *Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other Gods.*] But all these Deliverances proved ineffectual to keep them stedfast in the Worship of GOD.

Wherefore I will deliver you no more.] He threatens therefore to leave them under the Power of their Enemies, which now sorely distressed them, as they justly deserved; but it was an Intention to awaken them to a more serious and hearty Repentance, otherwise he resolved not to deliver them.

Ver. 14. *Go and cry unto the Gods you have chosen, let them deliver you in the Time of your Tribulation.*] A bitter Reflection, both upon them, and upon their Gods, like to that in the Song of *Moses*, *Deut.* xxxii. 37, 38.

Ver. 15. *And the Children of Israel said unto the* LORD, *We have sinned.*] In worshipping such Gods as could not save them.

Do thou unto us, as seemeth good unto thee.] They submit to such Punishment, as he thought fit to inflict, confessing, they deserved no Favour; which shews, their Hearts were, for the present, very sensible of the Folly wherewith they were reproached in the foregoing Verse.

Deliver us only, we pray thee, this Day.] They acknowledged, that they deserved the severest Punishment, but beseech him to have so much Pity on them, as not to punish them this Way, by letting these cruel Enemies insult over them any longer.

Ver. 16. *And they put away the strange Gods from among them.*] Gave open Proof of their Repentance, by renouncing all Idolatry.

And served the LORD.] And returned to the Worship of the LORD, and of him alone, which is the most remarkable Repentance and Reformation, that we read of hitherto in this History of the *Judges*; and it seems to have been so serious, that for a long time they did not relapse; for we read nothing of their Idolatry, in the Time of those three Judges that followed *Jephthah*.

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And encamped in Gilead.] Or, *Against Gilead*; for both *Arias Montanus*, and *Peter Martyr*, think that they laid Siege to *Gilead*, the chief City in those Parts: By taking which, they hoped to be Masters of all that Country; and then, with greater Forces, go over *Jordan* again, and conquer the other Tribes beforementioned.

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Ver. 18. *And the People and Princes of Gilead.*] Who were most nearly concerned in this Matter, their Country lying nearest to the *Ammonites*.

Said one to another.] Entered into a Consultation, in a grand Assembly of all the People, and their Rulers. See ix. 6.

What Man is he that will begin to fight against the Children of Ammon?] Will be our Leader. It seems to me a probable Conjecture of *Peter Martyr*, that they consulted GOD also about this Matter, who directed them, perhaps, to go to *Jephthah*.

He shall be Head over all the Inhabitants of Gilead.] They resolved, whatsoever the Mind of the rest of the Tribes should be, that he should command all the *Gadites* and *Manassites* that inhabited the Land of *Gilead*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jephthah the Gileadite.*] A Man of the ſame Country with *Jair*, their laſt Judge.

Was a mighty Man of Valour.] A warlike Perſon, of great Courage and Conduct.

And he was the Son of an Harlot.] Or, *But he was*, &c. Some, by the *Hebrew* Word *Zonah*, underſtand a Concubine, but it never ſignifies ſo in Scripture; but, as we tranſlate it, an *Harlot*; and ſometimes one that kept a *Publick Houſe*; for ſuch People were wont to make their Bodies as common as their Houſes, to all Comers. See *Joſh.* ii. 1. But ſeveral of the *Hebrew* Doctors think that this Word may ſignify either one of another Tribe, or a Stranger, one of another Nation: And ſo *Joſephus* himſelf here underſtands it, that he was ξένος πρὸς τὴν μητέρα, *A Stranger by his Mother's Side.* And *Saidas Batricides* ſaith, his Mother was an *Iſhmaelite*, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, *Lib. de Succeſſionibus*, Cap. 3. Now ſuch were called νόθοι by the *Greeks*, as *Grotius* obſerves, who were born of a Wife that was not a Citizen. But among the *Jews*, if ſuch Perſons embraced the Law, their Children were not ſtained, but capable to inherit among the reſt of their Brethren; and therefore *Jephthah* complains of his Expulſion, *Ver.* 7. looking upon himſelf as unjuſtly dealt withal, which could not have been ſaid, had he been a Baſtard.

And Gilead begat Jephthah.] One of the Poſterity of *Gilead*, the Son of *Manaſſeh*, was his Father, who was called after the Name of his great Anceſtor.

Ver. 2. *And Gilead's Wife bare him Sons.*] He took a Wife alſo of the *Jewiſh* Nation, who bare him ſeveral Sons.

And his Wife's Sons grew up, and they thruſt out Jephthah.] When his Father was dead; for till then, the Inheritance was not to be divided; and, if he had been alive, he would not have ſuffered them to be ſo injurious to *Jephthah*, who was the Son of a Wife whom he loved extremely, as *Joſephus* relates, Lib. 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 9.

And ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt not inherit in our Father's Houſe.] Have no Share of his Eſtate.

For thou art the Son of a ſtrange Woman.] This explains the Word *Zonah*, to be the ſame with a *Woman of another Country*; for there is no reaſon to think, that by *another Woman* (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) he means a Woman of another Tribe, as the *Chaldee Paraphraſt*, *R. Bechai*, and others, expound it. See *Selden* in the Place before named, and *Buxtorf*, *de Sponſal. & Divortiis*, P. 61.

Ver. 3. *Then Jephthah fled from his Brethren.*] When they were ſo unkind as to drive him from his Father's Houſe, he did not think fit to ſtay in their Country.

And dwelt in the Land of Tob.] We read no where elſe of this Country, which, it is likely, was not far from *Gilead*, upon the Borders of the *Ammonites*, in the Entrance of *Arabia deſerta*; or, perhaps, it is the ſame with the Country called *Iſh-tob* (2 *Sam.* viii. 6, 8.) which was in *Syria*, and ſo near the *Ammonites*, that they hired Forces from thence, as well as from other *Syrians*, to fight with King *David*. We find ſome Foot-ſteps of this Land, it is very probable, in the ſecond Book of *Maccabees*, Chap. xii. 17. where we read of Τυβιηνοὶ Ἰουδαῖοι, i. e. *Jews* who dwelt in the Land of *Tob*.

And there were gathered vain Men to Jephthah.] Or, Empty Men; for the Word *Rekim* ſignifies poor and needy Perſons, Men of no Eſtates; ſuch as reſorted to *David* when he fled from *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 2. So I ſuppoſe it to be here underſtood, (not that they were profligate Perſons) for the Word *Pochazim*, light Men, is not here added, as it is in the Story of thoſe who followed *Abimelech*, ix. 4. Therefore *Grotius* doth not ſeem rightly to have repreſented *Jephthah*, when he ſaith, He was one of thoſe who *ex prædonum Ducibus juſti Duces facti ſunt.* Lib. 3. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 3. Sect. 3. For theſe were not Highway-Men, as we call them, that lived by Prey; but only Men of ſmall or no Fortune, who were glad of an Occaſion to join themſelves to ſo gallant a Man as *Jephthah* was. And ſo the Word we tranſlate *gathered*, imports, that they liſted themſelves under him of their own Accord, being invited to it by the great Fame of his Humanity and Valour. But *Grotius* herein follows the *Vulgar*, who adds the Word *Latrocinates*, without any Authority, either from the *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, or LXX.

And went out with him.] Made Excurſions upon the Enemies of the *Iſraelites* thereabouts, and got what Booty they could from them, for their Subſiſtence, juſt as *David* did when he was forced to flee into the Land of the *Philiſtines*, 1 *Sam.* xxvii. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs in Proceſs of Time.*] In the *Hebrew* it is, *after Days*, i. e. as Primate *Uſher* underſtands it (in the Place above-named) after thoſe Years mentioned, x. 8. *viz.* Eighteen Years, in the Concluſion of which, when *Jair* was dead, the *Ammonites* took the following Reſolution; but there is no good Ground, as I have ſhewn there, for this Interpretation: Therefore by *after Days*, I underſtand, ſome Time after their Retreat into their own Country, which I mentioned x. 17.

That the Children of Ammon made War againſt Iſrael.] They only came in Parties before, to rob and ſpoil them; but now finding the *Iſraelites* began to take Courage, and had formed a Camp in *Gilead*, x. 17. they raiſed an Army, intending to conquer them, and poſſeſs themſelves of their Country.

Ver. 5. *And it came to paſs, when the Children of Ammon made War againſt Iſrael.*] The *Vulgar* interprets it, *Preſſed hard upon them.*

The Elders of Gilead.] Who are called Princes, x. 18.

Went to fetch Jephthah out of the Land of Tob.] Some of the principal Perſons of the Country, were ſent in the Name of all the Inhabitants of *Gilead*, in an Embaſſy to him, to invite him to return to them.

Ver.

Ver. 6. *And they ſaid unto Jephthah, Come and be our Captain, that we may fight with the Children of Ammon.*] They did not pretend to make him their King, (remembering, perhaps, what had befallen the Men of *Shechem* and *Abimelech*) but only the Leader of their Army.

Ver. 7. *And Jephthah ſaid unto the Elders of Gilead, Did ye not hate me, and expel me out of my Father's Houſe?*] This ſignifies, that his Brethren ejected him, by the Aſſiſtance of the publick Authority (unleſs we ſuppoſe that they were of the Number of *Elders*, that were ſent to him;) or the Elders, who ſaw the Wrong his Brethren did him, connived at it, and did not interpoſe, according to their Office, to do him Right, whereby they made his Expulſion their own Act.

And why are ye come unto me now, when you are in Diſtreſs?] As much as to ſay, What Reaſon have you to expect that I ſhould hearken to you, ſince I know it is only your Diſtreſs, which moves you to recal me?

Ver. 8. *And the Elders of Gilead ſaid unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now.*] This may relate either to what immediately goes before, and then the Senſe is, We confeſs we are in Diſtreſs, and therefore implore thy Help, (which, if thou wilt afford us, thou ſhalt command us all for ever;) or to the Beginning of the foregoing Verſe, and the Meaning is, We are ſenſible of the Injury that was done thee, and therefore are come to repair it, by inviting thee to be our Head; for that is meant by their *turning again to him:* They had altered their Mind, and not only revoked that unjuſt Act, but offered him a Recompence.

That thou mayeſt go with us, and fight againſt the Children of Ammon, and be our Head over all the Inhabitants of Gilead.] Of the Tribes on their Side *Jordan*; for they could promiſe nothing for the Tribes in the Land of *Canaan*, ſome of which were oppreſſed now by the *Philiſtines*, as they were by the *Ammonites*.

Ver. 9. *And Jephthah ſaid unto the Elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again, to fight againſt the Children of Ammon, and the* LORD *deliver them before me, ſhall I be your Head?*] He offers to be the General of their Army, if, after he had vanquiſhed their Enemies, they would, in good Earneſt, make him their Governor in Chief, and not throw him off, when they had no further Need of him. In which Agreement, he ſuppoſed, the Conſent and Appointment of GOD, by whoſe Aid alone he hoped to be victorious.

Ver. 10. *And the Elders of Gilead ſaid unto Jephthah, The* LORD *be Witneſs between us, if we do not according to thy Word.*] They ſolemnly call GOD to witneſs their Sincerity, confirming what was agreed by an Oath, and wiſhing GOD to revenge it, if they did not perform what they promiſed.

Ver. 11. *Then Jephthah went with the Elders of Gilead.*] Unto his own Country.

And the People made him Head and Captain over them.] In a full Aſſembly of the People, with the Princes, ix. 6. x. 18. he was made General of their Army; with an Aſſurance, he ſhould be their Head, after the War was ſucceſsfully ended.

And Jephthah uttered all his Words before the LORD.] The People had done their Part, but *Jephthah* would undertake nothing, without GOD's Approbation, before whom, in a ſolemn Prayer, he laid all that he had ſaid unto them; and, it is likely, that GOD anſwered him by ſome Prophet, and authorized him to undertake the Conduct and Government of the People, (See x. 11.) for if he had done it without a divine Warrant, *the Spirit of the* LORD would not have come upon him, as we read it did, *Ver.* 29.

In Mizpeh.] Where the Children of *Iſrael* had gathered themſelves together to oppoſe the *Ammonites*, x. 17. and where *Jephthah* choſe to fix his Habitation, after the Conqueſt of them, *Ver.* 34. of this Chapter; for that *Mizpeh* where all the Tribes, we often read, met before the LORD, was on this Side *Jordan*, not far from *Jeruſalem*, either in the Tribe of *Judah*, or of *Benjamin*. It is thought probable, by ſome learned Men, that there was ſome *Proſeucha*, a Praying-Place, or Place of divine Worſhip, here at *Mizpah* (See *Joſh.* xxiv. 26.) where *Jephthah* uttered his Words; which otherwiſe, they think, could not be ſaid to be done *before the* LORD: But this is not a ſufficient Ground for ſuch an Opinion; for the divine Preſence (as *Raſi* here obſerves) was in that Place where all the People aſſembled upon a publick Concern. See 1 *Sam.* xi. 15. *Kimchi* obſerves the ſame upon the twentieth Chapter of this Book, *Ver.* 1. where his Words are, *In every Place, in which Iſrael, or a great Part of it, is aſſembled, the divine Preſence dwells.* See my Notes there.

Ver. 12. *And Jephthah ſent Meſſengers to the King of the Children of Ammon.*] Now he plainly acts as a Chief Governor, in appointing an Embaſſy to go from him to the King of the *Ammonites*; which Power he would not have aſſumed, if it had not been given him by GOD.

Saying, What haſt thou to do with me.] That is, What is the Ground of thy Quarrel? Or, For what Reaſon is this Invaſion made?

That thou art come to fight againſt me in my Land?] This is the Language of the ſupreme Governor of the Country, unto whom all were ſubject, as their Lord; and demonſtrates him to have been a moſt pious Prince, that would firſt debate Matters fairly, before he came to Blows, according to the Senſe of a Number of great Men in future Times, mentioned by *Grotius* at large, Lib. II. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 23. Sect. 7. Unto which he was not bound, having taken Arms only in his own Defence; yet to prevent the Effuſion of Blood, he argues the Caſe with the King of the *Ammonites*, who ought rather, if he thought himſelf injured by the *Iſraelites*, to have ſent, before he took Arms, to require Satisfaction.

Ver. 13. *And the King of the Children of Ammon anſwered to the Meſſengers of Jephthah, Becauſe Iſrael took away my Land, when they came out of Egypt.*] This is a mere Colour and Pretence, the Land being none of theirs, when the

the *Iſraelites* conquered it, but the Land of *Sihon*, King of the *Amorites:* For as to the Country of the *Ammonites*, God expreſly charged the *Iſraelites* not to meddle with it, (*Deut.* i. 19.) for he would give them none of it. It is true, this Land, which they now claimed, had formerly belonged to the *Moabites*, but *Sihon* had made a Conqueſt of it, and driven them out of it, as we read *Numb.* xxi. 26. The King of *Ammon* therefore could not call it *his Land*, unleſs he was alſo King of *Moab* at this Time, which is not improbable: Whence it is, that in the following Diſpute between him and *Jephthah*, there is a promiſcuous Mention of the *Moabites* together with the *Ammonites*, as if they were but one People, *Ver.* 15, 17, 18. and *Chemoſh*, which was the God of the *Moabites*, is called, *Ver.* 24. the God of the King of *Ammon:* Unto which may be added, that the Land which *Sihon* conquered, did not entirely belong to the *Moabites*, but ſome of it to the Children of *Ammon*, as is expreſly ſaid *Joſh.* xiii. 25. where we read, that to the *Gadites* was given *half of the Land of the Children of Ammon*; therefore ſome Part of *Sihon*'s Kingdom (where the *Gadites* were ſettled) had formerly belonged to the *Ammonites*.

From Arnon even unto Jabbok, and to Jordan.] Theſe are the Bounds of the Country to which they laid a Claim; the River *Arnon* on the South, and the Brook *Jabbok* on the North, (which we may call the Length of the Country) and *Jordan* on the Weſt; upon which afterward is added the Eaſtern Bounds, when it is ſaid, *Ver.* 22. *from the Wilderneſs unto Jordan*; which is the Wilderneſs through which the *Iſraelites* entered into the Territories of *Sihon*.

Now therefore reſtore theſe Lands.] Which belonged to the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*.

Again peaceably.] The Meſſengers of *Jephthah* had declared that he deſired not War, but Peace; which the King of *Ammon* tells him he muſt not expect, unleſs he reſigned theſe Countries to him.

Ver. 14. *And Jephthah ſent Meſſengers again to the King of the Children of Ammon.*] This is an Argument of a very peaceable Diſpoſition, and an high Commendation of a warlike Spirit, that he was ſtill deſirous to end this Controverſy by Reaſon, and not by the Sword.

Ver. 15. *And ſaith unto him, Thus ſaith Jephthah.*] This is his Reply; which ſeems to be delivered as from a Man in Authority.

Iſrael took not away the Land of Moab, nor the Land of the Children of Ammon.] He denies the Matter of Fact, upon which they grounded the War: For the *Iſraelites* found this Country in the Poſſeſſion of *Sihon*.

Ver. 16. *But when Iſrael came out of Egypt.*] He proves the Truth of what he affirmed, by a ſhort Hiſtory of what paſſed after they came out of *Egypt*; when the King of *Ammon* ſaid, *Ver.* 13. they took this Land from him.

And walked through the Wilderneſs, unto the Red Sea, and came to Kadeſh.] This is not to be underſtood of *Kadeſh-barnea*, but of that *Kadeſh* mentioned *Numb.* xx. 1, 14. which was in the Borders of *Edom*; unto which they came directly from the Red Sea: Nor of their coming to the Red Sea, in the firſt Year after they paſſed through it, mentioned *Numb.* xxxiii. 10. but of their laſt coming to it, in that Station they made at *Ezion-geber*, (after many Stations in other Places) which was upon the Shore of the Red Sea; from whence they immediately marched to this *Kadeſh*, *Numb.* xxxiii. 35, 36.

Ver. 17. *Then Iſrael ſent Meſſengers to the King of Edom, ſaying, Let me, I pray thee, paſs through thy Land.*] This ſhews, they were ſo far from invading any Body's Country, that they humbly begged Leave to paſs through *Edom*, engaging to do no Violence, but to pay for every Thing they wanted. See *Numb.* xx. 14, *&c.*

But the King of Edom would not hearken thereto.] Notwithſtanding which, they were not provoked by their Inhumanity to quarrel with them.

And in like manner they ſent to the King of Moab, but he would not conſent.] We do not read of ſuch a Meſſage ſent to the *Moabites:* But when they came from *Ezion-geber* into the Wilderneſs of *Moab*, we find a Command of God to them not to diſtreſs the *Moabites*, nor to contend with them in Battle: Which intimates there was ſome Occaſion for it; which was their Refuſal to grant them a common Civility.

And Iſrael abode in Kadeſh.] Put up all theſe Affronts, and abſtained from all Violence, continuing quiet in the Place where they had pitched their Tents.

Ver. 18. *Then they went along through the Wilderneſs, and encompaſſed the Land of Edom, and the Land of Moab.*] When they were denied a Paſſage the direct Way, they choſe rather to fetch a great Compaſs, and travel many Miles with great Labour and Toil, (ſee *Numb.* xxi. 4.) than give others the leaſt Diſturbance.

And came by the Eaſt Side of the Land of Moab, and pitched upon the other Side of Arnon.] See *Numb.* xxi. 13.

But came not within the Border of Moab; for Arnon was the Border of Moab.] This is a Demonſtration that they did no Injury to the *Moabites*, into whoſe Country they did not enter. For they went no further than *Arnon*, which divided their Country from the *Ammonites*.

Ver. 19. *And Iſrael ſent Meſſengers unto Sihon King of the Amorites, the King of Heſhbon.*] Where his Royal Palace was. See *Numb.* xxi. 25, 26.

And Iſrael ſaid unto him, Let us paſs, we pray thee, through thy Land, unto my Place.] Being denied Paſſage through *Edom* and *Moab*, they ſent a friendly Meſſage unto him, craving the Favour of being permitted to go through his Country unto *Canaan*, *Numb.* xxi. 21, 22.

Ver. 20. *But Sihon truſted not Iſrael to paſs through his Coaſt.*] Was jealous they would ſeize on his Country.

But Sihon gathered all his People together, and pitched in Jahaz, and fought againſt Iſrael.] He contented not himſelf to refuſe (as his Neighbours had done) to grant a Paſſage through his Country,

Country, which they could not demand, but raiſed all his Forces, and proudly marched to drive them away from his Borders, *Numb.* xxi. 23, 24.

Ver. 21. *And the* LORD GOD *of Iſrael delivered Sihon, and all his People, into the Hand of Iſrael, and they ſmote them.*] It was plainly an Act of GOD to give the *Iſraelites* the Victory; for they were unprepared for War, and tired with a long March about the Land of *Edom* and *Moab*.

So Iſrael poſſeſſed all the Land of the Amorites, the Inhabitants of that Country.] They did not diſpoſſeſs the *Moabites*, but the *Amorites*, who then inhabited that Country, which became the Poſſeſſion of the *Iſraelites*, by the Right of a juſt War, in their own Defence.

Ver. 22. *And they poſſeſſed all the Coaſts of the Ammorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the Wilderneſs even unto Jordan.*] This is a Deſcription of the Length and Breadth of the Land, from South to North, and from Eaſt to Weſt: (See above, *Ver.* 13.) None of which was then in the Poſſeſſion of the *Moabites* or *Ammonites*; who could not therefore charge the *Iſraelites* with taking any of their Land from them.

Ver. 23. *And ſo now the* LORD GOD *of Iſrael hath diſpoſſeſſed the Amorites from before his People Iſrael.*] This is a new Title to this Land; which they not only took in a juſt War, but was alſo given them by GOD, who made them victorious, and then beſtowed it upon them.

And ſhouldſt thou poſſeſs it?] It was abſurd to think, that they ſhould take the Pains to conquer it, and GOD ſhould give it to them, that they might put the *Moabites* again in the Poſſeſſion of it, with whom they had no Alliance; but, quite contrary, they had denied them the common Right of Mankind.

Ver. 24. *Wilt not thou poſſeſs that which Chemoſh thy* GOD *giveth thee to poſſeſs?*] He doth not call *Chemoſh* a GOD; but only argues from the Opinion that they had of him, which all Nations had of their Gods, that they owed their Conqueſts to them, to whom therefore they gave Thanks for all their Victories. Now he appeals to them, whether they would not keep what their GOD had given them, and look upon it as rightfully poſſeſſed by them.

So whomſoever the LORD *our* GOD *ſhall drive out from before us, them will we poſſeſs.*] By the very ſame Title, whereby the *Moabites* poſſeſſed the Country wherein they now lived; from whence they drove out the ancient Inhabitants, *Deut.* ii. 10, 11.

Ver. 25. *And now art thou any thing better than Balak, the Son if Zippor, King of Moab?*] This is a third Argument, that when this Conqueſt was newly made by the *Iſraelites*, the then King of *Moab* (as potent as the preſent) laid no Claim to this Country, nor demanded to have it reſtored to him; but only was afraid they ſhould invade the Land he ſtill poſſeſſed.

Did he ever ſtrive againſt Iſrael.] Diſpute their Title with them.

Or did he ever fight againſt Iſrael.] Endeavour by Force of Arms to recover this Country, as not belonging to them, but to him.

Ver. 26. *While Iſrael dwelt in Heſhbon, and her Towns, and in Aroer, and her Towns, and in all the Cities that be along by the Coaſt of Arnon three hundred Years? &c.*] In the laſt place he pleads Preſcription, and that for *three hundred Years*; in which long Space of Time none of the Kings of *Moab* pretended a Right to this Country, much leſs conteſted it with them; which Argument was irrefragable. For if ſuch a long indiſputed Poſſeſſion cannot make a Right to a Country, it is impoſſible there ſhould be any End of Wars between Kings and Princes. But all Mankind look upon thoſe Wars as unjuſt, which are made for Recovery of Countries wherein People have ſettled quietly for many Ages; tho', perhaps, in the firſt Acquiſition of them, their Title was not good. Therefore it is not neceſſary to examine, whether *Sihon* had a juſt Cauſe of War when he conquered this Country; nor is it of Importance, with reſpect to this, to examine whether the *Iſraelites* had held this Conqueſt juſt three hundred Years; for if a few be wanting, it is not material: But with reſpect to ſomething elſe it is of great Conſequence, for the explaining of what we read 1 *Kings* vi. 2. that *Solomon* began to build the Temple in the *four hundred and eightieth Year* after they came out of *Egypt*. Which Space is divided by theſe Words of *Jephthah* into two Intervals: The firſt of which contained three hundred and forty Years; for they had poſſeſſed this Country three hundred Years, and they came out of *Egypt* forty Years before its Conqueſt: During which Time, they had been Slaves to the *Meſopotamians*, *Moabites*, *Canaanites*, and *Midianites*. Now, if the Years wherein they were oppreſſed by theſe four Nations, and the Years of Peace and Quiet which they enjoyed, be put together, from the firſt Year of *Cuſhan-Riſhothaim*, to the laſt Year of *Jair*, they produce a little more than three hundred Years; ſo that no Time is left for *Joſhua*'s Conqueſt of *Canaan*, and his Life after it, and for the Generation that out-lived him. But by ſuppoſing that ſome of theſe Things fell out in the very ſame Time, (as for Example, during the fourſcore Years Reſt in the Eaſtern Parts of the Land after *Eglon*'s Death, they were oppreſſed twenty Years in the North by *Jabin*) this Difficulty is removed, and all comes right; as Sir *John Marſham* hath demonſtrated in his *Canon Chronicus*: Where he ſhews, that from the Death of *Moſes* to this Invaſion of the *Ammonites*, there were three hundred Years; allowing five and twenty Years (as *Joſephus* computes) for *Joſhua*'s Government after they came into *Canaan*, and thirty-five Years to the following Generation that ſurvived him. See *Seculum* 11. *Æra Exodi.* And concerning the other Interval, ſee here xii. 14.

Why therefore did ye not recover them within that Time?] This Queſtion could not be anſwered, that in ſo long a Time they ſhould hear nothing of their Claim till now.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore I have not ſinned againſt thee, but thou doſt me wrong to war againſt me.*] Upon all theſe Reaſons he concludes, the *Ammonites*

monites had no Cauſe to make this War; but were injurious in it to the *Iſraelites*.

The LORD, *the Judge, be Judge this Day between the Children of Iſrael, and the Children of Ammon.*] The Meaning is, that if they were not moved by theſe Reaſons, but the Controverſy muſt be decided by Arms, he committed his Cauſe to GOD, the righteous Judge of the whole World, who, he doubted not, would do him right. By *this Day* he doth not mean that GOD would determine the Right, by giving him the Victory then, when he ſpake theſe Words, (for he was not yet ready to give them Battle) but that GOD would judge of the Juſtice of his preſent Plea, and accordingly give Sentence, when the Matter came to be tried in a Battle.

Ver. 28. *Howbeit the King of the Children of Ammon hearkened not to the Words of Jephthah, which he ſent him.*] He would not yield to Arguments, being obſtinately reſolved to fight it out.

Ver. 29. *Then the Spirit of the* LORD *came upon Jephthah.*] The People had choſen him for their Leader, and promiſed to continue him their chief Governor, as they had already made him; and now GOD publickly declares his Approbation of their Choice; and made him their Judge, as he had done others before, (iii. 10.) by endowing him with an extraordinary Meaſure of Courage and Wiſdom, and all other Qualities neceſſary to render him fit to be the Ruler of his People.

And he paſſed over Gilead and Manaſſeh.] Went through the whole Country of *Reuben* and *Gad*, (which are comprehended in *Gilead*) and likewiſe the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, and levied what Men he could among them.

And paſſed over Mizpeh of Gilead.] Went to the extreme Part of the Country Northward, where *Mizpeh* was, towards Mount *Lebanon* and *Hermon*.

And from Mizpeh of Gilead he paſſed over unto the Children of Ammon.] He marched from thence, with ſuch Forces as he had gathered, toward the Enemies Country.

Ver. 30. *And Jephthah vowed a Vow unto the* LORD, *and ſaid, If thou ſhalt without fail deliver the Children of Ammon into my Hand.*] He did not make a Doubt of it, but thought he might be more aſſured of Victory, if he made a religious Vow before-hand, of being very grateful to GOD for it. Which was the Cuſtom of the ancient *Romans*, as we find in *Livy*; who frequently tells us, that their Generals were wont to vow to *Jupiter*, or *Apollo*, or others, Part of the Spoil they ſhould take in War; or to build Temples in their Honour. And thus the *Iſraelites*, when King *Arad* came againſt them, as they were going towards *Canaan*, (a little before the Conqueſt of this Country now in Controverſy) vowed to make his Country a *Cherem*, if GOD would deliver it into their Hands. See *Numb.* xxi. 2.

Ver. 31. *That it ſhall be, that whatſoever.*] This comprehends all Sorts of Creatures, as the *Hebrew* Doctors commonly obſerve.

Cometh forth of the Doors of my Houſe to meet me.] The *Vulgar* adds the Word *firſt*, which muſt be underſtood; otherwiſe, he would have been obliged to devote many Things to the LORD, which might poſſibly come out of his Houſe.

When I return in Peace from the Children of Ammon.] Come back victorious.

Shall ſurely be the LORD'*s, and I will offer it up for a Burnt-offering.*] If it was a Thing fit to be offered; for if a Dog or a Swine ſhould have happened to come out firſt to meet him, that was not lawful to be offered. But the great Queſtion is, Whether it was not as unlawful to offer his Daughter, who ſeems to be comprehended in this Vow? And it is ſaid afterwards, *Ver.* 39. that he did unto her according to it. *Joſephus*, and the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt, and ſeveral famous *Rabbins*, think that he did offer her, being deceived by a Miſtake of the Senſe of that Law, *Levit.* xxvii. 28. And tho' he might have been abſolved from his Vow by the High Prieſt, yet they tell an idle Story, that they ſtood ſo much upon a Punctilio of their Dignity, that he would neither go to *Phineas*, nor *Phineas* vouchſafe to wait upon him. Which is a Tale not to be found in the *Talmud*, but in ſome leſſer Writer, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, Lib. 4. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 11. where he ſhews, that the two *Kimchi's*, Father and Son, with *R. Levi ben Gerſom*, and others, interpret theſe Words quite otherwiſe; and take the Particle (which we tranſlate *and*) to be a *disjunctive*; that is, as much as *or*. So *Kimchi* his Words are, *It ſhall be conſecrated to the* LORD, *if it be not fit for a Burnt-offering; or it ſhall be offered for a Burnt-offering, if it be fit for it.* And ſo they think ſhe was devoted to GOD, and ſeparate from all Secular Affairs, that ſhe might give herſelf continually to Prayer and holy Exerciſes. Which Opinion hath ſeveral Difficulties in it, as he there obſerves; and it muſt be confeſſed, the Stream of Interpreters runs the quite contrary Way: For tho' they call this *votum temerarium*, as *Tertullian* doth, a *raſh* Vow, or a *fooliſh incautious* Vow, as *Theodoret*, St. *Auſtin*, and others; yet very great Numbers (and indeed moſt of the antient Chriſtian Writers) think that he did really offer her: Tho' it cannot be denied, that there are great Difficulties in this Interpretation alſo; no ſuch thing having ever been done in *Iſrael*; but ſuch Sacrifices declared abominable unto GOD: Which it is a Wonder he ſhould not know, nor the People neither; who, one would have expected, ſhould have hindered ſuch a barbarous Sacrifice. All that can be ſaid in Anſwer to this, is, that they having been long accuſtomed to Idolatrous Worſhip, and he having lived out of his own Country, and being a Soldier, had forgotten their Law, or retained but a very imperfect Knowledge of it. But they that would ſee this Matter largely diſcuſſed, may conſult *Ludovicus Capellus*, who hath a long Diſſertation on purpoſe about it; and I ſhall ſay ſomething more of it upon the latter End of this Chapter.

Ver. 32. *So Jephthah paſſed over unto the Children of Ammon, to fight againſt them.*] He was not far from them before, *Ver.* 29. but now he drew his Army up to them, and engaged them.

And

And the LORD *delivered them into his Hand.*] And thereby declared the *Ammonites* were in the wrong, *Ver.* 27.

Ver. 33. *And he ſmote them from Aroer.*] Which was a City upon the Banks of the River *Arnon*; or rather in the River, being encompaſſed with it.

Till thou come to Minnith.] Another City up in the Country.

Even twenty Cities, and unto the Plain of the Vineyards.] They chaſed them a great Way, and deſtroyed their Cities as they went along, till they came to the Plain here mentioned. Or, as it is in the Margin, unto *Abel*; a City perhaps which was very ſtrong, called *Abel-Keramim*, as the LXX underſtand it.

With a great Slaughter.] Both in the Field, and in the Cities.

Thus the Children of Ammon were ſubdued before the Children of Iſrael.] So that they infeſted their Country no more.

Ver. 34. *And Jephthah came to Mizpeh, unto his Houſe.*] From which he went forth when he began this Expedition, *Ver.* 29.

And behold, his Daughter came out to meet him, with Timbrels and Dances.] She was the firſt Perſon of his Family whom he ſaw at his Return, who came, accompanied with ſome of her Neighbours, to welcome him home, and congratulate his Victory with Muſick and Dancing. So the old Manner had been, *Exod.* xv. 20. and continued afterwards, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 6.

And ſhe was his only Child; beſide her he had neither Son nor Daughter.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, he had not *from himſelf* either Son or Daughter; intimating, perhaps, that tho' his Wife had Children by another Huſband, or he had adopted Children, yet he had none deſcended from his own Body but this only Daughter, which made her the dearer to him.

Ver. 35. *And it came to paſs, that when he ſaw her, he rent his Clothes.*] As the Manner was when any great Calamity befel them. See *Levit.* x. 6.

And ſaid, Alas! my Daughter, thou haſt brought me very low.] Quite ſpoiled my Triumph.

And thou art one of them that trouble me.] Which was the more afflictive, becauſe he expected from her the greateſt Comfort and Pleaſure.

For I have opened my Mouth unto the LORD, *and I cannot go back.*] That is, made a Vow, which he could not retract. It is likely he told her what it was, tho' that be not here expreſſed; or by his deep Sorrow at the firſt Sight of her, ſhe underſtood it was upon her Account: But in this he was groſly miſtaken, which way ſoever we interpret this Vow; whether of ſeparating her from Company, or of offering her for a Burnt-offering; for he was bound to neither, yea, he was bound not to offer her in Sacrifice, which was a Thing abominable. As for the other, there was no ſuch Power by their Law granted to Parents, to ſhut up their Children, and ſeparate them from all Society with Men, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, there being not the leaſt Footſtep of any ſuch Thing in the whole Body of their *Talmud*, or in their Lawyers.

Ver. 36. *And ſhe ſaid unto him, My Father, if thou haſt opened thy Mouth unto the* LORD, *do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy Mouth; foraſmuch as the* LORD *hath taken Vengeance for thee of thine Enemies, even of the Children of Ammon.*] A rare Inſtance of Religion, Courage, Obedience to her Parents, and Love to her Country.

Ver. 37. *And ſhe ſaid unto her Father, Let this Thing be done for me.*] Grant me only one Requeſt; which was not inconſiſtent, ſhe thought, with his Vow; for he did not ſay he would execute it immediately.

Let me alone two Months.] Leave me at Liberberty ſo long.

That I may go up and down upon the Mountains.] Which were fit Places for her Purpoſe, being ſolitary, and far from Company.

To bewail my Virginity.] For it was accounted a great Infelicity in that Nation to die without Iſſue.

I and my Fellows.] Other Virgins, her Companions. This ſome take for an Argument, that ſhe was not to be ſacrificed; for then ſhe would have bewailed her Death, rather than her Want of Poſterity. But this it no concluding Argument; for ſhe might poſſibly look upon it as an Honour to be a Sacrifice unto GOD.

Ver. 38. *And he ſaid, Go; and he ſent her away for two Months, and ſhe went with her Companions, and bewailed her Virginity upon the Mountains.*] They that think ſhe knew ſhe was to be offered, infer from hence, that ſhe looked upon it as a greater Calamity to die without Iſſue, than merely to die.

Ver. 39. *And it came to paſs, at the End of two Months ſhe returned to her Father.*] Having had time to bring her Mind unto a perfect Reſignation to her Father; or rather, to confirm herſelf in the Reſolution ſhe had at firſt, chearfully to ſubmit unto whatſoever he had vowed.

Who did with her according to his Vow, which he had vowed.] That is, ſaith *Kimchi*, he made her an Houſe, and brought her into it, and there left her ſecluded from the Company of all Men, and from all ſecular Affairs. That's the Meaning, he thinks, of the firſt Part of his Vow, *It ſhall ſurely be the* LORD'S. And ſo *Ralbag*, a little more fully, ſhe was ſeparated from the Company of Men; for if ſhe had had a Huſband, ſhe could not have ſerved the LORD alone, but muſt have ſerved her Huſband alſo, as all Wives are bound to do. *Selden* indeed ſaith, that he doth not ſee what Law gave him this Power to keep her from Marriage; there being nothing of it in all their Books, as was ſaid before. But there is ſomething like it in 2 *Sam.* xx. 3. where *David* ſhut up his Concubines, and made them live in Widowhood till their Death. And he might take the Liberty to do this, (though no Law gave him ſuch Power) rather than take away the Life of his Daughter, which was againſt Law; for it condemned ſuch Sacrifices. But the Truth is, there was no Neceſſity of doing either, if he had underſtood,

or conſidered the Law; for he might have paid a Price for her to the Prieſt, which the Law preſcribed, when a Son or Daughter was conſecrated to GOD, *Levit.* xxvii. 2, 3, *&c.* Nay, they who conſecrated themſelves, might redeem themſelves: And about this very Caſe of *Jephthah* there was anciently a Diſpute between two famous Doctors, *Simeon ben Lakiſh*, and *R. Johanan*; the former of which maintained, that he ought to have paid the Price or Value of her, according to the Law; but the other maintained, he was not bound to do ſo much as that, becauſe the Vow was to offer a Burnt offering, in which his Daughter could not be comprehended. For other Animals only were capable of being offered in Sacrifice. As for thoſe Words, *Levit.* xxvii. 28, 29. upon which *Lud. Capellus* hath founded his Opinion that ſhe might be ſacrificed, *Maimonides* hath better reſtrained them to the Sons and Daughters of the *Canaanites*, devoted by GOD to Deſtruction. But who can think that GOD would have the *Hebrew* Children ſo devoted as thoſe Slaves were, upon whom a Curſe was denounced before they entered into *Canaan?* Beſide, if *Jephthah* was bound to offer his Daughter, who ſhould be employed in that Work? Should the Prieſts? But their Buſineſs was rather to perſuade and deter him from what he had imprudently vowed. Should the Magiſtrates? But they could not be ignorant that GOD had forbidden ſuch Sacrifices. Should *Jephthah* himſelf? But this would have argued him as void of common Senſe, as of natural Affection. And who can think (as *Theodoricus Hackſpan* goes on) that ſince GOD allowed Cities of Refuge, whither a Man-ſlayer might flee, and be ſafe, when he had unwittingly killed a Man, that the ſame Privilege might not have been allowed to a Son or a Daughter, who was perfectly innocent, (as this Virgin was) *viz.* to ſave their Lives by Flight, or by paying a Ranſom?

The *Jews* are very doubtful in this Matter; for ſome ſay *Phineas* loſt his Prieſthood, and it was tranſlated to the Family of *Ithamar*, becauſe he did not abſolve *Jephthah* from this Vow: But others of the Eaſtern Writers ſay, he was forbid to releaſe him by the Spirit of Prophecy. And *Jephthah*, when he was admoniſhed by his Friends to go and adviſe with him how to ſave his Daughter, was forbid by an Angel to go. See *Selden*, Lib. 1. *de Succeſſion. ad Pontificatum*, Cap. 2. Fol. 117, *&c.* But the *Targum* upon this Verſe blames *Jephthah* for not conſulting *Phineas*; for if he had he would have redeemed her for a Sum of Money.

And ſhe knew no Man.] This is looked upon, by thoſe who think ſhe was only conſecrated to the LORD, as an Argument of it; that after the Performance of his Vow, it is ſaid, *She knew no Man*; that is, as long as ſhe lived, ſhe continued a Virgin.

And it was a Cuſtom in Iſrael.] They that think ſhe was ſacrificed, take theſe Words as ſeparate from thoſe that follow, and interpret them, Upon this a Sanction was made, that none ſhould hereafter, by the like Error offer human Sacrifices. So the *Targum*. See *Selden* in the Place forenamed. But there was no need of this Statute; nor is it likely that the Fable among the *Greeks*, concerning the Sacrifice of *Iphigenia* by *Agamemnon*, was deviſed out of this ſacred Story, as *Lud. Capellus* conjectures; who fancies alſo this *Jephtigenia*, that is, the Daughter of *Jephthah*, (from whence might come *Iphigenia*) was not ſacrificed upon the Altar, but only ſlain; though the Vow was, he would offer a Burnt-offering. But we refer theſe Words to what follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 40. *That the Daughters of Iſrael.*] They of that Country.

Went yearly to lament the Daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.] Some interpret the *Hebrew* Word *Thannoth* to ſignify they went to *diſcourſe* with her, or to comfort her; though the moſt ancient Interpreters (as *Bochartus* obſerves in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 1. Cap. 9.) tranſlate it as we do θρηνεῖν, as the LXX have it, to *make Lamentation*. But quite contrary the learned *Lud. de Dieu*, different from the reſt, (except *Sixtinus Amama*, who hath the ſame Notion) interprets it to *praiſe her*. Which Signification he plainly derives out of the *Arabick* Language; and beſide, we ourſelves in this very Book (*Ver.* 11.) ſeem to follow it, by tranſlating it *rehearſe*. And thus that excellent Man explains this whole Matter. *She was not ſlain; but as appears ſufficiently from the foregoing Words, was devoted to perpetual Virginity; in which ſhe deſerved greater Commendation than her Father. For he, as ſoon as he ſaw her come to meet him, repented of the Vow he had raſhly made, and tore his Clothes, lamenting the miſerable Condition into which he had brought himſelf and her: But ſhe moſt courageouſly comforted her Father, and congratulating his Victory, deſired him not to be troubled about her, for ſhe was ready to ſubmit to what he had vowed. Upon the Account of which heroick Virtue, whereby ſhe obliged the whole Country, they could do no leſs than celebrate her Praiſe every Year.*

Four Days in the Year.] One Day in every Quarter of the Year, they went to celebrate her Fame with Verſes compoſed in her Praiſe, as *Grotius* ſuppoſes. But whether they went to the Place where ſhe was retired, and there ſang them before her, or in ſome other publick Place; and whether while ſhe lived, or after her Death, is uncertain, as *de Dieu* obſerves.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Men of Ephraim gathered themſelves.*] In the *Hebrew*, *were called*, by a publick Cry, or Proclamation, to arm themſelves.

And went Northward.] To the Country of *Manaſſeh*, on the other Side *Jordan*. For this ſufficiently ſhews, that *Mizpeh* was in that Country, and in the Northern Part of it, towards *Lebanon* and *Hermon*, as I obſerved before, xi. 29. *Pet. Martyr* thinks they did not march orderly thither, being not gathered together (as far as appears) by the Authority of the

the Magiſtrate, but in a tumultuous Manner, as ſeditious People are wont to do.

And ſaid unto Jephthah.] By this, and by what follows, it appears they came to *Mizpeh*, where *Jephthah* dwelt.

Wherefore paſſedſt thou over.] They do not mean *over Jordan*, for there he was already; but from hence to the Coaſt of the *Ammonites*. See xi. 30, 32.

To fight againſt the Children of Ammon, and didſt not call us to go with thee?] Their Pride made them take it ill, that they had not a Share in the Glory of the late Victory. Juſt as formerly they quarrelled with *Gideon* upon the like Occaſion, viii. 1. which ſhews they were an haughty Tribe.

We will burn thine Houſe upon thee with Fire.] Their Pride put them into ſuch a ſtrange Rage, that they ſeem to threaten to burn him, as well as his Houſe.

Ver. 2. *And Jephthah ſaid unto them, I and my People were at great Strife with the Children of Ammon.*] He anſwers their furious Language with great Mildneſs; and firſt tells them, that he did not undertake this War till he was forced to it by the *Ammonites*, who ſorely diſtreſſed them, x. 9.

And when I called you, ye delivered me not out of their Hands.] In the ſecond place he denies their Charge, and affirms the contrary, that he had begged their Aſſiſtance, but they refuſed to give it him: Yea (as the Word we tranſlate *called* ſignifies) he had cried aloud to them, with earneſt Importunities, to help them in their Diſtreſs.

Ver. 3. *And when I ſaw that you delivered me not.*] That there was no Hope of your Help to preſerve us from Ruin.

I put my Life in my Hand.] Expoſed myſelf to the utmoſt Hazard; for he had but a ſmall Part of the People of *Iſrael* with him, to fight with their powerful Oppreſſors. This Phraſe ſeems peculiar to the *Hebrews*, and the Eaſtern Writers; for among all the *Greek* and *Roman* Writers, *Iſaac Caſaubon* ſaith he never met with it but once in *Xenarchus*; whom *Athenæus* alledges, introducing in one of his Plays a Man full of Fear and Trembling——ἐν τῇ χειρὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἔχοντα.

And paſſed over againſt the Children of Ammon.] With ſuch Forces alone as he could get on his Side *Jordan*, xi. 29, 30.

And the LORD *delivered them into my Hand.*] GOD approved his Undertaking, by giving him a great Victory.

Wherefore then are ye come up unto me this Day to fight againſt me?] Who had defended and preſerved them. For if the *Ammonites* had vanquiſhed *Jephthah*, they would ſoon have paſſed over *Jordan*, and fallen upon the *Ephraimites*; as they had before attempted, x. 9.

Ver. 4. *Then Jephthah gathered all the Men of Gilead, and fought with Ephraim.*] When he ſaw they were not pacified by this fair and peaceable Apology, but ſtill continued their Menaces, he betook himſelf to Arms, and raiſed as many Men as he could to oppoſe them.

And the Men of Gilead ſmote them.] Put them to flight, and made a great Slaughter of them.

Becauſe they ſaid, Ye Gileadites are Fugitives of Ephraim.] That which provoked them to kill ſo many of them, was their ſcoffing Language (added to their Threats) whereby they reproached the Men of *Gilead* (who were the chief Managers of the late War, xi. 29.) as if they were but the Scum and Dregs of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, *i. e.* of thoſe deſcended from *Joſeph*, among whom they were the principal.

Among the Ephraimites, and among the Manaſſites.] That is, that dwelt in the Land of *Canaan:* Who looked upon the *Gileadites*, and the reſt of the *Manaſſites*, on the other Side *Jordan*, and in the moſt Northerly Part of it, as the Refuſe of their Nation. But it muſt be acknowledged that the Words in the *Hebrew* are capable of another Senſe, and may be thus tranſlated: *Therefore* (ſo the Particle *Ki* is often tranſlated) *they ſaid, Fugitives of* Ephraim *are ye*; That is, having ſmote them, the *Gileadites* called the *Ephraimites Run-aways*. And the Truth is, thus they (not the *Gileadites*) are called in the next Verſe: And then the following Words may be thus tranſlated, *Gilead got between the Ephraimites and the Manaſſites*. It is very probable that the *Manaſſites* in *Canaan* joined with the *Ephraimites*, in this preſumptuous Attempt upon the *Gileadites*; who being well acquainted with their own Country, got between them and the River *Jordan*, to intercept their Paſſage over it, as we read in the following Verſe.

Ver. 5. *And the Gileadites took the Paſſages of Jordan before the Ephraimites.*] So that none could paſs over at theſe Fords, without their Leave.

And it was ſo, that when the Ephraimites who were eſcaped.] They are the very ſame Words in the *Hebrew*, which are uſed in the foregoing Verſe, *The Fugitives of Ephraim.*

Said, Let me go over; that the Men of Gilead.] Who were ſet to guard the Paſſages.

Said, Art thou an Ephraimite.] They examined him what Countryman he was; whether a *Reubenite*, *Gadite*, *Manaſſite*, on their Side *Jordan*, or one of the *Ephraimites* on the other.

If he ſaid, Nay.] For Fear would make him deny it.

Ver. 6. *Then ſaid they unto him, ſay now Shibboleth.*] To find the Truth, they put him to this Teſt; whether his Pronunciation of ſome Words was like that of the *Gileadites:* For People of the ſame Nation, who ſpeak the ſame Language, differ very much in their Pronunciation of it, in ſeveral Parts of the Country: As in *Greece*, all ſpake *Greek*; but the *Ionians*, *Atticks*, *Dorians*, and *Æolians* ſpake it very differently. And ſo they did among the *Romans*; for at *Prænesſte*, which was not far from *Rome*, (as *Pet. Martyr* obſerves out of *Plautus*) inſtead of *Ciconia*, they ſaid *Konia*. And ſo the *Ephraimites* ſaid *Sibboleth*, but could not pronounce *Shibboleth*. There were many other Words like this, which they could not

not frame their Mouths to ſpeak, as the *Gileadites* did; but this was choſen, it is likely, becauſe it was very fit for the Purpoſe; *Shibboleth* ſignifying not only an *Ear of Corn*, but alſo *Floods of Water*, (*Pſal.* lxix. 2.) ſo that the Teſt they put them unto was this, to bid them ſay, *Let me paſs over the Water.*

And he ſaid Sibboleth; for he could not frame his Mouth to pronounce it right.] If he was an *Ephraimite*, he preſently diſcovered himſelf; for he could not pronounce the Letter *Shin*; which proceeded, I ſuppoſe, from the long Uſe and Cuſtom of that People to pronounce otherwiſe, ſo that they could not frame the Organs of Speech to pronounce as the *Gileadites* did: Which we ſee at this Day among all Nations; who in different Provinces, very much differ in their Speech, tho' they uſe the very ſame Language.

Then they took him, and ſlew him in the Paſſages of Jordan.] Otherwiſe they let him go; for they uſed this Mark of Diſtinction on purpoſe, leſt they ſhould kill any of another Tribe.

And there fell at that Time of the Ephraimites, Forty and Two Thouſand.] In the Fight, and at the Paſſages of *Jordan*, this Number periſhed: Which was a juſt Puniſhment to take down their Pride and Inſolence, in deſpiſing ſo great a Man as *Jephthah*, and threatning to deſtroy his Houſe, after ſo glorious a Victory, whereby he had ſaved all the People of *Iſrael*; and reproaching their Brethren alſo, whom they invaded without any Cauſe, and ſeem to have intended to drive them out of their Country.

Ver. 7. *And Jephthah judged Iſrael ſix Years.*] After this Humiliation of the *Ephraimites*, all the Tribes, whom the *Ammonites* had oppreſſed, (on the other Side *Jordan*, perhaps, in the Land of *Canaan*, as well as the *Gileadites*, and the reſt on their Side) ſubmitted themſelves unto him, as their Judge; and he continued ſix Years in the Government.

Then died Jephthah the Gileadite, and was buried in one of the Cities of Gilead.] The *Jews* have ſeveral fooliſh Conceits concerning his Death and Burial; becauſe it is ſaid, *He was buried in the Cities of Gilead*, as the Words are in the *Hebrew*: Which they would have underſtood, as if he rotted (as a Puniſhment for offering his Daughter) and one Piece of him, when it dropt off, was buried in one City, and another in the next City, *&c.* when the plain Meaning is expreſſed in our Tranſlation, That he was buried *in one of the Cities*, that is, in *Mizpeh* where he lived. See *Gen.* xix. 29. And ſo *Aben-Ezra* and *Ralbag* interpret it: Tho' the latter of theſe *Rabbins* could not forbear to incline to one of their *Talmudical* Fables; that he having no Iſſue to propagate his Name, ordered his Body to be cut into ſeveral Pieces, and buried in ſo many Cities of *Gilead*; that every one might preſerve his Memory. Other fancies there are, in which Men indulge themſelves, and *Peter Martyr* hath thought fit to interpoſe his Conjecture, that the Word *Iram*, which we tranſlate *Cities*, may poſſibly be a proper Name of a City in *Gilead*, wherein he was buried.

Ver. 8. *And after him Ibzan of Bethlehem judged Iſrael.*] It is not ſaid upon what Occaſion he was made Judge; for, perhaps, he was raiſed up by God immediately after *Jephthah*'s Death, only to preſerve them in the true Religion, which was in ſome meaſure reſtored. Some of the *Jews* fancy him to have been the ſame with *Boaz*, who married *Ruth* the *Moabiteſs*; but without any Ground at all that I can find.

Ver. 9. *And he had Thirty Sons and Thirty Daughters.*] A numerous Iſſue was accounted a great Bleſſing in thoſe Days: And tho' we read of no memorable Act that this Judge did, yet this is ſet down to ſhew, that he was a Perſon eminently favoured by God.

Whom he ſent abroad.] The *Vulgar* refers this to his Daughters, for whom he provided Huſbands, and ſent his Daughters to their Houſes, as the Manner was, *Gen.* xxiv. 67. xxxi. 50.

And he took in Thirty Daughters from abroad for his Sons.] This compleated the Bleſſing of God in the Gift of ſo many Children; who all lived to the State of Men and Women, and were all diſpoſed by him in Marriage; for that was in the Power of Parents. See *Gen.* xxiv.

And he judged Iſrael Seven Years.] Not all the *Iſraelites*, but thoſe that *Jephthah* had judged; and none diſputed his Authority, but he ruled over them thus long.

Ver. 10. *Then died Ibzan, and was buried at Bethlehem.*] There were two *Bethlehems*, one in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, and the other in the Tribe of *Judah*; the latter of which, it is generally thought, is here meant, where he was born and buried.

Ver. 11. *And after him Elon a Zebulonite judged Iſrael, and he judged Iſrael Ten Years.*] It is obſerved by many, that *Euſebius*, in his *Chronicon*, paſſes by this Judge, becauſe he ſaith the LXX do not mention him; tho' the *Hebrew* Text doth: But as all our preſent Copies of the LXX now mention him; ſo did thoſe whom a very antient Writer uſed, *viz. Theophilus Antioch.* Lib. 1. *ad Autolicum*; and which is more to be wondered at, thoſe Copies alſo which *Euſebius* himſelf followed in his *Tenth* Book, *de Præpar. Evang.* Cap. xiv. as our Primate *Uſher* hath obſerved in his *Chronologia Sacra*, Pars I. Cap. *ult.*

Ver. 12. *And Elon the Zebulonite died, and was buried in Aijalon in the Country of Zebulon.*] Theſe laſt Words were added to diſtinguiſh this *Aijalon* here mentioned, from another in the Tribe of *Dan.* i. 35.

Ver. 13. *And after him Abdon the Son of Hillel, a Pirathonite, judged Iſrael.*] The Place where he was born, ſhews that he was of the Tribe of *Ephraim*; whom God at laſt honoured with a Judge of their own Country, after their Pride had been humbled by *Jephthah*: For *Pirathon* is expreſly ſaid, *Ver.* 15. to be in the Land of *Ephraim.*

Ver. 14. *And he had Forty Sons, and Thirty Nephews.*] That is, Grandſons.

That rode on Threeſcore and Ten Aſſes Colts.] See *Ver.* 10. This is ſaid, to ſhew that God bleſſed him not only with a numerous Poſterity, but let them all grow up to be Men. See x. 4.

And he judged Iſrael Eight Years.] The Intention of this Book is chiefly to ſhew how God puniſhed them for their Sins, and delivered them upon their Repentance: But nothing remarkable of this Kind falling out in the Time of theſe Three laſt mentioned Judges, he omits to relate their other Acts, which was beſide his Purpoſe.

Here it may be fit to note, that the other Interval of the two mentioned upon xi. 26. conſiſting of an Hundred and Forty Years, (which added to Three Hundred and Forty, in the foregoing Interval, make up the 480 Years mentioned 1 *Kings* vi. 2.) it is evident that the latter Part of them, viz. *Eighty Four Years*, were made up by the Reigns of *Saul* and *David*, who each reigned Forty Years, (2 *Sam.* v. 4. *Acts* xiii. 21.) and the four firſt Years of *Solomon*: Therefore the remaining *Fifty ſix* Years are made up of Part of the *Eighteen Years* wherein the *Ammonites* oppreſſed *Iſrael* after the Death of *Jair*, and the Years wherein theſe four laſt named Perſons and *Samuel* judged *Iſrael*.

Ver. 15. *And Abdon the Son of Hillel the Pirathonite died, and was buried in Pirathon in the Land of Ephraim, in the Mount of the Amalekites.*] Some think this Mount retained the Name of *Mount Amalek* (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) from ancient Times; the *Amalekites* having poſſeſſed it heretofore, when the *Canaanites* were the Inhabitants of this Country: But it may as well be thought (ſince all that is ſaid, is but Conjecture) that it was ſo called from ſome famous Overthrow, which the Children of *Ephraim* gave the *Amalekites* in this Place: For in the Time of the Judges they more than once joined with others againſt the *Iſraelites*. See iii. 13. vi. 3. but eſpecially ſee what I have noted upon v. 14.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Children of Iſrael did Evil again in the Sight of the* Lord.] As he complained before, x. 6. when he began to ſpeak of what befel them thereupon.

And the Lord *delivered them into the Hand of the Philiſtines Forty Years.*] This is the ſixth Oppreſſion, and the longeſt that they ever lay under: Which is thought, by a great Man I have often mentioned, to have ended ſeven Months after the Death of *Eli*, when the Ark was brought back out of the Land of the *Philiſtines*; and, by the ſame Reaſon, it began ſo many Months after he entered upon the Government, after the Death of *Abdon*. See *Uſſherii Annales, ad A. D.* 2848. and his *Chronologica Sacra*, Pag. 1. Cap. 12, 13. But, I think, Sir *John Marſham* hath ſince that more rightly judged, That this Oppreſſion by the *Philiſtines* is not different from that mentioned x. 7, 8. but one and the ſame; they vexing and oppreſſing the *Iſraelites* in the Weſt, when the *Ammonites* oppreſſed them in the Eaſt: For tho' the Oppreſſion of the *Philiſtines* laſted longer, yet it began at the very ſame Time with the other; which made their Diſtreſs the greater: And therefore that Preface (x. 7.) belongs not only to what immediately there follows, concerning the *Ammonites* and *Jephthah*; but to what is here related concerning the *Philiſtines* and *Sampſon*: Which the holy Writer could not ſpeak of both together without Confuſion; and therefore firſt relates the Iſſue of the War with the *Ammonites*, and then relates the other Part of the Hiſtory concerning the *Philiſtines*, which he here begins: And by this *Synchroniſm* all Difficulties may be ſolved, and the Years, which ſeemed redundant, brought within their true Compaſs. See his *Canon Chronicus*, Sect. 11. Pag. 293.

Ver. 2. *And there was a certain Man of Zorah.*] See *Joſh.* xix. 40, 41.

Of the Family of the Danites.] Sometimes the Word *Family* is uſed for a *Tribe*. See *Joſh.* vii. 17. Or, the Meaning may be *of a Family among the Danites*: From among whom it was very proper to have a Deliverer raiſed up to them, for the *Danites* were near Neighbours to the *Philiſtines*, who oppreſſed them.

Whoſe name was Manoah, and his Wife was barren and bare not.] Was not likely to have any Children.

Ver. 3. *And the Angel of the* Lord *appeared unto the Woman.*] As he did to *Gideon*, vi. 12. in Human Shape; as the Relation ſhews in the following Verſes, 5, 8, *&c.*

And ſaid unto her, Behold now thou art barren and beareth not; but thou ſhalt conceive and bear a Son.] The greateſt Men of this Nation were born of barren Women; as *Iſaac* was antiently, and *Samuel* and *John* the *Baptiſt* in future Times.

Ver. 4. *Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not Wine nor ſtrong Drink.*] She was to live as the *Nazarites* did, (*Numb.* vi. 2, 3.) while ſhe carried him in her Womb, and perhaps while ſhe nurſed him; becauſe, as it follows in the next Verſe, he was to be a perpetual *Nazarite* unto God, from his Conception to his Death (*Ver.* 7.) which he could not have been, if ſhe had drank Wine or ſtrong Drink; becauſe a Child in the Womb and its Mother live by the ſame Nouriſhment.

And eat not any unclean Thing.] It is likely they were too negligent in thoſe Days, in obſerving the Precepts about Meats; otherwiſe there would have been no need to mention this.

Ver. 5. *For lo, thou ſhalt conceive and bear a Son, and no Raſor ſhall come on his Head; for the Child ſhall be a Nazarite unto* God *from the Womb.*] See upon *Numb.* vi. 4.

And he ſhall begin to deliver Iſrael out of the Hands of the Philiſtines.] He did not perfectly deliver the *Iſraelites* from the Yoke of the *Philiſtines*, but it was done after his Death by *Samuel*; who put an End to this Forty Years Tyranny, by this famous Victory at *Eben Ezer*, 1 *Sam.* vii. 13. as the ſame Sir *J. Marſham* obſerves: Who ſuppoſes *Eli* to have died in the midſt of this Servitude, that is, twenty Years before

before this Victory. *Sampſon* therefore only ſorely galled the *Philiſtines*, but they ſtill continued to oppreſs the *Iſraelites*, as they did when he was born; for it appears by theſe Words, that when the Angel ſpake to them, they were under *the Hand*, that is, the Power of the *Philiſtines*, and ſo continued all his Days: For it is ſaid, xv. 20. that he judged *Iſrael* Twenty Years, *in the Days of the Philiſtines*; that is, while they tyrannized over *Iſrael*: From which Tyranny he was ſo far from being a compleat Deliverer, that he himſelf was taken and bound by them; nor had he ever any Command over the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 6. *And the Woman came and told her Huſband.*] The Angel ſeems to have appeared to her in the Field, and ſhe acquainted her Huſband with it when ſhe came home.

Saying, A Man of God *came unto me.*] So they called Prophets.

And his Countenance was like the Countenance of an Angel of God, *very terrible.*] That is, venerable, or full of Majeſty; for ſo the *Men of* God, I ſuppoſe, ſometimes appeared; as may be gathered from the Story of St. *Stephen*, who being full of the Holy Ghoſt, when he ſtood before the Council of *Jeruſalem*, his Face ſhone *as if it had been the Face of an Angel*, Acts vi. 15.

And I aſked him not whence he was, neither told he me his Name.] The Luſtre of his Countenance ſtruck ſuch an Awe into her, that ſhe made no Enquiry who he was, nor whence he came, and he was not pleaſed to tell her. Tho' the *Vulgar* (againſt both the *Hebrew* Text, the *Chaldee*, and the LXX) hath it, *She aſked him who he was, and whence he came, and what was his Name, but he would not tell her.*

Ver. 7. *And he ſaid unto me, Behold, thou ſhalt conceive and bear a Son, and now drink no Wine, nor ſtrong Drink*, &c.] She recites the Words of the Angel unto her Huſband; who, as *Joſephus* fancies, hearing her highly commend the Perſon who appeared to her, for his Beauty and Majeſty, began to ſuſpect her Chaſtity, which is a Conceit for which there is no Ground, but much againſt it.

Ver. 8. *Then Manoah intreated the* Lord, *and ſaid, O my* Lord, *Let the Man of* God, *whom thou didſt ſend, come again unto us.*] To make good the forenamed Conceit, *Joſephus* makes this to be the Prayer of his Wife, that he might ſatisfy the Jealouſy of her Huſband; directly contrary to what is here expreſly ſaid, that *Manoah* made this Requeſt. See *Lib.* 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 10.

And teach us what we ſhall do unto the Child which ſhall be born.] He did not in the leaſt queſtion his Wife's Chaſtity; no, nor blame her Credulity, but deſired himſelf to ſee the Perſon (if God pleaſed) who had brought this good News to them, and to be informed, how they ſhould educate the Child.

Ver. 9. *And* God *hearkned to the Voice of Manoah.*] Who appears by this, deſired only further Satisfaction, in that which he already believed.

And the Angel of God *came again unto the Woman, as ſhe ſat in the Field.*] Where, I ſuppoſe, *Ver.* 6. he appeared to her before: And, I think, all Interpreters agree, that it was on the very ſame Day.

And Manoah her Husband was not with her.] This is no Sign of his Jealouſy, but rather quite contrary, that he had a great Opinion of her Virtue.

Ver. 10. *And the Woman made haſte and ran, and ſhewed her Husband, ſaying, Behold, the Man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other Day.*] The Word *other* is not in the *Hebrew*; but it may be tranſlated, *To Day*. And, perhaps, he appeared to her at the firſt in the Morning, and now in the Evening.

Ver. 11. *And Manoah aroſe, and went after his Wife.*] Who led him the Way, to ſhew him where the Man was.

And came to the Man.] Whom his Wife had deſired to ſtay a while, till ſhe called her Huſband to him, as *Joſephus* probably enough conjectures: But I cannot imagine how he came to add, That when her Huſband ſaw him, ὁ δ' ὅτως ἐπαύετο τῆς ὑπονοίας, he was not inſtantly rid of his Suſpicion; for there is nothing like it in the following Words.

He ſaid unto him, Art thou the Man that ſpakeſt unto the Woman?] And told her, She ſhould have a Son.

And he ſaid, I am.] The ſame *Jewiſh* Writer adds, That *Manoah* prayed him to tell him what he had ſaid to his Wife; but the Angel replied, it was enough that he had told it her.

Ver. 12. *And Manoah ſaid, Now let thy Words come to paſs.*] Theſe Words may be no more than a Wiſh, that what he foretold might prove true; tho' ſome look upon them as a Prayer to God, to make them good.

How ſhall we order the Child, and how ſhall we do unto him?] The *Hebrew* Word *Miſchpat*, which we tranſlate *Order*, ſignifies here, the Rule whereby he ſhould live.

Ver. 13. *And the Angel ſaid unto Manoah, Of all that I ſaid unto the Woman, let her beware.*] This general Anſwer might have been ſufficient; but that they might be the more careful, he adds in the next Verſe, all the Particulars he had mentioned to his Wife, *Ver.* 4. and ſomething more largely.

Ver. 14. *She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the Vine.*] *i. e.* Neither Grapes nor Raiſins.

Neither let her drink Wine, nor ſtrong Drink, nor eat any unclean Thing.] This ſeems to lay a Charge upon him, as well as her, to ſee this Abſtinence obſerved.

All that I commanded her, let her obſerve.] Breed him up a *Nazarite* all the Days of his Life.

Ver. 15. *And Manoah ſaid to the Angel of the* Lord, *I pray thee let us detain thee until we have made ready a Kid for thee.*] He deſired him to ſtay and accept an Entertainment from them, which was antiently given to Strangers, eſpecially when they appeared like more than ordinary Perſons, *Gen.* xviii. 3, 4, &c. and was continued to theſe Days, *Judg.* vi. 18. Some think he intended to offer a Sacrifice of *Peace-Offerings*, and feaſt the Man of God with that Part which belongs to him that brought it to be offered.

Ver. 16. *And the Angel of the* LORD *ſaid unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy Bread.*] He was perſuaded to ſtay, but not to taſte of his Meat; for the Word *Bread* comprehends all Proviſion of Food.

And if thou wilt offer a Burnt-Offering, thou muſt offer it unto the LORD.] Or, *But* if thou hatt a mind to expreſs thy Thankfulneſs, offer a *Burnt-Offering*, which muſt be wholly ſacrificed unto the LORD. A Prophet (as *Manoah* took this to be) might warrant Men to ſacrifice, tho' they were not Prieſts, nor at the Tabernacle, as *Elijah* did at Mount *Carmel*.

For Manoah knew that he was an Angel of the LORD.] As he did, ſhortly after, when he appeared to be more than an Angel.

Ver. 17. *And Manoah ſaid unto the Angel of the* LORD, *What is thy Name, that when thy Sayings come to paſs, we may do thee Honour?*] He deſired they might ſhew themſelves grateful to him, by making him ſome Preſent, which they could not do, unleſs they knew his Name, and where he dwelt. So *Joſephus* interprets *doing him Honour*, ἵνα χάριν αὐτῷ ἢ δωρεὰν παρέχωσι, that they might give him Thanks, and beſtow ſome Gift upon him.

Ver. 18. *And the Angel of the* LORD *ſaid unto him, Why aſkeſt thou after my Name, ſeeing it is ſecret?*] Or rather (as it is in the Margin) *it is wonderful*; ſo the LXX θαυμαστὸν, *admirable*. Whoſe Eſſence (for that is meant by *Name* in Scripture) is to be admired, but cannot be comprehended. This ſhews it was the LORD himſelf; that is, the WORD of the LORD, who was to be the *Meſſiah*; unto whom the Prophet *Iſaiah* gives the ſame Name of *Pele* the *Wonderful*, Iſa. ix. 6.

Ver. 19. *And Manoah took a Kid, with a Meat Offering.*] Which uſually attended the Burnt Offering, as we read in the Book of *Leviticus*.

And offered it upon the Rock unto the LORD.] He did not offer it, properly ſpeaking, but laid it upon the Rock, as on an Altar, to be offered unto the LORD. And ſo the LXX προσήνεγκε, he brought it to be offered; he laid τὰς ἄρτους καὶ τὰ κρέα ἐπὶ τῆς πέτρας, he laid the Bread and the Fleſh upon the Rock.

And the Angel of the LORD *did wondrouſly.*] The Word *Angel* is not in the *Hebrew*, and therefore this is to be referred unto *Jehovah*, immediately foregoing, who appeared in the Form of an Angel, and now acted ſuitable to his Name *Pele* wonderful; unto which the Word *Maphli* (*did wondrouſly*) plainly alludes; that is, he brought Fire, it is probable, out of the Rock, as in the Days of *Gideon*. So *Joſephus*; for we read of no Fire that *Manoah* brought, and yet there was a Flame, in which the Angel went up into Heaven.

And Manoah and his Wife looked on.] Which ſhews that *Manoah* was only a Spectator of what was done, but did not offer the Sacrifice.

Ver. 20. *And it came to paſs, when the Flame went up toward Heaven from off the Altar.*] So that Part of the Rock is called where the Fleſh and the Bread were laid, being, I ſuppoſe, a very great Stone, flat at the Top like an Altar.

That the Angel of the LORD *aſcended in the Flame of the Altar.*] In which he went up ὥσπερ ὀχήματι (as *Joſephus* ſpeaks) as in a Chariot.

And Manoah and his Wife looked on it, and fell on their Faces to the Ground.] Being aſtoniſhed, when they ſaw him, whom they took only for a Prophet, to be an Angel of the LORD; and, perhaps, worſhipping the Divine Majeſty, who had appeared in ſuch an illuſtrious Manner to them, and praying him to preſerve their Lives, which they thought in Danger by ſuch a Sight.

Ver. 21. *But the Angel of the* LORD *did no more appear to Manoah and his Wife.*] There being no further Occaſion for it.

Then Manoah knew that it was an Angel of the LORD.] By the wonderful Things that he did, and aſcending up to Heaven in a Flame, which demonſtrated his Cœleſtial Nature, which could not be hurt by Fire.

Ver. 22. *And Manoah ſaid unto his Wife, We ſhall ſurely die, becauſe we have ſeen God.*] This had been an old Opinion among the *Iſraelites*. See upon vi. 22.

Ver. 23. *And his Wife ſaid unto him, If the* LORD *were pleaſed to kill us, he would not have received a Burnt-Offering, and a Meat-Offering, at our Hand.*] She ſeems to have had a better Conſideration of the Thing than her Huſband. and ſtrongly argues him out of his Fears, as altogether unreaſonable: And firſt ſhe makes GOD's Acceptance of a Sacrifice from them, a plain Demonſtration of his Favour to them; and his Acceptance of it appeared by his kindling a Fire himſelf, whereby it was conſumed; and by the Aſcenſion of the Angel in the Flame, as if he went to carry the Sacrifice unto GOD, and preſent it to him in Heaven.

Neither would he have ſhewed us all theſe Things.] Concerning the Birth of a Son, and the Manner of his Education, and his beginning the Deliverance of *Iſrael* from their Oppreſſors, of which there was no Hope, if GOD intended to take away their Lives from whom this Son was to iſſue.

Nor would he at this Time have ſhewn us ſuch Things as theſe.] Appeared again and again unto them, to acquaint them with theſe Things, at a Time when ſuch Viſions were rare, and when they were in ſuch Diſtreſs, that GOD ſeemed to have abandoned them to the Will of their Enemies. Theſe were two unanſwerable Arguments that they had no Reaſon to think GOD would take away their Lives, but continue them, for the fulfilling his Promiſe.

Ver. 24. *And the Woman bare a Son.*] We have no Direction whereby to know the Time of his Birth, but only this, That the Angel ſaid before he was conceived, *Ver.* 5. That he ſhould *begin to deliver Iſrael from the Hands of the Philiſtines.* Which is a plain Indication, they were then under their Power; that is, the Forty Years Oppreſſion of the *Philiſtines* was begun; and, conſequently, ſince his Twenty Years Judicature was in *the Days of the Philiſtines*, xv. *ult.* that is, during their Tyranny; he was born in the Beginning of it: For we cannot well ſuppoſe, that he began to be their Deliverer

verer before the Eighteenth Year of his Age, as Primate *Uſher* obſerves in his *Annal. ad A. M.* 2849.

And called his Name Samſon.] Which, *Joſephus* ſaith, ſignifies ἰσχυρὸν, *ſtrong*, or *robuſt*; but whence he derived it, I cannot imagine. Some think from *Shemeſh*, which ſignifies *the Sun*, which is a Body of mighty Force. So St. *Hierom*, who thinks *Samſon* is as much as *their Sun*; a great *Light of Iſrael*, as *David* is called.

And the Child grew, and the LORD *bleſſed him.*] As he grew up, there plainly appeared in him extraordinary Endowments of Body and Mind, which the LORD beſtowed on him.

Ver. 25. *And the Spirit of the* LORD *began to move him.*] To do ſome unuſual Things, beyond mere human Power, which were Specimens of an Heroical Virtue. The *Targum* tranſlates it, *The Spirit of Fortitude or Courage*, &c.

At Times.] Upon certain Occaſions, when it would be viſible to the People, that GOD intended to work Deliverance by him.

In the Camp of Dan, between Zorah and Eſhtaol.] See xvi. 31. There was no Army of the *Danites* encamped where *Samſon* diſplayed his Valour; but this is the Name of a Place called *Machana-Dan* (*the Camp of Dan*) in which, perhaps, *Samſon* lived. The Reaſon of this Name is given afterwards in the xviiith Chapter, *Ver.* 12. where there is an Hiſtory of an Expedition of the *Danites*; which, though placed after this, yet was really before the Times of *Samſon*. But this Camp, it appears by that Place, did not lie between *Zorah* and *Eſhtaol*, but in the Tribe of *Judah*, or in the very Borders of it: Therefore the Word *and* muſt be here ſupplied; *in the Camp of Dan, and between Zorah and Eſhtaol*, towards which that Camp lay. If this be not allowed, we muſt ſuppoſe, that the ſix hundred Men mentioned xviii. 11. made their Encampment between *Zorah* and *Eſhtaol*, before they marched out of their own Country, and gave that Place the ſame Name which the other had near *Kirjath-jearim*, where they encamped the firſt Night.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *AND Samſon went down to Timnath.*] A City in his own Tribe, as we read *Joſh.* xix. 47. (ſee there) but fallen, it is probable, into the Poſſeſſion of the *Philiſtines*, near to whoſe Country it lay, who, at this Time, oppreſſed the *Iſraelites*, and made them their Tributaries, which did not hinder, but rather promote all manner of Commerce between them.

And ſaw a Woman of Timnath, of the Daughters of the Philiſtines.] That is, he fell in love with her; according to the vulgar Saying among the *Greeks*, ἐκ τῦ ὁρᾶν τὸ ἐρᾶν, *from looking comes loving*.

Ver. 2. *And he came up and told his Father and his Mother.*] This was a Part of the Honour they thought was owing to their Parents, to adviſe with them about their Marriage, of which they did not treat, but left it to their Parents. So it ſeems, by this, to have been in ancient Times, though their Children were of Age, (as *Samſon* is now ſuppoſed to be) and, according to the later Doctors among the *Jews*, fit to contract Marriage themſelves. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *Uxor. Heb.* Cap. 3. And ſee above, xii. 9.

And ſaid, I have ſeen a Woman in Timnath, of the Daughters of the Philiſtines; now, therefore, get her for me to Wife.] This was when *Samſon* was about Twenty-two Years old, as Primate *Uſher* computes it, who thinks *Eli* judged *Iſrael* at this Time in Civil Affairs; but Sir *J. Marſham* makes account, as I obſerved, he died in the middle of this Servitude.

Ver. 3. *And his Father and his Mother ſaid unto him, Is there never a Woman among the Daughters of thy Brethren.*] That is, in their own Family.

Or among all thy People.] In the whole Tribe of *Dan*.

That thou ſhouldſt go to take a Wife of the uncircumciſed Philiſtines?] Which was againſt the Law of *Moſes*, in *Exod.* xxxiv. 16. *Deut.* vii. 3. For though they were none of the ſeven Nations of *Canaan*, yet they were under the ſame Condemnation, and their Land was given to the *Iſraelites*.

And Samſon ſaid unto his Father, Get her for me, for ſhe pleaſeth me well.] His Mother, ſome think, expreſſed ſuch Diſlike to the Motion, that he applied himſelf wholly to his Father, and beſeeched him to favour his Choice, becauſe he was deeply in love with her.

Ver. 4. *But his Father and his Mother knew not that it was of the* LORD.] He felt ſome divine Motion in him, which carried him to this Place to ſeek a Wife; but his Parents knew not of it, till he told them (as ſome think) and then readily conſented.

That he ſought an Occaſion againſt the Philiſtines.] Which he knew this Treaty of Marriage would give him, whether it ſucceeded or miſcarried.

For at that Time the Philiſtines had Dominion over Iſrael.] They were ſtill, as they had been ſeveral Years, under the Power of the *Philiſtines*, who treated them, it is likely, with ſuch Scorn and Contempt, as if they had been their Slaves.

Ver. 5. *Then went Samſon down, and his Father, and his Mother, to Timnath.*] He overcame them by his Importunity; or, perhaps, told them, as I ſaid before, what a Motion he felt from GOD, to deſire this Match.

And came to the Vineyards of Timnath.] Unto which he turned aſide, upon ſome Occaſion not here mentioned.

And behold a young Lion roared againſt him.] Came with full Mouth (as we ſpeak) to devour him. By this, and many other Places, it appears, there were Lions in *Judæa*, from whence ſeveral Places had their Names, as *Lebaoth*, *Joſh.* xv. 32. and *Beth-lebaoth*, xix. 6. Every one alſo knows, that a young Lion, come to his full Strength, was the fierceſt of all other. And ſo *Cephir* (*Kimchi* obſerves) is uſed for a Lion grown bigger than *Gur*, which ſignifies a Lion's Whelp.

Ver. 6. *And the Spirit of the* LORD *came mightily upon him.*] The ſame Spirit, mentioned in the laſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter; which endued him with extraordinary Courage, and Undauntedneſs of Mind, together with a ſupernatural Strength of Body.

And he rent him, as he would have rent a Kid.] That is, as eaſily and ſpeedily. The *Hebrew* Word certainly ſignifies to *tear in Pieces*, and therefore, if it be true which *Joſephus* ſaith, (*Lib.* 5. *Antiq. Cap.* 10.) That he throttled him with his Hand, (ἄγχει ταῖς χερσὶ) the Meaning is, that after he had ſtrangled him, he rent him in Pieces.

And he had nothing in his Hand.] If he had encountred him being armed with ſome Weapon, it had been a bold Action; but when he was naked, to receive his Aſſault, was a miraculous Reſolution: By which he was encouraged to undertake greater things; as *David* was by the ſame Power given him.

But he told not his Father, nor his Mother, what he had done.] Being afraid perhaps that this Action might come to the Ears of the *Philiſtines*; which might make them jealous of him.

Ver. 7. *And he went down and talked with the Woman.*] Diſcourſed with her about Marriage; which he propounded to her.

And ſhe pleaſed Samſon well.] All things were agreed, and ſhe was eſpouſed to him: But before the Eſpouſals ſhe was converted to the *Jewiſh* Religion, and made an entire Proſelyte, as *R. Levi ben Gerſom*, and *Moſes Mikotzi*, and other *Hebrew* Doctors ſay; and then it was not unlawful to marry a Stranger, as *Joſhua*, they ſay, did *Rahab*. See *Selden*, Lib. V. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 15. and *Buxtorf*, *De Sponſalibus & Divortiis*, Sect. 31.

Ver. 8. *And after a time.*] In the *Hebrew* it is, *after Days*; a Year, as that Phraſe often ſignifies, and is ſo tranſlated by us, *Exod.* xiii. 10. where *Mijamim jamim* is rightly tranſlated, *from Year to Year.* See alſo *Gen.* iv. 3. and *Chap.* xi. of this Book, *Ver.* 4.

He returned to take her.] To compleat his Marriage; which was not wont to be celebrated between a Man and a young Virgin, till twelve Months after the Eſpouſals, (as the *Hebrew* Doctors ſay) that ſhe might have ſo much Time to adorn herſelf, and make herſelf every way fit for Marriage. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *de Uxor. Hebr.* Cap. viii. But if in that twelve Months time ſhe lay with any other Man, it was accounted Adultery, and puniſhed with Death; becauſe ſhe was really his Wife.

And he turned aſide to ſee the Carcaſs of the Lion.] Which was now a mere Skeleton, the Fleſh being all conſumed: And ſo the *Syriac* Interpreter here renders it.

And behold, there was a Swarm of Bees, and Honey in the Carcaſs of the Lion.] Bees are obſerved by *Ariſtotle*, and others, to abhor ſtinking Smells, and to abſtain from Fleſh; which hath made ſome think it ſtrange that a Swarm of Bees ſhould breed in the Carcaſs of a Lion: But they did not conſider, that Time had conſumed the Fleſh, or it was eaten up by Birds and Beaſts, and nothing but the bare Bones remained; in which the Bees did not breed, but ſettled themſelves when they ſwarmed, as they have done ſometimes in dead Mens Sculls, and in their Tombs. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozoicon*, Pag. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. x. and *Voſſius de Orig. & Progreſſu Idolol.* Lib. 4. Cap. 72.

Ver. 9. *And he took thereof in his Hand.*] Or, as the *Syriac* tranſlates it, *It dropped into his Hands*, from the Combs, that is, which they had made either in the Belly, as St. *Ambroſe* thinks, or in the Breaſt, as *Joſephus*, or (which *Voſſius* rather thinks) in the Head, or in the Mouth of the Lion, as the LXX and *Vulgar* underſtand it: Though *Bochartus* thinks that inſtead of ἐν ϛόμαλι in the Mouth, it ſhould be read in the LXX ἐν σώμαλι λέονλος, in the Body of the Lion.

And went on eating.] Which was not unlawful, in caſe of Hunger, though it was found in a Carcaſs; becauſe ſuch Ceremonial Laws as forbid ſuch Things, were not obſerved in Caſes of Neceſſity: As appears by *David*'s eating the Shew-Bread, and *Elijah*'s eating Food brought him by Ravens.

And came to his Father and Mother.] From whom he had turned aſide for a while, as he did when they firſt went to *Timnath*, Ver. 5.

And he gave them, and they did eat.] Wild Honey being delicious Food in that Country, as many Places ſhew, *Deut.* xxxii. 13. and *Pſal.* lxxxi. 16.

But he told them not that he had taken the Honey out of the Carcaſs of the Lion.] For then perhaps they would not have eaten it.

Ver. 10. *So his Father went down unto the Woman.*] (Together with his Wife and his Son) to demand her, who was eſpouſed to *Samſon*, to conſummate the Marriage.

And Samſon made there a Feaſt, for ſo uſed the young Men to do.] According to the Cuſtom of all Countries: Which Feaſt was called by the *Jews*, *The Nuptial Joy*, with which no other was to be intermixed; and all Labour ceaſed, as long as it laſted. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *Uxor. Hebr.* Cap. xi. Pag. 172.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs, when they ſaw him.*] What a goodly Perſon he was.

That they brought Thirty Companions to be with him.] Her Friends, out of Reſpect to him, brought this great Number of Bridemen, to honour his Nuptials: But ſome of the *Jews* think they had a further End in it, that they might ſerve as a Guard to him, if he ſhould attempt any Diſturbance; of which, they fancy, the *Philiſtines* were afraid, when they ſaw he was a Man of Might.

Ver. 12. *And Samſon ſaid unto them, I will now put forth a Riddle unto you.*] This ſhews how ancient the Cuſtom was (which we find afterward among the *Greeks*) of propoſing Queſtions to be reſolved in their Compotations and Feaſts; that they might not be ſpent merely in dull eating and drinking, but there might be ſomething to exerciſe and whet the Wits of the Company: And they called ſuch Riddles as theſe, which were contrived to puzzle Mens Thoughts, by the Name of γρίφος, which the *Scholiaſt* upon *Ariſtophanes* defines to be παροίνιον ζήτημα, a Queſtion put among their Cups.

Cups. *Athenæus* diſcourſes largely of ſuch *Problems*, as they alſo called them, in his *Deipnoſophiſts*. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozoicon*, Pag. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. 12.

If you can certainly declare it, within the Seven Days of the Feaſt.] So long the Nuptial Solemnity was wont to continue in ancient Times, *Gen.* xxix. 27. They could not ſhorten the Days, as the *Jewiſh* Doctors tell us, but they might lengthen them; as they did at *Tobit*'s Marriage, when the Solemnity continued fourteen Days, though according to Cuſtom they were bound to keep but three, ſhe being a Widow, as *Selden* obſerves in the forenamed Book, Pag. 185. and *Buxtorf* in his *Synagoga Judaica*, Cap. 35.

And find it out, then I will give you Thirty Sheets, and Thirty Change of Garments.] The *Greeks* followed this Example, and gave Rewards to him who reſolved the Queſtion propoſed, but ſet a Mulct on thoſe that could not.

Ver. 13. *But if you cannot declare it, then you ſhall give me Thirty Sheets, and Thirty Change of Garments.*] Moſt take *Sidinim* (from whence the Word *Sindon* ſeems to come) for ſuch Linen Cloths, as the whole Body may be wrapped in; and therefore properly tranſlated *Sheets:* And *Change of Garments* ſignifies new Robes, which they might change for the old: But of the Word *Sindon*, ſee *Braunius de Veſtitu Sacerd. Hebr.* Lib. 1. Cap. 7. N. 7.

And they ſaid unto him, Put forth thy Riddle, that we may hear it.] They agreed to the Conditions, and bad him propound it.

Ver. 14. *And he ſaid unto them, Out of the Eater came forth Meat; and out of the Strong came forth Sweetneſs.*] The Oppoſition is manifeſt in the firſt Part of the Riddle, but not in the ſecond; for Weakneſs is oppoſed to Strength, not Sweetneſs, whoſe Oppoſite is Bitterneſs, or Sharpneſs: But *Bochartus* hath ingeniouſly obſerved, that theſe two Words are ſometimes confounded; for in the *Arabick* Language, the Word *Mirra*, which ſignifies Strength, comes from *Marra*, which ſignifies to be bitter: And ſo it is among the *Latins*, where *Acer* a ſharp Man, is as much as a valiant Man, who *eagerly* (as we ſpeak) engaged his Enemies: And this very Word (as he and others have noted) *is uſed* of Lions, whom *Ovid* in his *Faſti* calls

——*Genus acre leonum.*

And therefore the Riddle is truly this: *Food came from the Devourer, and Sweetneſs from that which is eager and ſharp*, i. e. Fierce.

And they could not in Three Days expound the Riddle.] Whereupon (it appears by what follows) they applied themſelves to his Wife, and deſired her (with good Words, it is likely, at firſt) to try what ſhe could do by her Careſſes, to perſuade him to unriddle it to her.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs, that on the Seventh Day.*] Which was the laſt Day of the Feaſt; when they were in Danger to loſe their Wager.

They ſaid unto Samſon's Wife, Entice thy Huſband, that he may declare to us the Riddle.] By letting her know it; who they expected would tell it them.

Leſt we burn thee and thy Father's Houſe with Fire.] From Intreaties, they now betake themſelves to Threatenings, and thoſe very terrible; which they concluded would make her as preſſing upon them, as they were upon her.

Have ye called us.] This ſignifies that they were invited by her Friends to the Feaſt.

To take what we have?] To make us pay very dear for our good Cheer.

Is it not ſo?] Will not your Kindneſs conclude in Rudeneſs, by ſtripping us of our Raiment?

Ver. 16. *And Samſon's Wife wept before him.*] She added Tears to her Intreaties.

And ſaid, Thou doſt but hate me, and loveſt me not; Thou haſt put forth a Riddle unto the Children of my People, and haſt not told it me.] This was prudent enough, to pretend to doubt of his Affection, becauſe he concealed this Secret from her; for a new married Couple are uſually ſo kind, as freely to unboſom themſelves one to another.

And he ſaid unto her, Behold, I have not told it my Father, and my Mother.] With whom he had been long acquainted.

And ſhall I tell it thee?] Whom he did not yet ſo well know, as to be ſure ſhe could keep a Secret.

Ver. 17. *And ſhe wept before him the Seven Days while the Feaſt laſted.*] That is, the reſt of the Seven Days of the Feaſt, which remained after the third, ſhe importuned him continually with Tears; and upbraided him, I ſuppoſe, with Want of Kindneſs to her, as the foregoing Verſe imports.

And it came to paſs on the Seventh Day, that he told, becauſe ſhe lay ſore upon him.] Made him very uneaſy by her Importunity; which he could not reſiſt, though he had conquered the Lion.

And ſhe told the Riddle to the Children of her People.] For whom ſhe had more Affection than for her Huſband; or feared their Diſpleaſure more than his.

Ver. 18. *And the Men of the City ſaid unto him on the Seventh Day, before the Sun went down.*] Juſt before the Time was expired, which was prefixed for the Solution of the Riddle.

What is ſweeter than Honey? and what is ſtronger than a Lion?] This is a compendious Anſwer to the latter Part of the Queſtion, which ſufficiently comprehends the firſt: And St. *Ambroſe* thinks, that as ſoon as this Anſwer was out of their Mouth, *Samſon* immediately interpoſed and ſaid, *What is more perfidious than a Woman?* Which he had out of *Joſephus*, who ſaith the ſame; and ſomething like it follows in the next Words.

And he ſaid unto them, If ye had not plowed with my Heifer, ye had not found out my Riddle.] The Meaning is, That without the Aſſiſtance of his Wife, (whom he compares to a young Heifer, which is not yet ſubdued to the Yoke of Obedience), they had continued ſtill as ignorant as they had been all the Time of the Feaſt.

Feaſt. *Ralbag* indeed, and ſome others, take the Word *plowed* in a laſcivious Senſe; as if he meant that they had lain with his Wife, or otherwiſe they had not got the Secret out of her. But the Words will not bear this Interpretation; for he doth not ſay, *if ye had not plowed my Heifer*, (which might have been ſo interpreted) but if ye had not plowed *with my Heifer*; which plainly implies uſing her Help, to find out what they deſired. See *Bochart.* P. 1. *Hierozoicon*, Lib. 2. Cap. 41.

Ver. 19. *And the Spirit of the* LORD *came upon him.*] Which he had not always; but at ſpecial Seaſons it moved him, and gave him Power to do extraordinary Things, which otherwiſe had not been warrantable. See *Ver.* 6. and xiii. *ult.*

And he went down to Aſkelon.] A City of the *Philiſtines.*

And ſlew thirty Men of them.] As they were making merry, it is probable, either in the Field, or the City, at ſome publick Solemnity, when great Companies uſed to be gathered together, and to appear in their beſt Apparel.

And took their Spoil.] Whatſoever they had about them; and perhaps they that fled left a great many Things behind them.

And gave Change of Garments unto them that expounded the Riddle.] Together with the *Sheets* he promiſed; which he purchaſed, perhaps, with the Spoil.

And his Anger was kindled.] Againſt his Wife for betraying him, and againſt his Companions for their underhand Dealing.

And he went up to his Father's Houſe.] Left his Wife with her own Relations, and went to live at home with his Father. It is plain by the whole Story, that *Timnath* lay low, there being a Deſcent from his Father's Houſe to it, unto which they went up from thence, *Ver.* 1, 2, 5, 7, 10.

Ver. 20. *And Samſon's Wife was given to his Companion.*] She it ſeems was as angry as he; and looking upon herſelf as forſaken, was eaſily perſuaded to marry one of his Bridemen.

Whom he uſed as his Friend.] With whom he was more familiar, and treated him with greater Kindneſs, than he did the reſt that honoured him with their Company. For he, I ſuppoſe, was the principal Brideman, who was called by the Name of *the Friend of the Bridegroom*, as we read in the Goſpel of St. *John* iii. 29. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *Uxor. Hebr.* Cap. 16. P. 200, *&c.* This Uſage, no doubt, incenſed *Samſon* the more afterward againſt them; for he ſaw there was no Faith in any of them.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs within a while after.*] In the *Hebrew* the Word is *Mijamim*; which in other Places, ſignifies *after a Year*, (ſee xiv. 8.) when his Anger was appeaſed.

In the Time of Wheat Harveſt.] Which was about the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*; a Time of great Joy.

That Samſon viſited his Wife with a Kid.] Which was no contemptible Preſent, as appears by the Story of *Judah* and *Tamar*, *Gen.* xxxviii. 17. For it was a delicious Food, not only in *Judæa*, but in other Countries, as *Bochartus* hath ſhewn in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 2.

And he ſaid, I will go in unto my Wife, into the Chamber.] He attempted with the uſual Freedom which Huſbands have with their Wives, to go into her Apartment, and enjoy her Company.

But her Father would not ſuffer him to go in.] For the Reaſon following in the next Verſe.

Ver. 2. *And her Father ſaid, I verily thought that thou hadſt utterly hated her.*] He thought he had good Grounds to conclude he would never come near her more, having not heard from him a whole Twelvemonth.

Therefore I gave her to thy Companion.] Whom it is likely ſhe loved, having contracted an Acquaintance with him, by the Friendſhip he had with her Huſband, xiv. *ult.* For tho' ſhe was (as the *Hebrew* Doctors ſuppoſe) a Proſelyte to the *Jewiſh* Religion, yet ſhe was not ſo well inſtructed as to know, that it was not lawful, by their Law, to marry another, till *Samſon* had given her a Bill of Divorce; which he had not done, intending to return again to her.

Is not her younger Siſter fairer than ſhe? take her, I pray thee, inſtead of her.] He had no mind to quarrel with *Samſon*; and therefore endeavoured to aſſuage his Anger with the Offer of his other Daughter, who was more beautiful than her who had forſaken him. This indeed was contrary to the Law of *Moſes*; but the *Philiſtines* it ſeems continued their old abominable Cuſtoms, which GOD intended, by giving his Law, to aboliſh, *Levit.* xviii. 24, 27, 30.

Ver. 3. *And Samſon ſaid concerning them, Now ſhall I be more blameleſs than the Philiſtines, tho' I do them a Diſpleaſure.*] He ſeems to have turned away in Scorn and Indignation, without making a Reply to his Father-in-Law; but told the next Perſons he met, that he would be revenged of the *Philiſtines* for the Wrong that had been done him; and that they might blame themſelves for the Miſchief he intended them. By which it appears, that the People of that Place approved of this Marriage, and perhaps honoured it by their Preſence; whom *Samſon* reſolved therefore to chaſtiſe, not as a private Perſon, but as appointed by GOD to vindicate the Oppreſſion of the *Iſraelites*. Which *Grotius* thinks he did *ex naturali jure*, as a Piece of natural Juſtice. See Lib. 2. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 20. Sect. 8. N. 3.

Ver. 4. *And Samſon went and caught three hundred Foxes.*] Some make a Difficulty to believe this, becauſe Foxes are ſubtle Creatures, and not eaſily caught: But they ſhould conſider ſuch Things as theſe, which *Bochartus* hath repreſented, that this Country abounded with Foxes, from whence ſeveral Places had their Names, particularly one in the Tribe of *Dan*, (ſee Chap. i. 35. and *Joſh.* xix. 42.) and that under this Name of Foxes may be comprehended a Creature very like a Fox, called *Thoes*, which

which go together in Herds; ſo that two hundred (as good Authors report) have been ſeen in a Company together. And next, it is not ſaid he caught theſe at one Time, or in a Day and a Night; but there might be a Week or a Month's Time allowed for the Accompliſhment of his Deſign; in which his Servants, and Neighbours, and Friends, no doubt, aſſiſted him, if he deſired it; ſo that ſuch a Number might be caught in a ſhort Time: For they were not caught, as ſome imagine, only by hunting, but in Snares and Nets, as he demonſtrates in his *Hierozoicon*, Lib. 3. Cap. 13. Where, in anſwer to ſuch as aſk why he choſe Foxes, rather than Dogs, or ſome other Creatures, he thinks it is ſufficient to ſay, that he brought about two Ends; by the ſame means freeing the Country from a great many noxious Animals, by which he did much Hurt unto their Enemies.

And took Fire-brands, and turned Tail to Tail.] Which he tied together with a Cord; yet not cloſe, but at a Diſtance, that they might run the better.

And put a Fire-brand in the midſt between two Tails.] Which he ſo faſtened, that it ſhould not fall off by their Motion.

Ver. 5. *And when he had ſet the Brands on fire, he let them go into the ſtanding Corn of the Philiſtines.*] Near unto which he let them looſe; and they naturally ran into it to hide themſelves from the Fire; of which they are obſerved to be afraid. Beſide, being coupled, they could not run into their Holes.

And burnt up both the Shocks, and alſo the ſtanding Corn.] By this it appears, that it was in the midſt of Wheat-harveſt when this was done; ſome Corn being cut, and others ſtill ſtanding; but all conſumed. For the Fire being once begun, the Foxes were the more affrighted, and deſiring to run from it, this ſtill carried it to another Place, where there was Corn left, till they had burnt it quite up: Beſide it is obſerved by the ſame Author, that Foxes do not run ſtraight forward, but they make many Turnings, by which means they deſtroyed the more.

With the Vineyards and Olives.] Foxes are obſerved to love Grapes, and *Solomon* ſpeaks of them as noxious to Vineyards, *Cant.* ii. 15. whither they ran to ſatiate their Hunger, after they had been long kept up by *Samſon*. Some think, that as Part of the three hundred Foxes were ſent among the Corn, ſo the other Part among the Vines and Olives: Or, perhaps, being all let into the Corn, and finding the Flame increaſing there, they went to ſeek Shelter in the Vineyards, whither they carried the Fire.

Bochartus obſerves a very famous Monument of this Fact of *Samſon*'s, in *Ovid*'s fourth Book of his *Faſti*; where he ſaith, the *Romans* were wont every Year in the Middle of *April*, to let looſe ſome Foxes in the *Circus*, with burning Torches faſtened unto their Backs. The Original of which Cuſtom, he juſtly thinks, could not be from ſo ſmall an Occaſion, as *Ovid* mentions, from the Report of an old Man he met withal. But that it was derived from hence, may well be queſtioned; becauſe, tho' it fell out at the ſame Time of the Year that *Samſon* did this Thing, yet one can give no Reaſon why the *Phœnicians* (from whom the *Romans* muſt be ſuppoſed to borrow it) ſhould celebrate the Memory of this Miſchief which *Samſon* did them, in ſuch a Repreſentation of it. See him, in the Place before-mentioned, P. 856, 857, *&c.*

Ver. 6. *Then the Philiſtines ſaid, Who hath done this?*] The Owners of the Corn, or perhaps the Country in general, made an Enquiry after the Author of this Miſchief.

And they anſwered, Samſon the Son-in-law of the Timnite, becauſe he had taken his Wife, and given her to his Companion.] Some of thoſe who heard *Samſon*'s threatning Words, (*Ver.* 3.) it is likely, gave this Information.

And the Philiſtines came up, and burnt her and her Father with Fire.] I ſuppoſe they burnt their Houſe, and them in it. Whereby that very Calamity came upon her, which ſhe ſought to avoid by betraying her Huſband, xiv. 15.

Ver. 7. *And Samſon ſaid, Though you have done this.*] The Words in the *Hebrew* are a conciſe Form of Speech, *If ye had done after this manner*; that is, puniſhed them ſooner for the Injury done him, it might have ſeemed Love of Juſtice; but now they did it only out of Love to themſelves.

Yet will I be avenged of you.] Or, *but I will ſurely* take a further Revenge of you. Unto which, no doubt, he was moved not by his own private Spirit, but by that Spirit which raiſed him up to deliver GOD's People from their Oppreſſors.

And then I will ceaſe.] That is, unleſs they gave him further Occaſion, there ſhould be an End of this Quarrel.

Ver. 8. *And he ſmote them Hip and Thigh.*] It is hard to underſtand the Meaning of this; of which *Joſephus* only ſaith, that he ſlew many of them, ἐν πεδίῳ τῶν Παλαιςινῶν, *in a Field of the Philiſtines*; but ſaith not a Word concerning the Import of *Hip and Thigh*. But the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt interprets it, he ſmote both *Footmen and Horſemen*, the one reſting on their Legs, (as the *Hebrew* Word *Schock* ſignifies) and the other on their Thighs, as they ſat cloſe to their Horſes. They that think this to be forced, take the Meaning to be, that he ſmote them both on their Legs and their Thighs, as they fled away, ſo as to diſable them from any Service, tho' he did not kill them. I omit other Interpretations.

With a great Slaughter.] The Word is, *with a great Stroke*, and ſo the LXX tranſlate it, which agrees well with the laſt Interpretation, that he ſorely wounded them.

And he went down.] With reſpect to the Country of the *Philiſtines*, he went up (as appears by the next Verſe) but from the mountainous Part of *Judæa*, where he was, he firſt went down.

And dwelt in the Top of the Rock Eſham.] A ſtrong Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, (as *Joſephus* relates) to the Top of which, no more than one Man could come abreaſt, as we ſpeak. By all this, and by what follows in the reſt of his Hiſtory, it is plain that *Samſon* had no Commiſſion from GOD, nor was moved by him to raiſe

raiſe an Army, and make open War (as *Gideon*, and *Jephthah*, and others did) for the Deliverance of *Iſrael* from the Yoke of the *Philiſtines*, but only to weaken them, and to keep them in Awe, that, out of dread of him, they might be leſs cruel in their Oppreſſion. And this, no doubt, he underſtood to be all that God intended to do by him, from the Words of the Angel, xiii. 5. *He ſhall begin to deliver Iſrael.*

Ver. 9. *Then the Philiſtines went up and pitched in Judah.*] With a great Number of Men, as if they intended an abſolute Conqueſt of their Country.

And ſpread themſelves in Lehi.] A Place ſo called afterwards, from the Jaw-bone wherewith *Samſon* ſmote them.

Ver. 10. *And the Men of Judah ſaid, Why are ye come up againſt us?*] Since they paid their Tribute, (as *Joſephus* obſerves) and had committed no Offence againſt them, not having taken part with *Samſon* in any thing he had done, they might well expoſtulate with them about this Invaſion.

And they anſwered, To bind Samſon are we come up.] They ſoon ſatisfied them, that they had no Quarrel with them, but only with *Samſon*, whom, if they would deliver up bound to them, they would withdraw their Army.

To do to him, as he hath done to us.] Puniſh him for the Injuries he had done them; or rather, put him to Death, as he had killed many of them.

Ver. 11. *Then Three thouſand of the Men of Judah went to the Top of the Rock Etham.*] In the *Hebrew* it is *went down*, *i. e.* into the Cave where he was in the Top of the Rock: For it is ſaid, *Ver.* 13. That they brought him *up* to the *Philiſtines*, whereas from the Top of the Rock, it was *down*.

And ſaid unto Samſon, Knoweſt thou not, that the Philiſtines are Rulers over us?] And therefore not to be offended by us.

What is it that thou haſt done unto us?] To provoke them to come againſt *Judah*.

And he ſaid unto them, As they did unto me, ſo have I done unto them.] He ſaith nothing of any Motion he had from God to do what he had done, but only tells them, that he had merely requited the Wrong he had received from the *Philiſtines*.

Ver. 12. *And they ſaid unto him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the Hands of the Philiſtines.*] They came with a little Army, to ſhew they could by Force take him; but they rather deſired he would quietly reſign himſelf to them, that they might deliver him bound to the *Philiſtines*.

And Samſon ſaid unto them, Swear unto me, that ye will not fall upon me yourſelves.] He doth not upbraid them with their baſe Cowardiſe, in coming ſo many againſt one Man, and that to give up their Deliverer into their Enemies Hands, but conſents to their Deſire, on Condition that they would ſolemnly engage to do him no Hurt themſelves; for he was unwilling to ſhed the Blood of his Brethren, as he might have done, if they had attempted any thing againſt him.

Ver. 13. *And they ſpake unto him, ſaying, No, but we will bind thee faſt, and deliver thee into their Hands; but ſurely we will not kill thee.*] They promiſed to do as he deſired, if he would ſubmit to be bound and delivered unto the *Philiſtines*, who would not be otherwiſe ſatisfied.

And they bound him with two new Cords, and brought him up from the Rock.] To put him abſolutely into the Power of the *Philiſtines*: For two Cords, and thoſe freſh and new, wherewith they bound him, were ſufficient to ſhew their real Deſire to comply with their Demands.

Ver. 14. *And when they came unto Lehi.*] Where the *Philiſtines* had ſpread themſelves, *Ver.* 9.

The Philiſtines ſhouted againſt him.] As Soldiers uſed to do, when they had gotten a great Victory, their miſchievous Enemy being fallen into their Hand.

And the Spirit of the Lord *came mightily upon him.*] Or, *But the Spirit of the* Lord, &c. Their Joy was inſtantly quaſht; for by the mighty Power of God, the Cords immediately ſnapped in ſunder.

The Cords that were upon his Arms became as Flax, that was burnt with Fire.] Which is conſumed in a Moment.

And his Bands looſed from his Hands.] The *Hebrew*, to expreſs how ſpeedily and eaſily they were looſed, ſaith, *they melted*, or were diſſolved, as Wax is by the Fire.

Ver. 15. *And he found a new Jaw-bone of an Aſs.*] Of an Aſs that had not been long dead. So the Word *Terijah* ſignifies, which *Kimchi* here ſaith is an *Arabick* Word, ſignifying moiſt and freſh, and therefore not ſo brittle as one that is dry, and hath laid long in the Air and the Sun. See *Bochart.* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 15.

And put forth his Hand and took it.] The Providence of God laid it in his Way, that he might not be wholly unarmed, when he had a numerous Company of Enemies to deal withal.

And ſlew a thouſand Men therewith.] The *Philiſtines*, no doubt, were ſtrangely amazed, to ſee the Cords fall ſo eaſily, and ſuddenly, from his Hands, and to ſee him come boldly, or rather furiouſly, towards them, which put them in a Confuſion, and gave him ſuch Advantage againſt them, that he made this great Slaughter among them; wherein was fulfilled the Promiſe of *Moſes*, *Levit.* xxvi. 8. which was repeated by *Joſhua*, xxiii. 10. where he ſaith expreſly, *One Man of you ſhall chaſe a Thouſand.* It is not unlikely alſo, that the *Philiſtines* might fear, the Men of *Judah*, on this Occaſion, would join with him, which made them turn their Backs, and expoſe themſelves to Slaughter. But it was by a wonderful Strength which God infuſed into him, that he was able to purſue them ſo long, till he had done ſuch Execution, which is incredible only to thoſe who do not conſider the Power of God, who can raiſe our Powers to what Degree he pleaſes, and enfeeble the Spirits of thoſe who oppoſe his Deſigns: So that they ſhall have no Power to help themſelves. It may not be amiſs alſo here to note, that there are Inſtances of Men,

Men, who, by their natural Courage, have made great Havock among their Enemies: For *Flavius Vopiſcus* reports, That *Aurelian*, in the *Sarmatick* War, ſlew *Forty-eight* Men with his own Hands, in one Day; and in divers Days, *Nine hundred and Fifty*: Upon which the Boys made a Song, and ſhouted in their Dances after a military Manner, *Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, Mille, decollavimus. Unus homo, Mille, Mille*, &c. *Mille, Mille, vivat, qui Mille, Mille occidit.* And upon another Occaſion, another little Song was made of him, which *Salmaſius* found thus diſpoſed in antient *MS.*

Mille Sarmatas, Mille Francos
Semel & Semel occidimus
Mille Perſas quærimus.

Ver. 16. *And Samſon ſaid.*] Then he compoſed a triumphant Song.

With the Jaw-bone of an Aſs, Heaps upon Heaps; with the Jaw-bone of an Aſs, have I ſlain a Thouſand Men.] This ſeems to have been the Beginning, and, perhaps, the End of the Song. In which Words, *Belehi hachamor chamorcha morathaim*, every one may obſerve a graceful Alluſion, *Chamor* ſignifying, both an *Aſs*, and alſo an *Heap*.

Ver. 17. *And it came to paſs, that when he had made an end of ſpeaking.*] Of reciting the Song before mentioned, which contained more than theſe few Words, as this Phraſe ſeems to import.

That he caſt the Jaw-bone out of his Hand.] Which he held there, while he was ſpeaking.

And called that Place Ramath-lehi.] That is, the Projection, or caſting away of the Jaw-bone, as the *Chaldee* and *Kimchi* interpret it; for ſo the Word *Rama* ſignifies, to throw any thing from one. It is called, *Ver.* 9. and 14. ſimply *Lehi*, it being uſual to leave out the Beginning of Names, as I have often obſerved, *Salem* being put for *Jeruſalem*, and *Shittim*, for *Abel-Shittim*, &c.

Ver. 18. *And he was ſore athirſt.*] By his great Toil in the Fight, and by his ſpeaking ſo long, and ſo earneſtly, as it is likely he did afterwards.

And he called on the LORD, *and ſaid, Thou haſt given this great Deliverance into the Hand of thy Servant.*] This is an expreſs Confutation of the Fancy of *Joſephus*, that GOD ſent this Thirſt upon him, as a Puniſhment for not giving him the Glory of his Victory, but aſcribing it to his own Strength; for which I can ſee no Colour: For though GOD be not mentioned in his Song, but only the Jaw-bone, yet that was in itſelf ſo weak an Inſtrument, that his acknowledging twice it was the only thing wherewith he ſlew ſo many, was a ſufficient Signification, that he aſcribed not the Victory to human Power, but to the Power of GOD, whoſe Spirit he felt come mightily upon him, when he ſet upon them: But what is there tacitly inſinuated, is here in ſo many Words expreſſed.

And now ſhall I die for Thirſt, and fall into the Hands of the Uncircumciſed?] It ſeems he was very faint, for want of ſome Refreſhment, which made him ſo earneſtly implore Relief from GOD, who, he knew, would not fail to ſupply him in ſo great a Neceſſity: For the Remembrance of former Benefits, when we thankfully acknowledge them, is a mighty Support to Faith, in the Expectance of future; beſide, he repreſents himſelf to GOD, as a *Servant* of his, who had taken all this Pains, not to ſatisfy his own Revenge, but by his Inſtigation, and for the Deliverance of his People.

Ver. 19. *And* GOD *clave an hollow Place that was in the Jaw.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Maktes*, properly ſignifies the Socket in which the great Teeth in the Jaw are faſtened (as *Bochartus* evidently proves, P. 1. *Hieroz.* Lib. 2. Cap. 16.) one of which Teeth he made to drop out, and then cauſed Water to come forth out of that hollow Place: But our great *Primate* follows thoſe who think GOD made a Clift in ſome Part of the Earth, in that Place called *Lehi*, from whence he made a Fountain of Water to ſpring up. And ſo *Joſephus* ſaith, He brought it, κατὰ τινὸς πέτρας, out of a certain Rock.

And there came Water thereout.] From this Cavity he cauſed Water to iſſue, (whereas Blood is wont to flow when a Tooth is plucked out) juſt as he brought Water out of a Rock in the Wilderneſs, and made the Meal and the Oil to multiply in the Widow of *Sarepta*'s Veſſels.

And when he had drunk.] It is probable, he took up the Jaw, when he ſaw the Water bubble out of it, and let it run into his Mouth, till he had quenched his Thirſt.

His Spirit came again and he revived.] He was ſo ſpent, it ſeems, that he was ready to die, till GOD ſent him this Water, unto which his Power gave ſuch a Spirit, that it was as reviving as a Draught of Wine.

Wherefore he called the Name thereof, Enhakkore, which is in Lehi.] Or, as *Bochart*, I think, more truly renders it, *Enhakkore-aſher belehi*; that is, the Fountain of him that called, which is in the Jaw. See him in the above mentioned Place, P. 205.

Unto this Day.] Some have imagined, that the Fountain continued in *Lehi*, unto the time that this Book was written: But *Bochart* there obſerves, that theſe Words, *Unto this Day*, are not to be joined with thoſe next before; for they are ſeparated by an Accent which divides them; and therefore the Meaning is, that it is called to this Day, by the Name forementioned.

Ver. 20. *And he judged Iſrael in the Days of the Philiſtines, Twenty Years.*] All his Time, they remained under the Power of the *Philiſtines*, who, they confeſs, *Ver.* 11. were *their Rulers*, as they continued to be for Forty Years together, xiii. 1. of which theſe Twenty were a Part. In which he was not able to perfect their Deliverance, but only began it by ſeveral Damages he did them: But, after all, he left the *Iſraelites* under their Dominion; nor was there any Deliverer aroſe till *Samuel*, who, I obſerved before, compleated what *Samſon* began, 1 *Sam.* vii. 13.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *THEN went Samſon to Gaza.*] His late Victory made him deſpiſe the *Philiſtines*, as *Joſephus* thinks, (καταφρονῶν τῶν Παλαιστινῶν) and adventure to go, in a Bravery, into one of their principal Cities, which lay in the South part of their Country, towards *Egypt*. But it ſeems to me more likely, that he went thither ſecretly and unobſervedly, in the Duſk of the Evening, or in a Diſguiſe; that he might the better ſpy in what Poſture they were, and what Advantage he might poſſibly have of them.

And ſaw there an Harlot.] Who kept, it is likely, a Publick Houſe to entertain Strangers; but was as publick herſelf; which had been the Condition of *Rahab*. So *Joſephus* ἐν τινὶ τῶν καταγωγίων διετριβε, he took up his Lodging in one of the Publick Inns of the City.

And went in unto her.] Was enſnared by her Beauty, to lie with her.

Ver. 2. *And it was told the Gazites.*] The Magiſtrates of the City.

Saying, Samſon is come hither.] By this it appears, his coming thither was not publickly known; but by ſome Means or other diſcovered: Perhaps, by the Woman herſelf into whoſe Houſe he went, who gave private Information of his being there.

And they compaſſed him in.] The Meaning is not that they beſet the Houſe; for the next Words ſhew the contrary; That they intended to ſeize him, as he went out of the City.

And laid wait for him all Night, at the Gate of the City.] Eſpecially in that Gate which led to his own Country.

And were quiet all Night.] Made no Noiſe, for fear he ſhould be alarmed, and contrive ſome Way of Eſcape; or deſperately ſet upon them, and break through the Guards.

Saying, In the Morning, when it is Day, we ſhall kill him.] He would fall into their Hands, they imagined; having no Apprehenſion of Danger.

Ver. 3. *And Samſon lay till Midnight.*] When he was admoniſhed, perhaps by a Dream, to be gone; or had ſome Intelligence from his Servants (whom he had ſet to watch) that they lay in wait for him.

And aroſe at Midnight.] In the dead time of the Night, when no body was ſtirring; and the Soldiers themſelves, perhaps, aſleep: Imagining he would lie till Morning.

And took the Doors of the Gate of the City, and the two Poſts, and went away with them, Bar and all.] He did not ſtay to break them open, but plucked up the Poſts out of the Ground, with the Doors hanging upon them, faſt barred; which ſo aſtoniſhed the Guards, that they had no Heart to follow him.

And put them upon his Shoulders.] He ſeems to have carried them a little Way in his Hands; and then lifted them up to his Shoulders, and carried them before their Faces in Triumph. Which argued a mighty Strength; and no leſs Confidence in GOD.

And carried them up to the Top of an Hill, that is before Hebron.] Some take this Hill to have been near *Hebron*; which was twenty Miles from this Place. But it is more probable (as *Peter Martyr* conjectures) it lay between *Gaza* and *Hebron*; within the View of both: That the Inhabitants of the one City might behold them to their Confuſion; and they of the other to their Encouragement to hope for Deliverance.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs afterward.*] How long after is not known.

That he loved a Woman in the Valley of Sorek, whoſe Name was Delilah.] It is certain that *Sorek* was a Place in the Land of *Judæa*; famous for choice Vines (as *Bochart* obſerves, from *Gen.* xlix. 11. *Iſa.* v. 2. *Jer.* ii. 21.) and not above a Mile and a half from *Eſchol*; whence the Spies brought a Bunch of Grapes, for a Sample of the Fruitfulneſs of the Country. Unto this Place *Samſon* retired to refreſh himſelf, perhaps, after his Labours, with the Delights of it; and there ſaw a Woman, with whom he fell in Love. But whether ſhe was a Woman of *Iſrael*, or one of the Daughters of the *Philiſtines* (who now were Rulers of the Country of *Judah*, xv. 11.) and whether he loved her as his Wife, or kept Company with her as an Harlot, is not here ſignified. St. *Chryſoſtom*, and others are of Opinion, that he was married to her. But then one would think there ſhould have been ſome brief Mention of their Wedding Solemnities; or of his bringing her home to his own Houſe. And the *Philiſtines* would not have been ſo bold, as to attempt to draw her into their Party, and bribe her to betray him into their Hands. Which argues ſhe had not the Affection of a Wife to him; but was a mercenary Woman, that would do any thing to get Money. And ſo *Joſephus* underſtands it, Παρέβαινε ἤδη τὰ πάτρια, &c. He forſook the Inſtitutions of his Country, and followed the degenerate Manners of ſtrange People, ἐρασθεὶς γυναικὸς ἑταιριζομένης, being enamoured with an Harlot among the *Philiſtines*: Which was the beginning of all the Evils that befel him. For he did not keep her Company for a Night; but dwelt with her, and gave up himſelf ſo entirely to her, that he doted on her.

Ver. 5. *And the Lords of the Philiſtines came up unto her.*] There were five of them in all (as we read iii. 3.) who, it is likely, all joined together to make a Purſe (as we ſpeak) wherewith to corrupt her; and ſent their Agents to make large Offers to her, if ſhe would come into their Intereſts.

And ſaid unto her, Entice him, and ſee wherein his great Strength lieth, and by what Means we may prevail againſt him.] It is probable, that he had often declared, that the Source of his Strength was a Secret, known only to himſelf; which they hoped he might, with her Blandiſhments, entice him to reveal unto her.

That we may bind him, and afflict him.] That ſhe might not ſtartle at the Propoſal, they tell her, they had no Intention to kill him; but only to keep him faſt in Chains, and afflict him; ſo as to make him humble, and bring him low, that he might not be able to do them more Miſchief.

And we will give thee every one of us, Eleven hundred Pieces of Silver.] By which is commonly underſtood ſo many Shekels; which made in all five thouſand five hundred, which make almoſt two *Hebrew* Talents. For the *Jews* make it a Rule, that where *Pieces of Silver* are mentioned, the Meaning is Shekels. See *Gen.* xxiii. 15.

Ver. 6. *And Delilah ſaid unto Samſon, Tell me, I pray thee, where thy great Strength lieth.*] She did not bluntly aſk him this Queſtion, but, as *Joſephus* very probably tells the Story, the next time they were eating and drinking together, and he was careſſing her, ſhe fell into an Admiration of all his wonderful Deeds, and highly extolled them; deſiring him to tell her, how he came ſo much to excel all other Men in Strength.

And wherewith thou mighteſt be bound to afflict thee.] So that he ſhould not be able to help himſelf.

Ver. 7. *And Samſon ſaid unto her, If they bind me with ſeven great Withs, that were never dried; then ſhall I be weak, and be as another Man.*] Her laſt Words, perhaps, made him ſuſpect ſomething. However, ἔτι φρονεῖν ἰσχυρὸς ἦν, (as *Joſephus* ſpeaks) *he was yet ſtrong in his Underſtanding*, and not perfectly beſotted on her; and therefore did not truſt her with this important Secret, but anſwered her deceitfully. Which cannot be excuſed from being a downright Lye; unleſs we ſuppoſe he only jeſted with her, not believing ſhe would take ſuch an improbable thing for a Truth.

Ver. 8. *Then the Lords of the Philiſtines brought up to her ſeven green Withs, which had not been dried.*] It ſeems they lurked ſomewhere thereabout, that they might be informed ſpeedily of what paſſed. And they took care to provide the Withs themſelves, that there might be no Defect in them.

And ſhe bound him with them.] Καθεύδοντα μεθύοντα, *&c.* She bound him hard with the Withs, when he was aſleep, and full of Drink, as *Joſephus* ſpeaks.

Ver. 9. *Now there were Men lying in wait, abiding with her in the Chamber.*] In another Room of the Houſe, near to that where *Samſon* ſlept, ſhe had placed a Band of Soldiers, (as *Joſephus* alſo interprets it) who were ready, upon Notice, to ſeize him. This is an Argument that *Delilah* was not his Wife; for in his own Houſe, where he had his Servants about him, it had not been poſſible for her to have placed Soldiers ſecretly in any Room, without their Knowledge.

And ſhe ſaid unto him, The Philiſtines be upon thee, Samſon.] One would think, they might have ſet upon him when he was in a deep Sleep. But the Plot was otherwiſe laid between them and *Delilah*; and they thought it not ſafe to come near a ſleeping Lion, for fear he ſhould chance to awake, and tear them in pieces.

And he brake the Withs as a Thread of Tow is broken, when it toucheth the Fire: So his Strength was not known.] They found he was as ſubtle, as he was ſtrong; having deluded both her and them.

Ver. 10. *And Delilah ſaid unto Samſon, Behold, thou haſt mocked me, and told me Lyes: Now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mighteſt be bound.*] So as not to be able to free himſelf. The *Hebrew* Writers rightly obſerve, that ſhe did not ſay this to him immediately after the other; but at the next Opportunity, ſhe took Occaſion to complain of his want of Kindneſs, in not acquainting her with what ſhe deſired to know; as if ſhe was not able to keep the Secret of a Friend, which was not fit for any body elſe to underſtand; as *Joſephus* expreſſes it.

Ver. 11. *If they bind me faſt with new Ropes, that were never occupied, then ſhall I be weak, and be as another Man.*] He perſiſts in his Reſolution to delude her.

Ver. 12. *Delilah therefore took new Ropes, and bound him therewith.*] This looked more like Truth than the former, and ſhe took care, no doubt, to have the ſtrongeſt Ropes that they could get. And then made him a new Entertainment, where he eat and drank till he was heavy with Sleep; and then ſhe took the Opportunity to bind him, as ſhe had done before.

And ſaid unto him, The Philiſtines be upon thee, Samſon, (and there were Liers-in-wait in the Chamber.)] In the Inner Room, where they were formerly diſpoſed ſo ſecretly, that *Samſon* knew not of it; for if he had, he would have diſcovered her Treachery.

And he broke them from off his Arms like a Thread.] Which deterred them from breaking out upon him.

Ver. 13. *And Delilah ſaid unto Samſon, Hitherto thou haſt mocked, and told me Lyes; tell me wherewith thou mighteſt be bound.*] She prays him now to deal ſincerely with her; for ſhe perſiſted as reſolutely in her Attemps to draw the Secret from him, as he did in concealing it: Which he ſtill continued to do.

And he ſaid unto her, If thou weaveſt the Locks of my Head.] The *Nazarites* being bound never to cut their Hair, did not, I ſuppoſe, let it hang looſe, but curled it up in Locks, or plaited and broidered it after the manner of a Chain: And *Samſon*'s Hair was diſtributed into Seven of theſe plaited Locks. See Dr. *Spencer* concerning this, L. 3. Cap. 6. Diſſert. 1. P. 585.

With the Web.] He ſeems to direct her to wrap theſe ſeven Locks about a Weaver's Beam (as the *Chaldee* underſtands it) or to weave them one within another, ſo that they ſhould be but one Lock; and then he ſhould be like another Man; which is here to be underſtood. And in this he comes a little nearer to the Truth; but ſtill deceives.

Ver. 14. *And ſhe faſtened it with a Pin.*] That they might keep tight, and not be unlooſed.

And ſaid, The Philiſtines be upon thee, Samſon; and he awaked out of his Sleep.] This ſhews that ſhe had taken the former Advantages of him in his Sleep.

And he went away with the Pin of the Beam, and with the Web.] And thereby appeared as ſtrong as ever he was. For, as the *Vulgar* underſtands it, ſhe fixed this Pin in the Earth; or as the LXX,

in the Wall. But there is nothing like it in the *Hebrew* Text.

Ver. 15. *And ſhe ſaid, How canſt thou ſay, I love thee, when thy Heart is not with me? Thou haſt mocked me theſe three times, and haſt not told me wherein thy great Strength lieth.*] She now uſes her utmoſt Art to overcome him; by telling him, I ſuppoſe, ſhe would caſt him off, becauſe he did but pretend to love her; as appeared by his not truſting her: But notwithſtanding her importunate Deſire to be gratified in a ſmall Requeſt, he had no leſs than three times put a Cheat upon her.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs, when ſhe preſſed him daily with her Words, and urged him.*] Repeated this often from Day to Day, moſt earneſtly preſſing him to give her a Proof of his real Affection, by diſcloſing this Secret.

So that his Soul was vexed unto Death.] He was upon ſuch a Rack by two contrary Paſſions ſtruggling in him; Love to her, and Care not to loſe his Strength; that he was weary of Life; that is, very melancholy, and unconcerned what became of him.

Ver. 17. *That he told her all his Heart.*] God having forſaken him, becauſe he had abandoned himſelf to ſenſual Pleaſure; his Love of the Harlot prevailed over his Care of himſelf.

And ſaid unto her, There hath not come a Razor upon my Head; but I have been a Nazarite from my Mother's Womb.] Theſe Words were ſpoken with a greater Serioufneſs than any of the former; which made her conclude he had given her a true Account. For thus *Joſephus* paraphraſes, *I am under the Care of* God; *by whoſe Providence being born, I nouriſh my Hair; for* God *forbad that I ſhould ever have it cut off. All my Strength lying in the Increaſe and Continuance of this Hair*, Lib. 5. Antiq. Cap. 10.

If I be ſhaven, then will my Strength go from me, and I ſhall become weak, and be like any other Man.] There have been Men of wonderful Strength, whoſe Memory is preſerved in Hiſtory; particularly by *Pliny*, Lib. 12. *Natural. Hiſtor.* Cap. 20. and more are collected by *Caſpar Schottus*, in his *Mirabilia Naturæ & Artis*, Lib. 3. Cap. 36. And now at my preſent Writing of this, there is more than one Perſon in this City, of extraordinary Strength. But there is a Demonſtration that *Samſon*'s Strength wholly depended upon the Power of God, and was not inherent in himſelf; but came upon him when there was need, as long as he preſerved himſelf conſecrated unto God, by not ſhaving his Head, and obſerving all other Things belonging to the Vow of a *Nazarite*. Which was a Thing ſo notorious, that the Heathens were not ignorant of it; but from hence deviſed (as learned Men have obſerved) the Fable of *Niſus*, the King of *Megara*; upon whoſe Hair the Fortune of his Kingdom depended. See *Huetius* in his *Quæſtiones Alnecanæ*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. Sect. 28. and our Dr. *Jackſon*, in his firſt Book on the *Creed*, Chap. 15. Paragr. 3.

Ver. 18. *And when Delilah ſaw that he had told her all his Heart.*] Which ſhe perceived, as I ſaid, by the Manner of his ſpeaking.

She ſent and called the Lords of the Philiſtines.] Who ſtill, it ſeems, waited thereabouts, to ſee what would be the Succeſs of their Deſign; which ſhe gave them Hopes ſhe ſhould at laſt accompliſh. This could not but have been diſcovered by ſome of *Samſon*'s Servants, if he had had a Family there, as he would if he had been married. I look upon this therefore, as a Proof, that this Woman was not his Wife.

Saying, Come up this once; for he hath ſhewn me all his Heart.] She was afraid they would not have hearkened to her any more, having been ſo often deluded; which made her give them this full Aſſurance.

Then the Lords of the Philiſtines came up unto her, and brought Money in their Hands.] Which they never did before; but now ſhewed her the Reward was ready, if ſhe performed her Work.

Ver. 19. *And ſhe made him ſleep.*] Having given him, as *Delrio* thinks, a ſleeping Potion. Others think ſhe had drawn him in to drink Wine (which *Joſephus* ſuppoſes ſhe had done in former Entertainments) unto which he not being accuſtomed, he was intoxicated with it. And having broken the Law of the *Nazarites* in this Point, was juſtly delivered up by God to ſuffer all that followed.

Upon her Knees.] Reſting his Head, I ſuppoſe, upon her Knees. Or perhaps, ſhe ſet him upon her Knees, and with her Arms about his Neck, expreſſed the greateſt Affection to him, and Care of him.

And ſhe called for a Man, and ſhe cauſed him to ſhave off the ſeven Locks of his Head.] Which he did ſo gently, being a Man of Art, as not to awake him.

And ſhe began to afflict him.] Not by any ſenſible Pain; but by weakning him, and bringing him low (as the *Hebrew* Word is often interpreted.) For as ſoon as the Razor touched his Head, his Strength began to be diminiſhed.

And his Strength went from him.] When all the Locks were ſhaved off, his Strength quite failed him.

Ver. 20. *And ſhe ſaid, The Philiſtines be upon thee, Samſon. And he awoke out of his Sleep.*] She cried ſo loud, and alſo ſhook him ſo much (out of pretended Kindneſs to him, that he might eſcape the Danger) that ſhe rouzed him out of his Sleep.

And he ſaid, I will go as at other times before, and ſhake myſelf.] She had ſo often ſaid thoſe Words, that he was in no Fear; but thought to do as he had done before, that is, prepare himſelf to fall upon them.

And he wiſt not that the Lord *was departed from him.*] Being newly awakened out of a profound Sleep, and ſcarce come to himſelf, he did not miſs his Hair; and ſo had no Apprehenſion that God had deſerted him.

Ver. 21. *But the Philiſtines took him.*] But he ſoon found he had no Power at all left to reſiſt his Enemies; who laid hold on him, and took him Priſoner.

And put out his Eyes.] By a juſt Judgment of God, [as the *Miſchna* obſerves in the Title *Sota*, Cap. 8. where they ſay, he followed the Delight of his Eyes, and ſo he was puniſhed with the Loſs of them. Which the *Jews* are wont to call, *Meaſure for Meaſure.* They did not put

him to Death, much leſs cut him in Pieces, as their Hatred and Fury might have provoked them to do; for they had promiſed *Delilah* they would only bind him, and afflict or humble him, *Ver.* 5. and in thoſe Days all Men made ſome Conſcience of keeping their Word.

And brought him down to Gaza.] To be expoſed there to Scorn, where he had expoſed them to Shame, by carrying away the Gates of their City. It was a Place alſo of great Strength, where he would be kept ſecure; and it was remote alſo from his own Country.

And bound him with Fetters of Braſs.] Put very ſtrong, and heavy Fetters upon his Legs.

And he did grind in the Priſon-houſe.] As Slaves were wont to do. See upon *Exod.* xi. 5. and St. *Hierom*, *Iſa.* xlvii. 2. where this is turned to another Senſe, according to the Conceit of many of the *Jewiſh* Doctors; but without any Ground, for it is threatened there as a Puniſhment to *Babylon*, and ſo it was inflicted here as a Piece of Drudgery, unto which *Samſon*, as other Priſoners, was condemned.

Ver. 22. *Howbeit the Hair of his Head began to grow again, after he was ſhaven.*] Or (according to the Marginal Tranſlation) *As when he was ſhaven.* That is, grew in Time to the ſame Length it was of before *Delilah* cut it off: So that though his *Nazariteſhip* was interrupted by the ſhaving of his Head, yet it was renewed, by letting his Hair grow, and obſerving all other Rules belonging to it. He could not offer Sacrifice indeed for his Expiation, (as the Law was in caſe of an Interruption) but repented, no doubt, of his Folly, and began his *Nazariteſhip* again, with Prayer to GOD for a Pardon of his former Violation of it: And in this State of Penitence he continued ſome Time; for his Hair would be a good while in growing again to its former Length: When, being reſtored to the Condition wherein he was before he loſt the Favour of GOD, together with his Hair, the Divine Majeſty was reconciled to him, and reſtored his former Strength; which grew and increaſed, as his Hair did.

Ver. 23. *Then the Lords of the Philiſtines gathered themſelves together.*] Not immediately after the taking of *Samſon*; but after he had been ſome Time in Priſon, as appears by the Verſe foregoing: For it is likely they made great Preparation for the Solemnity mentioned in the next Words.

For to offer a great Sacrifice to Dagon their God, and to rejoice.] To give Thanks to their God at a Feſtival, which they appointed, I ſuppoſe, on purpoſe to expreſs their Joy for their taking *Samſon* Priſoner: Or, as *Joſephus* thinks, ἑορτὴν ἄγοντες τοῖς Παλαιστινοῖς δημοτελῆ, there being a publick Feſtival kept among the *Philiſtines* (which all Nations had at certain Seaſons) they made it more famous, by greater Sacrifices than ordinary, and by greater Feaſting and Rejoycing, which were Expreſſions of their Thankfulneſs to their God; who is called *Dagon*, becauſe, as *R. Solomon*, and many others think, he was in the Form of a Fiſh, (for *Dag* ſignifies a Fiſh) from the Navel downward, and upward in an Human Shape. Certain it is, this God had an Human Shape in the upper Parts, for we read 1 *Sam.* ver. 4. of his Head, and the Palms of his Hands, though nothing is there ſaid of his Feet. It is certain alſo, that the *Syrians* abſtained from Fiſh, as *Porphyry* notes; at leaſt from the Fiſh of that Lake hard by which the Temple of the famous Goddeſs *Derceto* ſtood, not far from *Askelon*: In which, as *Lucian* ſaith, in his *Dea Syria*, ἰχθύες ἱεροὶ τρέφονται, *ſacred Fiſhes were bred.* This *Derceto* was the ſame with *Venus*, as many learned Men think, whom the *Sidonians* called *Atarge*, and others *Artaga*; but moſt commonly *Aſtarte*, which, in the Scripture, is *Aſhtaroth*, the Goddeſs of the *Sidonians*, 1 *Kings* xi. 5, 33. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 13. and of the *Philiſtines* alſo, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 10. whom the *Iſraelites* imitated, 1 *Sam.* vii. 3, 4. And worſhipping the Gods of thoſe who ruled over them, no wonder they followed their wicked Manners, and gave themſelves over to Fornication: Which is the beſt Account that can be given of *Samſon*'s living in this Sin, without Reprehenſion; the Nation being depraved, and having loſt their antient Diſcipline, which corrected this Vice; for their Law permitted no Harlot to be in *Iſrael*.

For they ſaid, Our God hath delivered Samſon, our Enemy, into our Hands.] All Nations had this Senſe, that they owed all they enjoyed unto GOD: And eſpecially made their Acknowledgments to ſuch Gods as they worſhipped, for the Victories they got over their Enemies.

Ver. 24. *And when the People ſaw him.*] For he was publickly expoſed to all Mens View, in his Fetters, I ſuppoſe, and grinding in the Priſon.

They praiſed their God.] Some Hymns, perhaps, were compoſed on this Occaſion; which they ſang in praiſe of *Dagon*.

And ſaid, Our God hath delivered into our Hand, the Deſtroyer of our Country, which ſlew many of us.] This was Part of their Song, which the *Greeks* call *Pæan*: And they give the very ſame *Epithet* to *Samſon*, that *Homer* doth to *Hector*, whom he frequently calls ἀνδροφόνον, *The Slayer of Men.*

Ver. 25. *And it came to paſs, when their Hearts were merry.*] As they uſed to be with good Cheer, Muſick, and ſuch like Entertainments, at their Feſtivals.

That they ſaid, Call for Samſon.] The Lords of the *Philiſtines* ordered him to be ſent for.

That he may make us Sport.] It is uncertain whether they meant, that they would make themſelves Sport with him, by Flouts and Jeers; or that they would have him make them Sport, by ridiculous Geſtures and Speeches: *Joſephus* takes it in the firſt Senſe.

And they called for Samſon out of the Priſon-houſe, and he made them Sport.] Perhaps they made him dance in his Chains, or play'd with him at ſome ſuch Sport as we call Blind-Man's-buff: But it is hard to believe that ſuch a generous Spirit as his, would ſubmit to do any thing that ſhould make them laugh; therefore they made them-

themſelves all the Sport they could, by their Abuſes of him, which he was forced to ſuffer.

And they ſet him between the Pillars.] That he might be the more viſible to every one in the Place.

Ver. 26. *And Samſon ſaid unto the Lad, that held him by the Hand.*] And led him about, as he was directed.

Suffer me that I may feel the Pillars upon which the Houſe ſtandeth.] Which ſupported the Roof of it, as appears from *Ver.* 29.

That I may lean upon them.] To reſt himſelf, pretending he was weary, as *Joſephus* expounds it.

Ver. 27. *Now the Houſe was full of Men and Women, and the Lords of the Philiſtines were there.*] Some think this Houſe was one of their Temples, wherein they met to praiſe their God, and then to feaſt, as the Manner was, upon the Sacrifices which were offered on ſuch Occaſions. (See ix. 27.) And indeed no private Houſe can be thought to have had a Room wide enough to contain ſuch a Number of People: But their Temples were, in many Places, large enough, and made ſo on purpoſe that a vaſt Number might aſſemble in them; particularly that of *Diana* at *Epheſus* is celebrated for its Greatneſs, as well as for its Beauty and Riches; (ſee *Pliny*, *Lib.* 35. *Nat. Hiſt. Cap.* 14.) all the People round about, from all Parts, running thither at ſeveral Solemnities, as many have noted: But others think it was ſome *Theatre*, like thoſe in After-times, built by the *Romans*, ſome of which were of a prodigious Bigneſs: See *Pliny*, in the ſame Book, *Chap.* 15. where he mentions two Theatres built by *C. Curio*, who was killed in the Civil Wars, on *Cæſar*'s Side. They were made of Wood, ſo ample as to contain all the *Roman People*, (as he ſpeaks) and contrived with ſuch Art, that each of them depended upon one Hinge: Which moved *Pliny* to admire at the Madneſs of the People of *Rome*, who would venture into a Place, for their Pleaſure, where they ſat *tam infida inſtabilique ſede*, in ſuch an uncertain and unſtable Seat; for if that Hinge had ſlipt, there had been a greater Slaughter, than at the Battle of *Cannæ*. This I mention, to ſilence the Cavils of thoſe who fancy no ſuch capacious Building could be made, as relied only on two Pillars; which is not ſo ſtrange as this admirable Fabrick of *Curio*.

And there was upon the Roof about Three Thouſand Men and Women, that beheld while Samſon made Sport.] Every one knows that the Roof of their Houſes and Temples were flat, ſo that Men might ſtand or walk there: But how they ſhould ſee *Samſon* from thence, we cannot conceive, unleſs we ſuppoſe there were Windows to open upon Occaſion, whereby to look into the Houſe; or perhaps there were Battlements at the Top, in the Inſide (as in our Cathedrals) where this great Company of Men and Women ſtood: By whom we are to underſtand the Vulgar Sort; for the Lords of the *Philiſtines*, and Perſons of Quality, were in the Body of the Houſe.

Ver. 28. *And Samſon called unto the* LORD, *and ſaid, O* LORD GOD, *remember me, I pray thee, and ſtrengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O* GOD.] A moſt ardent Prayer, proceeding from the Anguiſh of his Soul, as *Joſephus* obſerves; nothing being more grievous than to be mocked, and expoſed to publick Scorn, which he calls δεινότερον τῶν κακῶν, the worſt of all Evils! But whether he ſpake theſe Words within himſelf, or, as ſome think, with an audible Voice, cannot be determined.

That I may be at once avenged of the Philiſtines, for the Loſs of my two Eyes.] If this had proceeded from a Spirit of private Revenge, GOD would not have heard his Prayer, (for he doth not love to gratify Mens Paſſions) but that is a Proof that this Deſire proceeded from GOD, (as St. *Auſtin* underſtands it, *Lib.* 1. *de Civ. Dei*, *Cap.* 21.) who intended to puniſh the *Philiſtines* for oppreſſing *Iſrael*, as well as abuſing *Samſon*, and depriving him of his Eyes.

Ver. 29. *And Samſon took hold of the two middle Pillars, upon which the Houſe ſtood, and on which it was born up*, &c.] On which the Weight of the Roof relied.

Ver. 30. *And Samſon ſaid, Let me die with the Philiſtines.*] He is not to be thought properly a Self-Murderer; for he was moved by an heroical Spirit from GOD himſelf, to make himſelf a Sacrifice (as I may call it) for the Good of his Country: And it is no more than great Soldiers do, who are content to loſe their Lives, in Defence of a Poſt where they are placed, for the Preſervation of the Army to which they belong. See *Grotius*, in his Book *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 2. Cap. 19. Sect. 5. N. 4.

And he bowed himſelf with all his Might, and the Houſe fell upon the Lords, and all the People that were therein.] But it was not by his Might, but by a miraculous Power of GOD, that this Houſe was ſubverted, whereby all their Mirth and Jollity was extinguiſhed in a Moment.

So the Dead which he ſlew at his Death, were more than they which he ſlew in his Life.] This laſt Act was the greateſt of his whole Life: For he not only ſlew more, but Perſons of greater Note, (their principal Rulers and Governors) and deſtroyed one of their Temples, (as moſt Authors take this Houſe to have been) together with their GOD: Which muſt needs put thoſe that ſurvived into the greateſt Conſternation and Confuſion.

This was a Thing known to the Heathen; for it is a very probable Conjecture of ſome great Men, that hence the *Greeks* framed the Fable of their *Hercules*; who lived about his Time, and whoſe Name is the ſame with *Samſon*'s, if it be derived from *Schemeſh* the Sun: For *Hercules* is as much as *Or-chol*, that which enlightens all, *i. e.* the Sun. Of him it is reported, by *Herodotus*, That being bound in *Egypt*, he was brought in a pompous manner to be ſacrificed to *Jupiter*; and reſting a while, till he could be placed on the Altar, he broke out and ſlew all that were preſent.

Ver. 31. *Then his Brethren, and all the Houſe of his Father.*] By *Brethren* are commonly meant in Scripture, the neareſt Kindred; and by *the Houſe of his Father* is meant, all the reſt of his Relations: Or, perhaps, after the Birth of this Child, GOD beſtowed the Bleſſing of other Children upon *Manoah* and his Wife; as he did upon *Hannah*, after the Birth of *Samuel*.

Came down and took him.] By the Permiſſion of the *Philiſtines*, who had ſo much Humanity (as all Nations anciently had) as not to prohibit Enemies from burying their Dead: But the *Iſraelites* were now in Subjection to the *Philiſtines*, and did not join with *Samſon* in any of his Enterprizes; which he performed ſolely by himſelf: And beſide, the *Philiſtines* were much humbled and mollified, no doubt, by this late Diſaſter.

And brought him up.] With ſome Pomp, or Solemnity, it is likely; he being a very great Man, and famous for his wonderful Exploits.

And buried him between Zorah and Eſhtaol.] Theſe were two Cities in the Tribe of *Dan*, (*Joſh.* xv. 33.) but on the Frontiers of the Tribe of *Judah*, as ſome gather from *Nehem.* xi. 29.

In the Burying-Place of Manoah his Father.] To be buried in the Sepulchres of their Anceſtors, was accounted a great Bleſſing by all Nations, as *Ezekiel Spanhemius* notes upon *Callimachus* his Hymn to *Diana*, Ver. 131, 132. And we have Examples of it in Scripture, *Gen.* xlvii. 29, 30. *Nehem.* ii. 3, 5. as the contrary was accounted a Curſe, 1 *Kings* xiii. 22.

And he judged Iſrael Twenty Years.] This was ſaid before, xv. 20. and here mentioned again to ſhew that he continued to judge *Iſrael* (that is to vindicate them from their Oppreſſors, for we read of no other Act of a Judge) till he died. When he did as great an Act, as any he had done all the Time of his Judicature (or rather greater) for the humbling of the *Philiſtines*, who domineered over the *Iſraelites*, and reſtoring them to their Liberty: Which though he could not effect, yet he did ſo much towards it, by the many Miſchiefs he did them, that not many Years after his Death, they had the Courage to betake themſelves to their Arms, and fight the *Philiſtines*; whom they overthrew, and ſubdued, ſo that they came no more to moleſt the *Iſraelites* all the Days of *Samuel*; under whoſe Government, as I obſerved before, they recovered their Liberty from the long Oppreſſion of this People, 1 *Sam.* vii. 10, 13.

CHAP. XVII.

HERE begins the *Second* Part of this Book; which gives an Account of ſeveral memorable Tranſactions, in or about the Time of the *Judges*: Whoſe Hiſtory the Author would not interrupt by intermixing theſe Matters with it; but reſerved them to be related apart by themſelves, in the five following Chapters: Wherein he *firſt* gives an Account how Idolatry crept into the Tribe of *Ephraim*; which he doth in this Chapter: And then, *Secondly*, How it was propagated among the *Danites*, in an Expedition they made, wherein they ſacked *Laiſh*, *Chap.* xviii. And then, *Thirdly*, He relates a moſt foul Adultery committed in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, *Chap.* xix. After which follows the Deſtruction of that Tribe, for countenancing that Fact, *Chap.* xx. And *Laſtly*, The Reſtauration of it, *Chap.* xxi.

Ver. 1. *AND there was a Man of Mount Ephraim, whoſe Name was Micah.*] When this Man lived, and did what follows, we may with ſome Certainty gather from *Ver.* 6. which tells us, there was *no King in Iſrael* at this Time; that is, no ſupreme Governor, with a Power to keep the People to their Duty. Which Anarchy happened (as Primate *Uſher* and other great Men obſerve) between the Death of thoſe Elders, who ſurvived *Joſhua*, and the firſt Oppreſſion of *Iſrael* by *Cuſhan*: In which Space of Time, it is manifeſt, the *Iſraelites* firſt fell from the Worſhip of GOD, and polluted themſelves with Idolatry, ii. 13. iii 7. where we read the *Children of Iſrael forſook the* LORD, *and did Evil in his Sight*, i. e. committed Idolatry: The Beginning of which Defection from GOD, is deſcribed briefly in this Chapter.

Ver. 2. *And he ſaid unto his Mother.*] Who ſeems to have been a rich Widow, that lived with her Son *Micah*.

The Eleven Hundred Shekels of Silver.] There is no mention of *Shekels* in the *Hebrew*; but our Interpreters followed the Rule I mentioned, that where *Pieces of Silver*, or *Silverlings*, are ſpoken of, the Meaning is *Shekels*.

That were taken from thee.] Of which ſhe was robbed: Or, as the *Vulgar* underſtands it, which ſhe had ſeparated, or ſet apart; that is, devoted and conſecrated to an holy Uſe, but ſome body had ſtolen and perverted to their own Uſe.

About which thou curſedſt.] Adjured all her Family to diſcover the Money; with ſome ſort of Curſe upon them, if they knew where it was, and concealed it. See Dr. *Hammond* upon St. *Matth.* xxvi. Annot. 1.

And ſpakeſt of alſo in my Ears.] He was preſent, when ſhe made this ſolemn Adjuration.

Behold, the Silver is with me, I took it.] He confeſſed the Truth, for fear the Curſe ſhould light upon him.

And his Mother ſaid, Bleſſed be thou of the LORD, *my Son.*] She prayed the Curſe might be turned into a Bleſſing upon him, for his ingenuous Confeſſion.

Ver. 3. *And when he had reſtored the Eleven Hundred Shekels of Silver to his Mother, his Mother ſaid, I had wholly dedicated the Silver unto the* LORD.] This, ſome think, is the Meaning of her *curſing* before mentioned. She confirmed, with an Oath, the Conſecration of the Money to GOD, after the Manner of thoſe, who vowed any thing unto him, *Levit.* xxvii. 28.

From my Hand.] Reſolving not to keep it for my own Uſe: Or, thou ſhalt have it as a Gift from me.

For my Son to make a graven Image, and a molten Image.] For the Convenience of *Micah* and his Family; that he might make ſome Reſemblance of GOD, whereby to worſhip him at home, without the Trouble of going, upon all Occaſions, to the Tabernacle of *Shiloh*. For it appears by the Name *Jehovah*, to whom ſhe conſecrated the Silver, that ſhe did not intend to forſake the LORD GOD of *Iſrael*, but only to worſhip him by an Image; unto which the *Iſraelites* had very early inclined, (*Exod.* xxxii.) and afterward generally relapſed into it in the Days of *Jeroboam*.

Some are of Opinion that her Meaning was, her Son might make either a graven or a molten Image, which he pleaſed; but it is manifeſt he made both, from xviii. 18. where they are evidently mentioned as diſtinct. But that theſe were a Repreſentation of the two *Cherubins*, which covered the Ark, I dare not affirm; for they being of different Kinds, one a graven, the other a molten Image, ſeems to import the contrary; for the *Cherubims* were both alike. But ſee our moſt learned Dr. *Spencer*, L. 3. Cap. 3. Diſſert. 7. Sect. 4.

Now therefore I will reſtore it unto thee.] She reſolved to return it into his Hands, for the Uſe before named.

Ver. 4. *Yet he reſtored the Money to his Mother.*] Theſe Words ſeem to ſignify, that at the firſt he only brought the Money to her, offering to reſtore it; but ſhe bid him keep it; which he refuſed to do; but would have her take it again into her Hands, which ſhe did.

And his Mother took two hundred Shekels of Silver.] Some think ſhe reſerved the reſt for her own private Uſe, contrary to her Vow: But it is more probable, that ſhe gave them to her Son, to make the *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and other Things belonging to that divine Service, which they intended to ſet up in their Houſe.

And gave them to the Founder, who made thereof a graven Image, and a molten Image.] It is not certain whether this Silver was melted, and then the Images made of it; or that for this Sum of Money, the Founder ſold theſe Images to him, made perhaps of Braſs, ſilvered over. And this is moſt probable, becauſe they would have been very ſmall, if they had been made only of two hundred Shekels of Silver.

And they were in the Houſe of Micah.] Placed in ſome Room of his Houſe, where he intended to worſhip, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 5. *And the Man Micah.*] This ſeems to import, that hereupon he looked upon himſelf, and was accounted a very conſiderable Perſon.

Had an Houſe of Gods.] The *Hebrew* Words *Beth Elohim* may well be tranſlated *an Houſe of* GOD; as *Peter Martyr* here underſtands it. And ſo the Phraſe is uſed in other Places, *Gen.* xxviii. 22. and in the next Chapter of this Book, *Ver.* 31. For his Intention was to make an Imitation of the Houſe of GOD at *Shiloh* at his own home; which may alſo be truly called *an Houſe of Gods*, (as we tranſlate it) becauſe, whatſoever his Intention was, to worſhip GOD by Images, was accounted by him the Worſhipping of other Gods.

And made an Ephod.] That the divine Service of his Houſe might be performed with a greater Reſemblance of what was done at the Tabernacle of *Shiloh*, he made Prieſtly Garments, as *Peter Martyr* underſtands it: Who takes the *Ephod* to comprehend not only the Breaſt-Plate adjoining to it, but the reſt of the Veſtments uſed by the High Prieſt; for he intended, it appears by the next Words, to ſet up an Oracle in his own Houſe. But whatſoever Reſemblance this *Ephod* had in its Shape and Form to the *Ephod* of the High Prieſt, it had none of that rich Work in it which the High Prieſt's *Ephod* had, nor no Girdle or Breaſt-Plate belonging to it; being no more ſuch a Garment as that Golden *Ephod*, than his *Levite* was a Prieſt; or his *Teraphim*, an *Urim* and *Thummim*.

And Teraphim.] Of this Word I have ſaid enough, upon *Gen.* xxxi. 19. where I have ſhewn, they were Images whereby the Eaſtern People conſulted GOD, and hoped to receive Anſwers from him. And therefore I take *Micah*'s Meaning to have been, to ſet up an Holy Oracle in his Houſe, where the Prieſt wearing an *Ephod*, and other ſacred Habiliments, ſhould conſult GOD by theſe *Teraphim*. But, as Mr. *Selden* well obſerves, (in his *Syntagma*, 1 *de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2.) the Worſhip of the true GOD, and of Idols, were here blended together by him. For the *Ephod* and the *Levite* (whom he afterward provided) were intended, no doubt, for the Service of the true GOD; but the graven and molten Image, and the *Teraphim*, belonging unto Dæmons, (as he ſpeaks) by which the Children of *Dan*, in the next Chapter, deſire the *Levite* to enquire of GOD for them; for they neither truſted to the *Ephod* alone, which related to GOD, nor to their *Teraphim* alone, which were an Invention of their own; but thought it neceſſary to join both together in divine Worſhip. And thus began Idolatry in *Iſrael*, by the Superſtition of an old Woman, who puts this into her Son's Head. Many of the *Jews* fancy ſhe was *Delilah*; who having got ſo much Money of every one of the Lords of the *Philiſtines*, thought it was fit to employ ſome of it to expreſs her Devotion. But this is an idle Conceit, which hath no Ground, but only her being named in the foregoing Chapter; which relates an Hiſtory of Things long after *Micah*'s Time.

And conſecrated one of his Sons, who became his Prieſt.] In the *Hebrew* it is, *filled the Hand* of one of his Sons; that is, as many think, the eldeſt Son of his Family, into whoſe Hands he put Sacrifices to be offered unto GOD? For that was the Rite of initiating Prieſts, as we find *Exod.* xxxi. 24. *Levit.* viii. 27.

Ver. 6. *In thoſe Days there was no King in Iſrael.*] That is, this was before the Time of the *Judges*, when theſe Things fell out; in whom there was a Sovereign Power to correct Abuſes, and eſpecially to ſuppreſs Idolatry;

latry; which Power being now wanting, it was the Reaſon *Micah* took upon him to make himſelf a private Temple in his own Houſe; becauſe the Ways (as *Grotius* conjectures) were dangerous when there was no ſupreme Governor, being infeſted with Thieves, or not kept in good Repair, which made Travellers uneaſy. This laſt is more probable than that Robbers infeſted the Country; for it was now a Time of Peace, when the *Levite* travelled from one Part of the Land to the other ſecurely enough; and the *Danites* ſent Spies a long way to ſearch out the Country of *Laiſh* without Danger; and afterwards marched with a great Body to ſeek a new Settlement; which, one would think, ſhould rather have been employed in clearing their Country where they were, from ſuch peſtilent Cut-throats, as ſome ſuppoſe to have infeſted it.

As for the Name of *King*, it was given to the *Judges*; juſt as it was to *Moſes*, who was their ſupreme Governor; but was not properly a King, as *Hermannus Conringius* obſerves, in his Book *de Rep. Hebr.* Sect. 49. *&c.*

But every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes.] And there can be no worſe State of Things (as *Peter Martyr* here obſerves) than for every one to be left unto his own Will and Pleaſure; as they were now, when they left the LORD their GOD: For being *without the true* GOD, they were alſo *without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law*, as the Prophet *Azariah* his Words are, 2 *Chron.* xv. 3. where he ſeems, in that and the following Verſes, to deſcribe the lamentable State of Things in theſe Times, after the Death of *Joſhua*, and the Elders that out-lived him, to the Days of *Samuel*.

Ver. 7. *And there was a young Man came out of Bethlehem-Judah.*] There was another *Bethlehem* in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, *Joſh.* xix. 15. and therefore this is called *Bethlehem-Judah*, to diſtinguiſh it from that.

Of the Family of Judah, who was a Levite.] By his Mother's Side he was of the Tribe of *Judah*. Which is the moſt eaſy Explication, notwithſtanding what *Kimchi* ſaith to ſhew that Genealogies are not derived from the Mother. For here is no Account of his Genealogy, which is mentioned afterward, xviii. 30. from his Father; but it is noted that his Mother was of the Tribe of *Judah*, to ſhew how he came to live at *Bethlehem*, which was no *Levitical* City.

And he ſojourned there.] Lived there as a Stranger, (for ſo the Word *Gour* ſignifies in the next Verſe) not as a Citizen, and Inhabitant of the Place.

Ver. 8. *And the Man departed out of the City from Bethlehem-Judah, to ſojourn where he could find a Place.*] By this it appears he was a kind of Vagabond, who rambled about from Place to Place to find a Subſiſtence; for though there was ſufficient Proviſion made for the *Levites*, by the Tythes of the Land; yet we may well think they were not duly paid in a Time of ſuch Confuſion, that every Man did what he liſt; there being no Judge to ſee them do their Duty.

And he came to Mount Ephraim, to the Houſe of Micah, as he ſojourned.] As he travelled about the Country, he came hither, to beg an Alms perhaps, or, at beſt, to ſeek for ſome Employment.

Ver. 9. *And Micah ſaid unto him, Whence comeſt thou?*] He examined him, as the Manner was, unto what Country he belonged, and what was his Buſineſs.

And he ſaid unto him, I am a Levite of Bethlehem-Judah, and I go to ſojourn where I may find a Place.] He was looking out for a Maintenance ſomewhere or other, to ſupport him in his neceſſitous Condition.

Ver. 10. *And Micah ſaid unto him, Dwell with me.*] He deſires him to ſeek no further, but ſtay there, and ſettle with him in his Houſe.

And be unto me a Father and a Prieſt.] The Prophets, and other great Men, were called antiently by the Name of *Father*, as *Eliſha* calls *Elijah*, 2 *Kings* ii. 12. and the King of *Iſrael* calls *Eliſha*, 2 *Kings* vi. 21. and the King of *Syria* is repreſented as ſpeaking to him in the ſame Language, 2 *Kings* viii. 9. and King *Joaſh*, xiii. 14. Therefore *Micah*'s Meaning is, he would make him the Director and Governor of his Family, and reverence him accordingly, if he would undertake to perform all ſacred Offices among them.

And I will give thee ten Shekels of Silver by the Year.] Next to Honour, he promiſes him Money, and all Things needful for his Support.

And a Suit of Apparel.] Or, as it is in the Margin, a *double Suit*. For ſo the LXX and the *Vulgar*, ζεῦγος ἱματίων, *a Couple of Garments*. And there being ſomething of Order ſignified in the Word *Herech*, which we tranſlate *Suit*, many underſtand hereby a Winter and a Summer Suit of Clothes: And *de Dieu* hath juſtified this Interpretation of a double Garment out of the *Ethiopick* Language, where this Word ſignifies a Companion; whence it may be probably concluded, that here is intended not one Suit only, but two at leaſt. With whom agrees *Hottinger* in his *Smegma Orientale*, Cap. 5. P. 88. where he obſerves, that all, in a Manner, are of Opinion, that more Suits of Apparel than one are ſignified by this Word; but whence to fetch that Signification is not to be found, but in the *Ethiopick* Language, where it ſignifies a Companion, a Friend, another Self, as his Words are.

And thy Victuals.] His conſtant Diet at his Table.

And the Levite went in.] Accepted of his Offer, ſo far as to go into his Houſe, and ſee how he liked every thing.

Ver. 11. *And the Levite was content to dwell with the Man.*] After ſome time he reſolved to ſettle in his Houſe.

And the young Man was unto him as one of his Sons.] He treated him with ſuch Affection, that he was the more willing to ſtay there.

Ver. 12. *And Micah conſecrated the Levite, and the young Man became his Prieſt.*] A wonderful Preſumption in them both; *Micah* having no Authority to conſecrate, nor the *Levite* (who

(who was not of *Aaron*'s Family) being capable of the Prieſtly Office. But ſuch was the Confuſion of thoſe Times, for want of a Judge, that *Micah*'s Superſtition had no Check upon it; and the *Levite*'s Poverty and Ambition tempted him to accept of the Preferment proffered to him: His Youth alſo made him the more ignorant.

And was in the Houſe of Micah.] Continued with him to execute the Prieſt's Office.

Ver. 13. *Then ſaid Micah, Now I know that the* LORD *will do me good, becauſe I have a Levite for my Prieſt.*] Who he thought had more Right to the Office, and would be more acceptable to God, than his own Son, whom he had conſecrated before, *ver.* 5.

By this it is evident, that he did not intend to forſake the LORD; but his Mind was ſo blinded, that he took one ſmall Benefit for a ſufficient Sign of his Favour, when he was guilty of ſo many heinous Offences againſt the Divine Majeſty: Firſt, in making Idols, and then in making one of his Sons a Prieſt; and after that, in drawing a poor young Man into the ſame Crime with him; and in taking upon him to conſecrate a baſe *Levite* to be a Prieſt; of which Office he was not capable, if he had had Power to conſecrate one, which he had not. But both of them were Intruders into that which belonged not to them; and thereby drew upon themſelves a Curſe, rather than a Bleſſing.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *IN thoſe Days there was no King in Iſrael.*] Theſe Words ſeem to be repeated, to ſuggeſt the Reaſon of ſuch enormous Practices, as are before mentioned, and here follow in this Chapter.

And in thoſe Days.] When there was no Judge in *Iſrael*. That is, ſaith the Author of *Tzemach David*, in the Interval between the Government of *Jair* and *Jephthah*. Which is an idle Opinion; and yet he ſaith he ſhould be of it, did he not reverence his Maſters who are of another mind; which is the truer: That *theſe Days* were before there was a Judge in *Iſrael*, between the Death of *Joſhua* and the Elders that ſurvived him, and the Time of *Othniel*, who was the firſt Judge that God raiſed up unto them. So *Joſephus*, Lib. 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 2.

The Tribe of the Danites.] Or rather, *a Tribe*, &c. For ſo the Word *Schebet* is ſometimes uſed for a *Family* in a Tribe; as in the 20th Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 12. it is ſaid, the Tribes of *Iſrael* ſent Meſſengers *to all the Tribes of Benjamin*, *i. e.* to all the Families of the Tribe of *Benjamin*; and in *Iſa.* xix. 13. *De Dieu* obſerves the ſame: Who alſo truly notes, that when the whole Tribe is ſpoken of, it is not ſaid *Schebet hadani*, as it is here, but *Schebet Dan*. Therefore *hadani* here, and in other Places, ſignifies a Family derived from that Tribe.

Sought them an Inheritance to dwell in.] Some of that Tribe which was very much ſtraitned by the old Inhabitants of the Land (who pent them up in a narrow Compaſs, which was not ſufficient for them) enquired where they might find a commodious Settlement in ſome other Place.

For unto that Day all their Inheritance had not fallen unto them among the Tribes of Iſrael.] They had an Inheritance allotted them, as well as the reſt of the Tribes, *Joſh.* xix. 40, *&c.* but by their Sloth, and for want of that brotherly Aſſiſtance which other Tribes ſhould have afforded them, they could not get Poſſeſſion of a conſiderable Part of it; but were forced by the *Amorites* to content themſelves with the mountainous Part of their Country, leaving them none of the Champain, (as *Joſephus* obſerves) nor all the Mountains neither. See the 1ſt Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 34, 35. Wanting room therefore for all their People and Cattle, and being unable to deal with the *Amorites*, they ſent ſome, as it here follows, to ſeek for a Dwelling ſomewhere elſe.

Ver. 2. *And the Children of Dan ſent of their Family five Men from their Coaſts.*] It is no improbable Conjecture of *Arias Montanus*, that there were five Families of the *Danites*; out of each of which one Man was choſen to make the following Diſcovery.

Men of Valour.] Who could not be daunted if they were taken for Spies. Some think alſo Men of Quality; ſuch as thoſe whom *Moſes* ſent to ſpy out the Land of *Canaan*.

From Zorah and from Eſhtaol.] Which Places are the firſt named in the Account of the Lot of their Inheritance, *Joſh.* xix. 41.

To ſpy out the Land.] They were ſent εἰς μεσόγειον, (as *Joſephus* ſpeaks) into the *Midland Country*, (for the *Danites* were ſeated near the *Philiſtines* towards the Sea-Coaſt) to ſee if they could find out a convenient Place for them.

And to ſearch it.] To enquire into the Condition of it, and of the Inhabitants.

And they ſaid unto them, Go, ſearch the Land.] They had a Commiſſion from their Elders to go whither they directed them, in the plain Country wherein *Laiſh* ſtood, *ver.* 14.

And when they came to Mount Ephraim.] Theſe two Tribes joined, as I obſerved upon i. 35.

To the Houſe of Micah.] To the Place where his Houſe ſtood.

They lodged there.] Not in *Micah*'s Houſe, but in ſome Place of Mount *Ephraim*, not far from it; as we may gueſs by the next Verſe.

Ver. 3. *And when they were by the Houſe of Micah.*] Near to which, it is probable, there was a publick Inn, for the Entertainment of ſuch as came from the neighbouring Parts to worſhip, or to ask Counſel of the Oracle at *Micah*'s Houſe.

They knew the Voice of the young Man, the Levite.] Having been acquainted with him heretofore, when, it is probable, he was in their Country; for he had led a wandering Life.

And they turned in thither.] Went into *Micah's* Houſe, at his Invitation, or to ſalute him, and enquire of his Welfare.

And ſaid unto him, Who brought thee hither?] Far from that City of the *Levites*, I ſuppoſe, to which he belonged.

And what makeſt thou here?] What Buſineſs haſt thou in this Place?

And what haſt thou here?] How doſt thou live and maintain thyſelf? For they knew he had been poor.

Ver. 4. *And he ſaid unto them, Thus and thus dealeth Micah with me, and hath hired me, and I am his Prieſt.*] He told them the Agreement between *Micah* and him, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 5. *And they ſaid unto him, Ask Counſel, we pray thee, of God, that we may know whether our Way we go ſhall be proſperous.*] They were as ignorant, it ſeems, as he; and thought God would give an Anſwer there, as well as at his own Houſe.

Ver. 6. *And the Prieſt ſaid unto them, Go in Peace.*] Whether he had any Anſwer from the *Teraphim*, or feigned it out of his own Head, is not certain; but he encouraged them to proceed in their Deſign.

Before the LORD is your Way, wherein you go.] He pretended to have this Anſwer from the LORD, who, he aſſures them, would direct, guide, and protect them in their Proceedings; for that is the Meaning of their Way *before the LORD:* Under his Eye; that is, his Care and Providence, who would diſpoſe all Things for their good Succeſs. Now if the *Levite* did not deviſe this Anſwer, which he thought would pleaſe them, but heard a real Voice from the *Teraphim*, which promiſed them Proſperity, then it was permitted by God, to ſerve the Ends of his Providence, juſt as *Nebuchadnezzar* was encouraged by his Diviners, to undertake the Siege of *Jeruſalem*, Ezek. xxi. 21, 22.

Ver. 7. *Then the Five Men departed, and came to Laiſh.*] Called *Leſhem* in *Joſh.* xix. 47. where this Story is briefly told, by way of Anticipation: See my Notes there. It was a City which lay at the Foot of *Libanus*, near the Fountain of *Jordan*, as *Joſephus* ſaith in the Place above named.

And ſaw the People that were therein, how they dwelt careleſs, after the Manner of the Zidonians.] Had no Fear of any Enemy, no more than the *Zidonians*, who were a powerful People, in a ſtrong City; whoſe Cuſtoms, I ſuppoſe, they imitated.

Quiet and ſecure.] Becauſe they knew nobody of whom they had any Fear.

And there was no Magiſtrate in the Land, that put them to ſhame in any thing.] To puniſh them for any thing they did, which made them live as they pleaſed. There are very various Interpretations of theſe Words, of which *De Dieu* hath given the beſt Account.

And they were far from the Zidonians.] Who might have otherwiſe come to their Aſſiſtance, upon any ſudden Invaſion, they following the Manners and Cuſtoms of that People; but they were a Day's Journey from them, as *Joſephus* there ſaith.

And had no Buſineſs with any Man.] No Traffick or Commerce with any of their Neighbours, nor they with them. This Diſpoſition laid them open to be a Prey to any reſolute Invader.

Ver. 8. *And they came unto their Brethren in Zorah and Eſhtaol.*] From whence they were ſent, *ver.* 2.

And their Brethren ſaid unto them, What ſay ye?] They asked them what Account they brought of their Journey.

Ver. 9. *And they ſaid, Ariſe, that we may go up againſt them.* This ſhews, that they were particularly directed to make a Diſcovery of *Laiſh*.

For we have ſeen the Land, and behold, it is very good.] Γῆν ἀγαθὴν καὶ πάμφορον, as *Joſephus* expreſſes it, a goodly Country, and very fertile.

And are ye ſtill?] Their Brethren did not ſeem at firſt to believe them, which makes them ſtir them up by this Queſtion, and the following Exhortation.

Be not ſlothful to go, and to enter to poſſeſs the Land.] They ſpeak as if they had no more to do, but to march thither, and take poſſeſſion of the Country.

Ver. 10. *When ye go, ye ſhall come unto a People ſecure, and to a large Land.*] They uſe two Arguments to excite them to the Enterprize; that it was eaſy, and would be very advantageous.

And God hath given it into your Hand.] They add the Encouragement the Prieſt had given them, *ver.* 6. which was the greateſt of all.

A Place where there is no Want of any thing that is in the Earth.] This magnifies the Goodneſs of God to them, in diſcovering a Country to them abounding with all manner of good things, which they very much wanted in the Mountains wherein they were pent up. See *ver.* 1.

Ver. 11. *And there went from thence of the Family of the Danites, out of Zorah and Eſhtaol.*] Either *Family* is here put for a Tribe, or the Singular Number for the Plural; there going out of ſome of the Families of the *Danites*, the following Number.

Six hundred Men, appointed with Weapons of War.] Carrying their Wives, and Children, and Houſhold-Stuff with them; for they nothing doubted of making a Settlement there. See *ver.* 21.

Ver. 12. *And they went up and pitched in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah.*] Not in the City itſelf, but in the Fields belonging to it, as appears from the laſt Words of this Verſe. See concerning this Place *Joſh.* xv. 9, 60. which lay in the North Part of the Tribe of *Judah*, and ſo lay in the Road to *Laiſh*.

Wherefore they called the Place Mahaneh-Dan, unto this Day.] See xiii. *ult.*

Behold, it is behind Kirjath-jearim.] On the Weſt of it, towards the *Mediterranean* Sea, which is called the *Hindermoſt Sea*, *Deut.* xi. 24. as on the contrary, the Eaſt is called *Kedem*, which imports as much as *before*. Here the *Danites* encamped the firſt Night after they came from *Zorah* and *Eſhtaol*.

Ver. 13. *And they paſſed thence unto Mount Ephraim.*] The ſecond Day's March was to this Place, ſtill more Northward.

And

And they came to the Houſe of Micah.] Unto the Town or Village where *Micah* lived; for they did not yet come to his Houſe, but afterward, *ver.* 15.

Ver. 14. *Then anſwered the five Men that went to ſpy out the Country of Laiſh.*] In the *Hebrew* Language he is ſaid oft-times to anſwer, who ſpeaks firſt, as in 1 *Kings* i. 28. and many other Places.

And ſaid unto their Brethren.] Who knew, perhaps, that they called at this Place by the way, and aſked them, who dwelt there?

Do ye know that there is in theſe Houſes.] *i. e.* In that Town or Village, *viz.* in *Micah*'s Houſe, which was the chief in the Town. See *ver.* 12.

An Ephod and Teraphim, and a Graven Image, and a Molten Image?] Which the *Levite* had ſhewn them, or told them were in the Houſe.

Now therefore conſider what ye have to do.] Whether it might not be expedient to carry thoſe ſacred Things along with them, which they fancied would be an Aſſurance of the divine Preſence with them: For from thence they had received an Anſwer of Peace, when they went to ſpy the Country whither they were now going, *ver.* 6.

Ver. 15. *And they turned thitherward, and came to the Houſe of the young Man the Levite, even unto the Houſe of Micah.*] To that Part of the Houſe where the *Levite* had his Apartment, not to the ſacred Place where the fore-named Idols were.

And ſaluted him.] Or, aſked him of his Health and Welfare, as the *Hebrew* Phraſe ſignifies, *Asked him of Peace.*

Ver. 16. *And the Six hundred Men appointed, with their Weapons of War, which were of the Children of Dan, ſtood by the Entering of the Gate.*] Whither the Five Men brought the *Levite* out to them, or he, hearing there was ſuch a Company there, came out to view them, after the Salutation was over.

Ver. 17. *And the Five Men that went to ſpy out the Land, went up, and came in thither.*] Having brought him out, they returned back to the Place where they knew the Images, *&c.* were.

And took the Graven Image, and the Ephod, and the Teraphim, and the Molten Image; and the Prieſt ſtood in the Entering of the Gate with the Six hundred Men, &c.] That is, while the *Levite* was diſcourſing with them, and wiſhing them, perhaps, good Succeſs, they robbed the Chapel, and took away all the Furniture of it. Some think *Micah* alſo was with him at the Gate, entertaining them with Meat and Drink. But that is confuted by what follows.

Ver. 18. *And theſe went into Micah's Houſe, and fetched the carved Image, the Ephod, and the Teraphim, and the Molten Image.*] They not only took them, as is ſaid before, but brought them out openly before the *Levite*'s Eyes, who ſaw them in their Hands, and thereupon expoſtulated with them.

Then ſaid the Prieſt unto them, What do ye?] Will you be guilty of ſuch a Sacrilege; Or, will you thus requite me, who have been very kind to you?

Ver. 19. *And they ſaid unto him, Hold thy peace, lay thine Hand upon thy Mouth.*] Keep Silence, and make no Noiſe. So this Phraſe is uſed thrice in the Book of *Job* (xxi. 5. xxix. 9. xxxix. 37.) and in the Book of *Proverbs*, xxx. 32. and the Prophet *Micah*, vii. 16.

And go with us, and be unto us a Father and a Prieſt.] They invite him to ſerve them in the ſame Quality as he did *Micah*, promiſing him the ſame Authority, Reverence, and Affection, that he had from him: And moreover, they repreſent to him, in the next Words, how much more advantageous it would be to miniſter unto ſo great a Part of a Tribe, than to one private Perſon.

Is it better for thee to be a Prieſt unto the Houſe of one Man, or that thou be a Prieſt unto a Tribe, and a Family in Iſrael?] They were not a Tribe, but only a Part of it; yet ſo conſiderable a Part being a great Family, they are called a *Tribe, and a Family*; that is, a whole Family in that Tribe.

Ver. 20. *And the Prieſt's Heart was glad.*] To think he ſhould ſo very much mend his Condition; for the ſame Arguments which prevailed with him to dwell with *Micah*, were far ſtronger now (*viz.* Covetouſneſs and Ambition) to move him to go along with them.

And he took the Ephod, and the Teraphim, and the Graven Image.] Under which is comprehended alſo, the Molten Image, which the Five Men brought out of the Houſe with the other, *ver.* 17, 18.

And went in the midſt of the People.] Who undertook to guard him from any Aſſault that might be made on any Side, to bring him back: Or, he went perhaps, with thoſe ſacred Things (as they accounted them) in the midſt of the People, in imitation of the Ark, which was ſo placed when the Camp of *Iſrael* marched, *Numb.* x. 21.

Ver. 21. *And ſo they turned and departed.*] From his Houſe.

And put the Little-ones, and the Cattle, and the Carriage, before them.] Both for Safety, if any ſhould purſue them, and that they might march no faſter than they were able to bear it.

Ver. 22. *And when they were a good way from the Houſe of Micah.*] Who did not immediately miſs the *Levite*, and his Idols, and ſpent ſome Time in aſſembling his Neighbours.

The Men that were in the Houſes near to Micah's Houſe.] If there was not a Town there before, it is likely, the Place of Worſhip which *Micah* ſet up, made many reſort thither, and ſettle their Habitation there.

Gathered together, and overtook the Children of Dan.] Hoping to recover what they had taken away.

Ver. 23. *And they cried to the Children of Dan.*] Deſiring them to ſtop their March, till they had ſpoken with them.

And they turned their Faces, and ſaid unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comeſt with ſuch a Company?] Accordingly they made a Stand, and faced about, aſking him, what he would have, and what he meant to bring a little Army with him, as if he intended an Aſſault.

Ver. 24. *And he ſaid, Ye have taken away my Gods which I made, and the Prieſt, and ye are gone away.*] By Gods he means the Symbols of the divine Preſence; for he was not ſo ſottiſh as to believe, that he could make his God, he being a Worſhipper of *Jehovah*, xvii. 3, 13.

And what have I more? and what is this that ye ſay unto me, What aileth thee?] He thought it a ſtrange Queſtion to aſk what he ailed, when they had taken away that which he valued above all Things in the World.

Ver. 25. *And the Children of Dan ſaid unto him, Let not thy Voice be heard among us.*] They that were next to him, adviſed him not to ſay a Word more, leſt, if the whole Army ſhould hear his Reproaches, miſchief might follow.

Leſt angry Fellows run upon thee, and thou loſe thy Life, and the Life of thy Houſhold.] There are always ſuch fierce and furious Men among Soldiers, who are incenſed to bloody Executions upon the leaſt Provocation; and theſe being Men going to make their Fortune (as we ſpeak) it is likely were generally of ſuch a violent Temper.

Ver. 26. *And the Children of Dan went their way.*] Turned about again, and purſued their March, with Neglect and Scorn of *Micah*.

And when Micah ſaw that they were too ſtrong for him, he turned and went back to his Houſe.] His Zeal was not ſo great for his Gods, but he loved his Life better.

Ver. 27. *And they took the Things which Micah had made, and the Prieſt which he had.*] *i.e.* They kept them, and carried them along with them.

And came unto Laiſh.] They ſeem to have made three Days March in this Expedition, encamping firſt at *Kirjath-jearim*, and the next Night at *Micah*'s Houſe, and coming the next Day to *Laiſh*.

Unto a People that were at quiet and ſecure.] Whom they found in the Poſture the Spies had deſcribed them, *ver.* 10. having no Scouts abroad, to bring them Notice of any approaching Danger, nor any Guards of the Paſſes to their City, or at its Gates; ſo that they were eaſily ſurprized.

And they ſmote them with the Edge of the Sword, and burnt the City with Fire.] Killed the People of the Country and City, unto which they ſet fire, when they had taken, I ſuppoſe, the Spoil of it. Thus was fulfilled the Prophecy of *Moſes* concerning this Tribe, *Deut.* xxxiii. 22. See there.

Ver. 28. *And there was no Deliverer, becauſe it was far from Zidon.*] See *ver.* 7.

And they had no Buſineſs with any Man.] Which deprived them of all Intelligence.

And it was in the Valley that lieth by Beth-rehob.] A City near to *Hamath*, in the moſt northerly Part of the Country. See *Numb.* xiii. 21.

And they built a City, and dwelt therein.] Larger, perhaps, than the former; which being not big enough to contain them, they thought fit to burn it, and build a better.

Ver. 29. *And they called the Name of the City Dan, after the Name of their Father Dan, who was born unto Iſrael.*] They gave it this Name, that it might be remembered they belonged to the People of *Iſrael*, tho' they lived at a great diſtance from their own Tribe, in the very Extremity of the North of *Judæa*, (whereas the Tribe of *Dan* had their Lot in the South-Weſt) from whence came the common Saying afterwards, when they would expreſs the whole Length of the Country, *From Dan to Beer-ſheba*.

Howbeit the Name of the City was Laiſh at the firſt.] This ſeems to ſignify, that they did not burn the whole City, but ſo much as might ſtrike a Terror into the Inhabitants, and make their Conqueſt more eaſy; for he ſpeaks of it as ſtill the ſame City, tho' it loſt its old Name.

Ver. 30. *And the Children of Dan ſet up the Graven Image.*] Together with the Molten, no doubt, and made uſe of the *Ephod* and *Teraphim* here, as *Micah* had done in his Houſe, fancying, I ſuppoſe, it was by a Divine Direction from this Oracle, that the five Men had ſuch good Succeſs, when they went to ſpy out this Land, *ver.* 5, 6.

And Jonathan.] This was the Name of the *Levite* who came along with them.

The Son of Gerſhon, the Son of Manaſſeh.] So not only the *Hebrew*, but the *Chaldee*, and the LXX. (both in the *Roman* Edition, and in that of *Baſil*, and in the *Palatine* MS. as *Hottinger* obſerves) which will not let us doubt it is the true Reading: Tho' the *Vulgar* hath put *Moſes* inſtead of *Manaſſeh*, according to an idle Conceit of ſome of the *Rabbins*, who ſay, the Letter *Nun*, in the middle of the Word, is not written even with the reſt, but ſuſpended above the reſt of the Letters, to ſhew, that tho' he was indeed the Son of *Moſes*, yet he ſhould rather be called the Son of *Manaſſeh*, becauſe he did the Works of *Manaſſeh*, and not of *Moſes*; that is, was an Idolater. So *Kimchi* (as the ſame *Hottinger* obſerves) who therein follows the *Talmudiſts* in *Bava Bathra*. See his *Theſaurus Philologicus*, L. 1. Cap. 2. *Quæſt.* 4. And *Bartoloccius*, in his *Kirjath-Sepher*, Tom. 1. P. 114. And thus they made this *Jonathan* to be the Grandchild of *Moſes*, for *Gerſhom* was his Son: But it is not likely he would have been left in ſo poor a Condition, if he had been ſo nearly related to their great Law-giver; nor would he have had ſo ill an Education. And, being now but a Youth, it is not probable that he was the Son of that *Gerſhom*, but of ſome other, who had the Name of his famous Anceſtor given him, tho' his Father's Name was *Manaſſeh*: But it is wholly uncertain from what Family of the *Levites* this Man was derived; and theſe Names, no doubt, were common to more than thoſe who firſt bare them.

He and his Sons were Prieſts of the Tribe of Dan.] Of that Part of the Tribe who ſettled here at *Laiſh*.

Until the Day of the Captivity of the Land.] Some Cavillers have endeavoured to frame an Argument from hence, that this Book was written in later Times, after the *Ten* Tribes were carried away by *Salmanaſſer*; or, as ſome of the *Jews* in *Seder Olam* interpret the *Captivity of the Land*, to ſignify that by *Nebuchadnezzar*:

chadnezzar : But *Kimchi* and *Ralbag* very well object againſt this, that it is altogether unlikely theſe Images ſhould have been ſuffered to continue in the Days of *David* ; who was a Man after God's own Heart, and ſet himſelf to advance true Religion to the utmoſt of his power, all the Country over, from *Dan* to *Beerſheba* : Therefore *Kimchi*, with great reaſon, concludes, That by *the Captivity of the Land* is meant the taking of the Ark by the *Philiſtines*, and carrying it Captive into the Temple of *Dagon* : Which is confirmed, as our famous *Selden* obſerves (*Syntag.* 1. *de Diis Syris*, Cap. 2.) by the next Verſe, which ſaith, That till *Shiloh* was deſtroyed, theſe Images remained. And this taking of the Ark the *Pſalmiſt* expreſly calls a *Captivity*, when he ſaith *Pſal.* lxxviii. 60, 61. *He forſook the Tabernacle of Shiloh*, &c. *and delivered his Strength into Captivity, his Glory into the Enemy's hand.* As for the Interpretation of *Ralbag*, who takes this Captivity to have been in the Days of *Jabin* King of *Canaan*, it is not worth confuting.

Ver. 31. *And they ſet up Micah's graven Image which he made, all the Time that the Houſe of God was in Shiloh.*] Which was all the Time of the Judges mentioned in this Book ; who, tho' zealous Reformers, could not, it ſeems, extend their Authority to the very Skirts of the Country, where Idolatry ſtill lurked in this Corner of the Land : For ſcarce any one of the Judges ruled over the whole Country of *Iſrael* ; but only over ſuch Tribes as they delivered from imminent Danger. This appears by the Armies which *Barak* and *Gideon* raiſed ; and in the double Oppreſſion they lay under, at the ſame time, in the Weſt and in the Eaſt, by the *Philiſtines* and the *Ammonites* ; when *Jephthah* was raiſed up againſt the latter, and *Samſon* againſt the former : No wonder therefore that none of them could make a general Reformation, nor aboliſh the Idolatry in this Place : But God uſed the *Philiſtines* as Inſtruments to put an end to it ; for when they deſtroyed *Shiloh*, where the true Houſe of God was, they deſtroyed *this Houſe of Gods* (as they eſteemed it. See xvii. 5.) being a Reſemblance of it : And perhaps, as they brought the Ark into the Field againſt the *Philiſtines*, ſo the *Danites* brought theſe Images, with the *Ephod* and *Teraphim*, and the Prieſt, who was ſlain with *Hophni* and *Phineas* ; or, as *Huetius* thinks, carried Captive into the Land of the *Philiſtines*, with a great many other *Iſraelites*. But this Place remained ſtill ſo famous for the Reſort of People thither to worſhip, that when *Jeroboam* ſet up his Golden Calves, he erected one of them here in *Dan*, as another in *Bethel* : Where there having been a real Appearance of God, in ancient Time, to *Jacob*, the People were eaſily made to believe there had been the like in *Dan*, in the Time here mentioned.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs in thoſe Days, when there was no King in Iſrael.*] In the Time before mentioned, xvii. 6. xviii. 1. See there.

That there was a certain Levite ſojourning on the Side of Mount Ephraim.] He ſeems to have been a Stranger in this Country, as the other *Levite* was, who ſojourned in the Land of *Judah*, xvii. 7.

And he took him a Concubine out of Bethlehem-Judah.] That is, a Wife of the ſecondary Sort, without ſuch ſolemn Eſpouſals, or a Dowry, as thoſe called *Wives* had. So the *Talmudiſts* generally think. But *Aberbinel*, following *Raſi*, thinks, that a *Concubine* was taken with Eſpouſals, and only wanted a Dowry, or a Jointure (as we ſpeak.) Certain it is, ſuch Perſons were really Wives ; and it was Adultery in any other Perſon that lay with them, but he who had married them. As this Man had this Woman, for he is expreſly called her Huſband in the next Chapter, xx. 4. and her Father is called his Father-in-Law in this Chapter, *ver.* 47. See *Selden*, Lib. 5. *De Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. vii. and *Buxtorf de Sponſal. & Divortiis*, pag. 11, *&c.* where the Opinion of *Abarbinel* is largely repreſented.

Ver. 2. *And his Concubine played the Whore againſt him.*] Was falſe to his Bed, into which ſhe admitted ſome other Perſon.

And went away from him unto her Father's Houſe in Bethlehem-Judah.] To eſcape the Puniſhment unto which ſhe was liable as an Adultereſs : But there are thoſe who, by the Word *Tizneh*, which we tranſlate *played the Whore*, will have no more to be meant, but that ſhe was froward and contumaciouſly diſobedient ; ſo that ſhe could not endure his Company, but forſook him : The *Chaldee* plainly inclines this way ; and the LXX tranſlate it ὠργίσθη αὐτῷ, *She carried herſelf like a Fury to him* ; and *Joſephus* ἀλλοτρίως εἶχε, *She behaved herſelf untowardly.*

And was there Four whole Months.] Or, as others take it, *A Year and Four Months.* For *Days* in Scripture frequently ſignify a Year : But the LXX, and *Joſephus* take it for ſo many Days as made Four Months.

Ver. 3. *And her Husband aroſe, and went after her.*] His Anger was over by this time, and his Affection to her revived : Perhaps alſo he heard ſhe repented, and was become a better Woman.

To ſpeak friendly to her.] In the *Hebrew*, *To ſpeak to her Heart* ; that is, to make her ſenſible of his Kindneſs to her, notwithſtanding her Offence, and to aſſure her of his Pardon.

And to bring her again.] To his own Habitation, from whence ſhe went away.

Having a Servant with him, and a Couple of Aſſes.] And for that end came attended with a Servant, to carry her and her Baggage (as we now ſpeak) with neceſſary Proviſions.

And ſhe brought him into her Father's Houſe.] She ſeems to have been as ready as he for a Reconciliation.

And when the Father of the Damſel ſaw him, he rejoiced to ſee him.] Embraced him with great Affection and Joy.

Ver. 4. *And his Father-in-Law, the Damſel's Father, retained him.*] Would not let him go away, as ſoon as he deſired.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *And it came to paſs on the Fourth Day, when they aroſe early in the Morning, that he roſe up to depart.*] With an Intention to leave him, and return to his own Houſe.

And the Damſel's Father ſaid unto his Son-in-Law, Comfort thy Heart with a Morſel of Bread, and afterward go your Way.] Her Father had no mind to part with him ſo ſoon, hoping, by keeping him longer in his Houſe, their Conjugal Love and Affection would be more confirmed: And deviſed this Way to detain him, by deſiring him to take a ſhort Repaſt with him, before he began his Journey; for this is meant by *a Morſel of Bread*, under which all ſort of Proviſions are comprehended: Wherewith he deſired him *to comfort*, or, as the Word literally ſignifies in the *Hebrew*, *ſupport his Heart*; which in *Engliſh* we expreſs exactly by, *ſtay his Stomach with a Morſel*, &c. For, in many Authors, the *Heart* ſignifies the Stomach, as ſeveral have obſerved, particularly *Gataker* in his *Cinnus*, Lib. 2. Cap. xvi.

Ver. 6. *And they ſat down, and did eat and drink both of them together.*] He made him a great Feaſt, at which they ſat a long time.

For the Damſel's Father had ſaid unto the Man, Be content, I pray thee, and tarry all Night; and let thy Heart be merry.] For he was earneſt with him not to think of going away that Day, but to ſpend it joyfully with him and with his Daughter.

Ver. 7. *And when the Man roſe up to depart, his Father-in-Law urged him; therefore he lodged there again.*] He preſſed his Stay ſo hard, that when he offered to be gone, he prevail'd with him to lodge there another Night.

Ver. 8. *And he aroſe early in the Morning on the Fifth Day to depart, and the Damſel's Father ſaid unto him, Comfort thy Heart, I pray thee.*] Stay till after Dinner.

And they tarried till Afternoon, and they did eat both of them.] He prolonged the Entertainment, ſo that the Sun began to decline before they had done.

Ver. 9. *And when the Man roſe up to depart, he and his Concubine, and his Servant.*] Who had made all ready for their Journey.

His Father-in-Law, the Damſel's Father, ſaid unto him, Behold now the Day draweth towards Evening, I pray you tarry all Night; behold, the Day draweth to an End.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *It is the pitching Time of the Day*; that is, when Men pitch their Tents, to take their Reſt.

Lodge here, that thine Heart may be merry.] He prays him that they may rejoice together one Night more.

And to-morrow get you early on your Way, that thou mayſt go home.] He promiſes not to detain them longer than this Night, but to let them go away as early as they pleaſed next Morning, without any Entertainment.

Ver. 10. *But the Man would not tarry that Night.*] Suſpecting his Father would uſe ſtill the ſame kind Artifice, or ſome other, to keep him longer with him.

But he roſe up and departed, and came over againſt Jebus, (which is Jeruſalem) and there were with him two Aſſes ſaddled, and his Concubine alſo was with him.] He carried away all that he brought, *(ver. 3.)* and his Wife alſo, whom he went to invite again to dwell with him.

Ver. 11. *And when they were by Jebus, the Day was far ſpent, and the Servant ſaid unto his Maſter, Come, I pray thee, and let us turn in unto this City of the Jebuſites, and lodge in it.*] The famous City *Jeruſalem* (anciently called *Jebus)* had been taken by the Children of *Judah*, (i. 8.) but the *Jebuſites* ſtill kept the ſtrong Fort of *Sion*, till the Time of *David*, and thereby ſo commanded the lower Town, that they forced the Children of *Judah* and *Benjamin* to let them dwell with them there, (i. 21. *Joſh.* xv. *ult.)* and it appears by this Place, that they were the ruling Party, and therefore it is called *this City of the Jebuſites*. See *Joſh.* x. 1.

Ver. 12. *And his Maſter ſaid unto him, We will not turn aſide hither, into the City of a Stranger, that is not of the Children of Iſrael.*] This is an Argument that he was not like the other *Levite*, mentioned in the xviith Chapter; for he would not take up his Lodging among Idolaters: And it alſo ſhews, that the greater Part of the Inhabitants were *Jebuſites*, and the Children of *Iſrael* had little or no Power there; yea, it is poſſible that this happened ſo long before the Days of the Judges, that *Jeruſalem* was not yet taken by the Children of *Judah*.

We will paſs over to Gibeah.] Which was poſſeſſed by the Children of *Iſrael*, *viz.* the *Benjamites*.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid unto his Servant, Come, and let us draw near to one of theſe Places, to lodge all Night, in Gibeah, or in Ramah.*] The Servant, I ſuppoſe, made ſome Objection againſt *Gibeah*, and therefore he put him to his Choice, either to go thither, or to *Ramah*; which was alſo a City belonging unto *Benjamin*, both of them lying Northward of *Jeruſalem*, and not far from it.

Ver. 14. *And they paſſed on and went their Way, and the Sun went down upon them, when they were by Gibeah, which belongeth to Benjamin.*] This is noted, to diſtinguiſh it from another *Gibeah* which belonged to *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 57.

Ver. 15. *And they turned aſide thither, to go in, and to lodge in Gibeah.*] Being unable to reach *Ramah*, unleſs they would have travelled in the Night, which had not been ſafe.

And when he went in, he ſat him down in a Street of the City.] There being, I ſuppoſe, no Publick Inn in the Town, unto which Strangers might reſort.

For there was no Man that took them into his Houſe to lodging.] They were grown ſo lewd in this Place, that there was no Humanity left among them; but the ancient Cuſtom of Hoſpitality, in entertaining Strangers, was quite aboliſhed: Or, if any had ſo much Goodneſs remaining as to be inclined to it, they durſt not make any Invitation of a Stranger to their Houſes, for fear of drawing Miſchief upon themſelves, from their debauched Neighbours.

Ver. 16.

Ver. 16. *And behold there came an old Man from his Work out of the Field at Evening.*] Before it was quite dark, *which was alſo of Mount Ephraim*, where this *Levite* dwelt, *and he ſojourned in Gibeah.* Being but a Sojourner himſelf, he had the more Compaſſion on a Stranger.

But the Men of the Place were Benjamites.] This was one of the Cities given to the Prieſts, *Joſh.* xxi. 17. But the Prieſts did not inhabit them alone, eſpecially now when they were but few, and therefore let other Perſons, who were not Prieſts, dwell there together with them.

Ver. 17. *And when he had lift up his Eyes, he ſaw a wayfaring Man in the Street of the City.*] Who looked as if he was at a loſs for a Lodging.

And the old Man ſaid, Whither goeſt thou? and whence comeſt thou?] Theſe were the uſual Queſtions made to Travellers.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid unto him, we are paſſing from Bethlehem-Judah, toward the Side of Mount Ephraim, from thence am I; and I went to Bethlehem-Judah.*] This is a full Anſwer to one Part of his Queſtion, giving him an Account where he commonly lived; tho' his Occaſions carrying him to *Bethlehem-Judah*, he now immediately came from thence.

But I am now going to the Houſe of the LORD.] This is an Anſwer to the other Part of his Queſtion: For *Shiloh*, where the Houſe of God was ſettled, was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*; (*Joſh.* xviii. 1.) and thither, like a good Man, he intended firſt to go, and give Thanks to God for reſtoring his Wife to him; and, perhaps, to offer an Expiation for her Sin; and then to return to his own Home, on the Side of Mount *Ephraim.*

And there is no Man that receiveth me to Houſe.] Whereby he was in danger to lie in the Street all Night.

Ver. 19. *Yet there is both Straw and Provender for our Aſſes, and there is Bread and Wine for me, and for thy Handmaid, and for the young Man which is with thy Servant.*] He uſes very civil and humble Language, and alſo ſignifies he did not deſire to be chargeable to any body; being ſo well provided with all things neceſſary, that he need not be a Burden to him that would entertain him.

There is no Want of any thing.] But only of a Lodging.

Ver. 20. *And the old Man ſaid, Peace be with thee.*] He ſaluted him kindly, after the uſual Manner that Friends and Neighbours greeted each other.

Howſoever.] Do not ſpeak of that.

Let all thy Wants be upon me, only lodge not in the Street.] I had rather entertain thee at my Charge, than ſuffer thee to lie in the Street.

Ver. 21. *So he brought him into his Houſe, and gave Provender for their Aſſes.*] Took care both of them and of their Beaſts, at his own Coſts, as the Words ſeem to import.

And he waſhed their Feet.] As the Cuſtom was in thoſe Countries after Travelling.

And did eat and drink.] Sat down to Supper.

Ver. 22. *And as they were making their Hearts merry.*] Eating and drinking very freely.

Behold the Men of the City, certain Sons of Belial.] See *Deut.* xiii. 13.

Beſet the Houſe round about.] That none might go out; *and beat at the Door*: As if they would force their Entrance; which made the Maſter of the Houſe come to ask them what they would have.

And they ſpake to the Maſter of the Houſe, the old Man, ſaying, Bring hither the Man that came into the Houſe, that we may know him.] Theſe laſt Words are capable of a good Meaning, as if they deſired only to examine him, and know who he was, and whence he came, *&c.* but the old Man being acquainted with their wicked Manners, underſtood their lewd Intentions, and accordingly gave them the following Anſwer. See *Gen.* xix. 5.

Ver. 23. *And the Man, the Maſter of the Houſe, went out unto them, and ſaid unto them, Nay, my Brethren, nay, I pray you, do not ſo wickedly, ſeeing this Man is come into my Houſe, do not this Folly.*] He endeavours to divert them from their Purpoſe, with kind Words, and humble Intreaties; urging withal, the Title the Man had to his Protection by the Laws of Hoſpitality, and the Greatneſs of the Sin they were about to commit.

Ver. 24. *Behold, here is my Daughter a Maiden, and his Concubine, them will I bring out now, and humble ye them, and do with them as ſeems good unto you; but unto this Man, do not ſo vile a Thing.*] His earneſt Deſire to preſerve the Laws of Hoſpitality from Violation, (which was a Thing very ſacred in thoſe Days) made him forget the Care he ought to have had to preſerve his Daughter's Purity. He hoped alſo, perhaps, that they were not grown yet ſo wicked, as to offer this Injury to a Neighbour, tho' they regarded not what they did to Strangers, which made him offer them the Man's Concubine alſo, ſuppoſing it better than to let them do Violence to her Husband. He muſt be conſidered, as in a Confuſion of Thoughts (like *Lot.* See *Gen.* xix. 8.) and ſo not to have minded ſo much what was right, as what was leaſt wrong.

Ver. 25. *But the Men would not hearken to him.*] And the *Levite* alſo, I ſuppoſe, abſolutely refuſed to have the old Man's Daughter, or his Concubine, expoſed to their Luſt: Whence aroſe a Quarrel, inſomuch that they threatned, and deſigned to kill him, (as he himſelf tells the Story, xx. 5.) which, it is likely, moved the old Man to perſuade him not to be ſo obſtinate; but for the Preſervation of his Life, which was in great danger, to yield a little to them: And perſuading the Men of the City not to be ſo furious, they came at laſt to compound the Matter; and finding the *Levite* ſo reſolutely bent to defend himſelf, were content only to have his Concubine (whoſe Beauty they admired, as *Joſephus* ſaith, when they ſaw her come into their City)

and

and to let him and the old Man's Daughter alone. Unto this they agreed, of two Evils chuſing the leaſt.

So the Man took his Concubine, and brought her forth unto them.] With her own Conſent, it is probable; for ſhe thought her Husband would loſe his Life, and ſhe not preſerve herſelf.

And they knew her, and abuſed her all Night, until the Morning, and when the Day began to ſpring, they let her go.] Leſt the Light ſhould diſcover who they were that had been ſo villainouſly wicked.

Ver. 26. *Then came the Woman at the Dawning of the Day, and fell down at the Door of the Man's Houſe, where her Lord was, till it was light.*] She fell down dead, ὑπὸ λύπης καὶ αἰσχύνης (as *Joſephus* ſpeaks) with Grief at what ſhe had ſuffered, and Shame to look upon her Husband; and it may be added, with the exceſſive Abuſe of her Body.

Ver. 27. *And her Lord roſe up in the Morning.*] So the Women in thoſe old Times called their Husbands, out of Reverence to them, as the Head of the Wife. See 1 *Pet.* iii. 5.

And opened the Door of the Houſe, and went out to go his Way.] Imagining, perhaps, that they intended to keep her, and he did not know where to find her, but muſt ſeek ſomewhere elſe by what Means to recover her.

And behold, the Woman his Concubine was fallen down at the Door of the Houſe, and her Hands were upon the Threſhold.] She being ſtretched out at length; as People are ſometimes, when they fall down with Wearineſs upon their Faces into a profound Sleep.

Ver. 28. *And he ſaid, Up, and let us be going.*] Suppoſing her to be only in a deep Sleep, he began to rouze her up, and to ſpeak comfortably to her (as *Joſephus* takes it) knowing ſhe was under a Force, and did not willingly ſubmit to their Filthineſs.

But none anſwered. Then the Man took her up upon an Aſs, and the Man roſe up, and gat him into his Place.] When he ſaw ſhe was dead, he made no Outcry; but (as *Joſephus* obſerves) prudently carried her away, as faſt as he could, to his own Home.

Ver. 29. *And when he was come to his Houſe, he took a Knife, and laid hold upon his Concubine, and divided her, together with her Bones.*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *according to her Bones*; that is, ſome of the Pieces were bigger, ſome leſſer, according as the Joints would ſuffer her Body to be divided.

Into Twelve Pieces.] That every Tribe might have a Limb of her, *Benjamin* not excepted. Among whom it was to be hoped, there were ſome who would reſent ſo foul a Fact, tho' committed by their own Brethren.

And ſent her into all the Coaſts of Iſrael.] Giving the Meſſengers a Charge (as *Joſephus* obſerves) to relate how ſhe had been abuſed, which was the Cauſe of her Death. He knew not what other Courſe to take, to have Juſtice done; for (as *Joſephus* there obſerves, *Lib.* 5. *Antiq.* Cap. 2.) there was no ſettled Court of Judicature eſtabliſhed according to the Law. Which is the Reaſon he gives (Chapter the *Fifth* of that Book) why *Eglon* attempted to ſubdue the *Iſraelites*, becauſe they were all in Diſorder, the Laws being not put in execution.

Ver. 30. *And it was ſo, that all that ſaw it, ſaid, There was no ſuch Deed done, nor ſeen, from the Day that the Children of Iſrael came up out of the Land of Egypt.*] They not only condemned the Fact, but were highly incenſed at it, as a Crime beyond all that had been heard of ſince they were a People: For it was a Mixture of Adultery and Murder, with an Attempt of Sodomy; and that upon a *Levite*; a Perſon conſecrated to the divine Service in ſome lower Miniſtries.

Conſider of it, take Advice, and ſpeak your Mind.] Theſe are either the Words of the Meſſenger, or rather of the People themſelves, who exhorted one another not to paſs over this Deed, only with expreſſing their Abhorrence of it; but to conſider, and conſult one with another what was to be done, and to declare their Opinion freely, how ſo heinous a Crime was to be puniſhed. And accordingly we find, in the Beginning of the next Chapter, that, by common Conſent, the whole Body of the People met together, to adviſe about this Matter.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND all the Children of Iſrael went out of their Cities.*] The principal Perſons who were appointed to repreſent the reſt.

And the Congregation was gathered together.] This *Congregation* conſiſted of the Captains of Thouſands and Hundreds, &c. which had been eſtabliſhed by *Jethro*'s Advice, together with the principal Citizens, as *Corn. Bertram* probably thinks, whom they called to this Aſſembly.

As one Man.] Except the People of *Jabeſh-Gilead*, xxi. 5, 8. and they of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, who had no Senſe of this Wickedneſs. For there was a general Summons, no doubt, iſſued out by the Command of their Rulers, to require every one to meet at a certain Place, mentioned in the following Words, or otherwiſe to forfeit their Lives.

From Dan even to Beer-ſheba, with the Land of Gilead.] That is, all *Iſrael* on this ſide *Jordan*, and on the other, were of the ſame mind in this Matter.

Unto the LORD to Mizpeh.] There was a Place of this Name in the Land of *Gilead*, as we read, xi. 11. but this *Mizpeh* here mentioned was in the Confines of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, for which Reaſon it is ſometime aſcribed to the former, *Joſh.* xv. 38. and ſometime to the latter, *Joſh.* xviii. 26. being a Place very conveniently ſituated for a General Meeting of all the People, who often aſſembled there in future Times, 1 *Sam.* vii. 5, 6, 7, 16. x. 17. And it was not far from *Shiloh*, which made it the more convenient; becauſe from hence they might, upon any Occaſion, immediately go to conſult the divine Majeſty; which they intended to do now, when they had diſpatched the Buſineſs

Buſineſs for which they met here, which was to examine the Crime of which the *Benjamites* were accuſed; and if there were good Proof made of it, to conſider how to puniſh it as it deſerved. Whence it is that *Joſephus* ſaith, this Congregation met in *Shiloh*, Εἰς τὴν Σιλῶν συλλεγέντες καὶ πρὸ τῆς σκηνῆς ἀθροισθέντες, as if it were the ſame with *Mizpeh*. And indeed, in this Hiſtory, there is a little difference made, becauſe they were ſo near one to another. See *ver.* 26. xxi. 2. But Mr. *Mede* thinks that here was a *famous Place of Prayer*, which is the *Houſe of God* mentioned in thoſe two Verſes. For ſo the Author of the Firſt Book of *Maccabees* ſaith, iii. 46. That when the holy City and Sanctuary lay deſolate, by the Tyranny of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, the People aſſembled together at *Maſpah*, to make their Supplications unto God, Ὅτι τόπος προσευχῆς εἰς Μάσφα τὸ πρότερον τῷ Ἰσραήλ, *becauſe at Maſpah had been, in former times, a Place of Prayer for Iſrael*; and therefore ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors ſay, the firſt Synagogue was built here, and make this the Original of all thoſe which were ſo frequent in After-times: For here, ſay *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel*, all the remaining Kings of *Canaan* aſſembled (after the Battle at *Gibeon*) to fight with *Iſrael*, *Joſh.* xi. 3. And here *Joſhua* finiſhed his Victories over the *Canaanites*, *ver.* 8. and therefore here, it is probable, he built an Altar unto the LORD, in Memory of ſo great a Deliverance. But this Conjecture is founded upon a plain Miſtake; for the *Land of Mizpeh*, where *Joſhua* compleated his Victories, was far from this, in the moſt Northern Parts of *Canaan*, near *Lebanon*, beyond the Fountains of *Jordan*.

Mr. *Mede* alſo, and *Corn. Bertram* think, that hither they brought the Ark upon this great Occaſion, and ſo might properly be ſaid to be gathered *unto the LORD*. But this ſeems to me improbable, that they ſhould remove the Ark hither, when it was ſo near them in *Shiloh*, to which they might as well go, as bring it to them. And as for that Phraſe, *Unto the LORD*, it is no Argument that either the Ark was here, or ſo much as a Place of Prayer; for where all the People of God were aſſembled in any Place, there God was in a ſpecial Manner preſent; as when they all aſſembled to make *David* their King, it is ſaid he made a League with them *in Hebron before the LORD*, though there was no Ark nor Altar there, 2 *Sam.* v. 3.

I ſee no reaſon therefore to believe, that the *Iſraelites* were now gathered to *Mizpeh* as *a Place of Prayer*, (for *Shiloh* was appointed for that Purpoſe, which was very near it) but as a fitting Place for ſuch a great Aſſembly to meet, and conſult what was to be done in the preſent Caſe. That was their Buſineſs here; and when they had Occaſion to enquire of God, and to Faſt, (and Pray, no doubt) they went to *Shiloh*, to the Houſe of God. See *ver.* 26. and 28.

Ver. 2. *And the Chief of all the People, even of all the Tribes of Iſrael, preſented themſelves in the Aſſembly of the People of God.*] The Word we tranſlate *Chief*, is in the *Hebrew* the *Corners*, who were the Strength and Support of the People, as the Corner-ſtones are of a Building, *viz.* the Heads of their Tribes, Rulers of Thouſands, and Rulers of Hundreds, Fifties, and Tens; who kept the People in ſome kind of Order, (now that they wanted a ſupreme Governor, and the Courts of Juſtice were unſettled) and, it is likely, brought them along with them to this General Aſſembly; which, in all probability, met in the open Air, as they anciently did among the *Romans*, *Athenians*, and other People, as many learned Men have obſerved. And *Lycurgus*, as *Plutarch* tells us, gave this Reaſon for it, that noble Rooms, adorned with Pictures and Statues, and ſuch like Ornaments, did not contribute εἰς εὐβουλίαν, to right Counſels, but rather did hurt, by diſtracting their Minds, and turning them from their Buſineſs: But the true Reaſon was, becauſe vaſt Multitudes met together, which no Houſe would contain, and therefore they aſſembled in the Field; as *Livy* tells us, when the Cauſe of *Appius Claudius* was heard, the People were cited to come into the *Campus Martius*. Lib. 6. Cap. 20.

Four hundred thouſand Footmen that drew Sword.] That is, together with ſo many of the People (for there could not be ſo many Chieftains) that came ready armed, to do as they ſhould be directed. I have often obſerved, that the Armies of the *Jews* were all Infantry, there being no Horſes bred in their Country. There are thoſe, who, by the *Corners of the People*, underſtand, not their *Chiefs*, but *all the Tribes of Iſrael*, (making the next Words the Explication of theſe) who made up this great Number of four hundred thouſand; becauſe, ſaith *Coccejus*, all the People, gathered together, is like an Houſe that hath Corners. But I ſhall not trouble the Reader with various Interpretations.

Ver. 3. *Now the Children of Benjamin heard, that the Children of Iſrael were gone up to Mizpeh.*] They could not be ignorant of ſuch an univerſal Concourſe of the whole Nation, except themſelves, nor of the Cauſe of their Meeting; but when they were told of it, would take no notice of it, being ſtupidly inſenſible of the Crime that had been committed among them, or fooliſhly confident of their own Strength; or rather, imagining their Brethren would attempt nothing by War againſt them.

Then ſaid the Children of Iſrael, Tell us, how was this Wickedneſs.] The *Hebrew* Word *Dabru (tell)* being in the Plural Number, denotes, that they ſpake to more than one; and therefore, in all Probability, not only the *Levite*, but the good old Man (his Hoſt) and his Servant were there, to give an Account of the Fact.

Ver. 4. *And the Levite, the Husband of the Woman that was ſlain, anſwered and ſaid, I came into Gibeah, that belongeth to Benjamin, I and my Concubine to lodge.*] He relates from the Beginning how it was; and they confirmed it, by their Teſtimony to the Truth of it. He being called her Huſband, it proves ſhe was his Legal Wife.

Ver. 5. *And the Men of Gibeah roſe up againſt me.*] A great Number of them, who were not reſtrained by the reſt; and therefore he imputes the Crime to them all.

And beſet the Houſe round about me by Night, and thought to have ſlain me.] For he reſolved to loſe his Life, as *Ralbag* here obſerves, rather than ſubmit to their abominable Deſires.

And my Concubine have they forced, that ſhe is dead.] But tho' he preſerved himſelf, he could not deliver her from them; but they abuſed her to Death.

Ver. 6. *And I took my Concubine, and cut her in Pieces, and ſent her throughout all the Country of the Inheritance of Iſrael; for they have committed Lewdneſs and Folly in Iſrael.*] Such a very heinous Crime, as he thought the whole Nation was bound to cenſure.

Ver. 7. *Behold ye are all Children of Iſrael, give here your Advice and Counſel.*] They all deteſted, he preſumed, ſuch foul Wickedneſs, and therefore deſires them to conſider and reſolve how to puniſh it. This could not be debated by all the Multitude; therefore ſome of the principal Perſons, I ſuppoſe, were deputed to ſit in Council, and hear the Cauſe, and then report their Opinion to the ſeveral Tribes.

Ver. 8. *And all the People aroſe as one Man, ſaying, We will not any of us go to his Tent, neither will we any of us turn into his Houſe.*] The Report being made from the great Council, and their Opinion declared, the People all agreed to keep in a Body till they ſaw Juſtice done, according to their Reſolution.

Ver. 9. *And now this ſhall be the Thing we will do to Gibeah, we will go up by Lot againſt it.*] This ſeems to be a popular Motion, who are in love with Equality, and therefore deſire, by their Officers, that it may be determined by Lots who ſhall go to War, and who ſhall ſtay at home to make Proviſion for the Army; for they did not know how long they ſhould continue abroad, and it was not eaſy to provide for ſuch a Multitude.

Ver. 10. *And we will take ten Men of an hundred throughout all the Tribes of Iſrael, and an hundred out of a thouſaud, and a thouſand out of ten thouſand, to fetch Victuals for the People.*] So *one* Man took care that *nine* of his Brethren wanted nothing; and *ten* took care of *ninety*, &c. In the whole, there were forty thouſand of the four hundred thouſand who went out to forage for the Army.

That they may do, when they come to Gibeah of Benjamin, according to all the Folly that they have done in Iſrael.] That the reſt might be wholly intent upon puniſhing the Inhabitants of *Gibeah* according to their Deſerts.

Ver. 11. *So all the Men of Iſrael were gathered together againſt the City, knit together as one Man.*] Nothing could contribute more to their good Succeſs, than this Unity and Concord among the Officers and Soldiers, who all agreed to put this Reſolution in execution.

Ver. 12. *And the Tribes of Iſrael ſent Men through all the Tribe of Benjamin.*] But firſt it was thought prudent and juſt, by the Rulers of the People, to ſend an Embaſſy to their Brethren, to deſire them to hearken unto Reaſon; and therefore there was a ſelect Number choſen out of every Tribe, who went to every City of *Benjamin* (it is probable) to offer ſuch Terms of Peace, as might prevent the War upon *Gibeah*. Or, they ſent this Meſſage to every Family in *Benjamin*, which were originally ten, for *Benjamin* had ſo many Sons; from whom ſprang ſuch a Number of People, that it made *R. Solomon* ſay, From *Rachel* were deſcended *twelve* Tribes: For there were two Sons of *Joſeph* which made two Tribes, beſides theſe ten Families of *Benjamin*, who were ſo powerful and valiant, that it puſt them up with Pride, and was the Cauſe of their Ruin.

Saying, What Wickedneſs is this that is done among you?] In the firſt place, they were ordered to repreſent the Greatneſs of the Crime that had been committed among them.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore deliver us the Men, the Children of Belial, which are in Gibeah.*] This was agreeable to the Law of Nations, by which the *Philiſtines* had thus demanded *Samſon* of the *Iſraelites*, who had done them miſchief, xv. 10. See *Grotius*, who gives a great many other Examples of it out of *Pauſanias*, *Strabo*, and other Authors. *Lib.* 2. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 21. Sect. 4.

That we may put them to death.] If the *Benjamites* themſelves would not do juſtice upon them.

And put away Evil from Iſrael.] According to the Direction *Moſes* had given in his Law, *Deut.* xiii. 5. For the Sin is taken away, when it is duly puniſhed.

But the Children of Benjamin would not hearken to the Voice of their Brethren the Children of Iſrael.] They ſeem to have been as unanimous in the Defence of this Wickedneſs, as the reſt of the Tribes were in their Endeavours to have it puniſhed. For, quite contrary to all their Brethren, who, upon the Hearing of this Crime, met together, examined into it, ſent Meſſengers to deſire the Malefactors might be delivered to be puniſhed, before they would enter upon a War, they moſt perverſely refuſed to come to their Aſſembly, or deliver up the Malefactors, or ſo much as excuſe the Fact, much leſs deny it, but prepare themſelves to protect ſuch lewd Criminals with all their Power. One can ſcarce think that there were no good Men left among them, but they were ſo few, that they had no Authority; and the Generality were ſo depraved, that they took part with the evil Doers. Perhaps they took it ill, that the other Tribes ſhould meddle with the Concerns of theirs; but if they had had any Goodneſs in them, they would have ſaved them this Labour, by calling the Offenders to an Account themſelves: Which they not doing, made the whole Tribe guilty of the Crime of a few, and provoked God juſtly to give them up to purſue their own Deſtruction.

Ver. 14. *But the Children of Benjamin gathered themſelves together out of the Cities unto Gibeah, to go out to Battle againſt the Children of Iſrael.*] Inſtead of hearkening to their Brethren, or giving any Reaſon of their Refuſal to ſatisfy their Deſires, they prepare themſelves to fight with them.

Ver.

Ver. 15. *And the Children of Benjamin were numbred at that Time out of the Cities, twenty and ſix thouſand Men that drew Sword.*] So the *Chaldee* expreſly mentions *twenty-ſix thouſand*, but the *Vulgar* ſaith only *twenty-five thouſand*, and the LXX of the *Roman* Edition *twenty-three thouſand*; but other Copies have *twenty-five thouſand*, as *Joſephus* alſo hath: Who imagined, I ſuppoſe, that the Number of *twenty-ſix thouſand* would not agree with the Account which follows, of *twenty-five thouſand and one hundred* ſlain in the laſt Battle, and in the Purſuit of them, *ver.* 35, 45. and *ſix hundred* only eſcaped, *ver.* 47. which make the Number of *twenty-five thouſand ſeven hundred.* But they ſhould have conſidered, that the two former Battles could not be fought without Loſs on the *Benjamites* Side, when ſo many fell of the *Iſraelites*, *ver.* 21, 25. And the other thouſand Men may well be ſuppoſed to have then periſhed, or ſome of them to have been left to defend their Cities, where they were afterward ſlain, *ver.* 48.

Beſide the Inhabitants of Gibeah, which were numbered ſeven hundred choſen Men.] Who were left, it is likely, (or at leaſt Part of them) to defend that City, while the reſt before-mentioned went out to Battle.

Ver. 16. *Among all this People, there were ſeven hundred choſen Men left-handed.*] Who could uſe their Left-hand, as well as their Right, in any Exerciſe. See iii. 13.

Every one could ſling Stones at an Hair's Breadth, and not miſs.] Such excellent Markſmen there have been in other Countries; particularly in the Iſlands called *Baleares*, where they were bred from Children to hit a Mark with a Stone flung out of a Sling, or elſe to loſe their Breakfaſt, as *Strabo* relates. See *Bochartus*, in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 10. This extraordinary Skill in their Arms, (for it is likely they handled other Weapons with the like Dexterity) and their natural Courage, emboldened them, with ſuch a ſmall Number, to undertake a War againſt ſuch a vaſt Multitude of their Brethren. Which warlike Diſpoſition of theirs was propheſied of by *Jacob*, when he ſaith, *Benjamin ſhall raven as a Wolf*; which is an undaunted, fearleſs Creature, *Gen.* xlix. 27.

Ver. 17. *And the Men of Iſrael beſide Benjamin, were numbered four hundred thouſand that drew Sword, all theſe were Men of War.*] This is mentioned again, to ſhew that they all perſiſted ſtedfaſt in their Reſolution, (*ver.* 2, 8.) to ſee Juſtice done upon the Men of *Belial*, before they would return to their own Home.

Ver. 18. *And the Children of Iſrael aroſe, and went up to the Houſe of God.*] In *Shiloh*, which was not far from *Mizpeh*, *and asked Counſel of God*, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, as they did i. 1. The *Targum* hath it, they aſked Counſel *by the WORD of the LORD.* Some of their principal Perſons, that is, were ſent to deſire God to direct them, as he was wont to do in all great Affairs concerning the Safety of their Commonwealth. For ſo God himſelf ordained, that the High Prieſt ſhould appear before him, *with the Breaſt-Plate of Judgment*, to aſk Counſel of him for them in all their weighty Concerns. See *Exod.* xxviii. 30. *Numb.* xxvii. 21.

And ſaid, Which of us ſhall go up firſt againſt the Children of Benjamin? And the LORD ſaid, Judah ſhall go up firſt.] The ſame Queſtion and Anſwer which we read in the Beginning of this Book; there being a Pre-eminence, we may obſerve all along, given to the Tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 19. *And the Children of Iſrael roſe up in the Morning, and encamped againſt Gibeah.*] Theſe Words ſeem to tell us, that *Judah* was only to lead the Van, (as we now ſpeak) and ſtand in the Front of the Battle, to make the firſt Aſſault; but that all the reſt went up with them.

Ver. 20. *And the Men of Iſrael went out to Battle againſt Benjamin.*] When the *Benjamites* heard that *Iſrael* were encamped againſt *Gibeah*, they came to the Relief of it; and the *Iſraelites* marched out of their Camp to engage them.

And the Men of Iſrael put themſelves in Array to fight againſt them at Gibeah.] The Battle was near that City.

Ver. 21. *And the Children of Benjamin came forth out of Gibeah.*] Thoſe Forces which were left in *Gibeah* for its Defence, iſſued out upon the *Iſraelites* in their Rear, as their Brethren fought them in the Front.

And deſtroyed down to the Ground of the Iſraelites that Day twenty and two thouſand.] Since God bid them go up, it may ſeem ſtrange that they ſhould receive ſuch a Defeat. But it is to be obſerved, that he did not promiſe them Succeſs; of which the *Jews* give theſe Reaſons: Some of them ſay, that they ſought him imperfectly, and therefore he gave them an imperfect Anſwer. So *D. Kimchi*, They did not aſk him if he would favour their Enterprize, as they did at the laſt, when they ſaid, *Shall we go up, or ſhall we deſiſt?* That is, if we ſhall not ſucceed, we will ceaſe the War. And then a clear and full Anſwer is returned, *Go up, for to-morrow I will deliver them into thy Hand*, *ver.* 28. But *Abarbinel* thinks they did not aſk Counſel in a due Place, nor by the proper Perſon; but by ſome other than *Phineas* the High Prieſt, of whom there is no mention till the third time they went to conſult the Oracle, *ver.* 28. But a better Reaſon is given in *Pirke Elieſer*, where they ſay, God was angry with the *Iſraelites* for their Neglect of him, in ſuffering Spiritual Adultery among them, while they were very earneſt to puniſh Carnal. So they made God's Anſwer to have been, when they enquired of him the Reaſon of the Miſcarriage, *Ye are zealous againſt the Adultery of the Tribe of Benjamin, but not againſt the Idol of Micah*, Cap. 38. And, indeed, they fell early into Idolatry after the Death of *Joſhua*, and the Elders that ſurvived him, (as we read in the Second Chapter of this Book) with which, though the *Benjamites* were defiled as well as others, yet he uſed them as Scourges to puniſh the reſt; intending, in due time, to take a terrible Vengeance on them, both for that, and all their other Sins.

2

Ver. 22. *And the People the Men of Iſrael, encouraged themſelves.*] Exhorted one another, not to be diſheartned by their Loſs, but to renew the Fight; for they knew they had a good Cauſe, which made them the bolder to hope for Victory.

And ſet their Battle again in Array, in the Place where they put themſelves in Array the firſt Day.] They were not ſo ſuperſtitious as to imagine, the Place wherein they fought was unlucky; and that with the Change of it, they ſhould change their Fortune (as they now ſpeak) but confidently reſolved to encounter them in the ſame Spot of Ground where they were overthrown before. Though there are thoſe that think the Ground was not well choſen, and that they were the more eaſily defeated, becauſe they fought ſo near *Gibeah*; whoſe Name imports, that it was ſituated on high, which gave them greater Advantages to annoy the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 23. *And the Children of Iſrael went up, and wept before the* LORD, *until Even.*] They ſeem to have been ſenſible that this was one Cauſe of their Loſs, that they had not more ſolemnly ſought the LORD, as they now do; but with greater Grief for their Loſs, than for their Sin.

And asked Counſel of the LORD.] The *Targum* here uſes again the ſame Phraſe; aſked Counſel, *by the* WORD *of the* LORD, *ſaying, Shall I again go up to Battle againſt the Children of Benjamin my Brother?* They ſeem to imagine that God did not approve of their going to War among themſelves, who were all *Brethren*.

And the LORD *ſaid, Go up againſt him.*] Here is a Leave to go up, but without any Promiſe of Succeſs; which they ſhould have deſired.

Ver. 24. *And the Children of Iſrael came near againſt the Children of Benjamin the ſecond Day.*] Near to *Gibeah*.

Ver. 25. *And Benjamin went forth againſt them out of Gibeah the ſecond Day, and deſtroyed down to the Ground of the Children of Iſrael Eighteen thouſand Men: All theſe drew Sword.*] They had now deſtroyed Forty thouſand, which was a much greater Number than the *Benjamites* had in their whole Army.

Ver. 26. *Then all the Children of Iſrael, and all the People went up.*] Not only all the Warriors, but other People.

And came unto the Houſe of God, and wept, and ſat there before the LORD.] Upon the bare Ground, as they uſed to do in very great Sorrow.

And faſted that Day before the LORD *until Even.*] Afflicted their Souls for their Sins, which they had not done before; at leaſt, not with ſuch Seriouſneſs as now they did.

And offered Burnt-Offerings.] This had not been done before. That is, they had not made ſuch ſolemn Supplications to God, as now they did by theſe Offerings. See upon *Levit.* i. 3. And in particular, it is evident, That in ancient time, *Burnt-Offerings* were offered as Prayers for Forgiveneſs of Sins, that ſo they might obtain God's Bleſſing, *Job* i. 5. And *Balaam* (who no doubt underſtood the ancient Rites of Religion) offered theſe Offerings to obtain Power from God to help *Balak*, and deſtroy the *Iſraelites*, *Numb.* xxiii. 3, 15, *&c.*

And Peace-Offerings before the LORD.] Theſe were offered to acknowledge Benefits received (which ought to accompany our Prayers) and ſome of them alſo were a kind of Prayer to God, for the Benefits they hoped ſtill to receive. See upon *Levit.* vii. 16.

Ver. 27. *And the Children of Iſrael enquired of the* LORD.] The ſame Expreſſion is again in the *Targum*, *By the* WORD *of the* LORD.

For the Ark of the Covenant of God was there in thoſe Days.] They had enquired of the LORD before, but not as they ought to have done; and therefore no mention is made till now, of the Preſence of God continuing among them. For, confiding in the Juſtice of their Cauſe, and their vaſt Forces, they ſeem to have made but ſlight and perfunctory Addreſſes to God, before they undertook the War.

Ver. 28. *And Phineas the Son of Eleazar, the Son of Aaron, ſtood before it in thoſe Days.*] To *ſtand before it*, is as much as to miniſter unto God before the Ark, where he reſided. See upon *Deut.* x. 8. xviii. 7. Some think this is here ſet down to direct us to the Time when this War was made, which was not long after the Death of *Joſhua* (as I ſaid before, xix. 1.) otherwiſe *Phineas* muſt have been now (if this were after the Time of the Judges) above Three hundred Years old, which is far beyond the Age to which Men then lived; for it was above ſo many Years ſince he did that noble Fact mentioned in *Numb.* xxv. *Saidus Batricides*, therefore, more juſtly makes him to have been High-Prieſt only twenty-five Years; and the *Chron. Alexandr.* mentions three other Prieſts between him and *Eli*, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, *Lib.* 1. *de Succeſſion. in Pontif. Cap.* 2.

Saying, Shall I yet again go out to Battle againſt the Children of Benjamin, my Brother, or ſhall I ceaſe?] This is a plainer Quæry than either of the former, (as *Pet. Martyr* here obſerves) for at firſt they only aſked what Tribe ſhould firſt go up, preſuming the War was fit to be made, *ver.* 18. and the ſecond Time only, Whether God would have them renew the Fight, *ver.* 23. But now they aſk, Whether they ſhould proceed in the War, or deſiſt from any further Attempt? that is, ſaith he, They leave it wholly to God's Pleaſure; deſiring to do no more, if he did not think good to accompany them with his Bleſſing.

And the LORD *ſaid, Go up, for to-morrow I will deliver them into thy Hand.*] Accordingly he condeſcended to give them a gracious Anſwer, aſſuring them of a ſpeedy Victory.

Ver. 29. *And Iſrael ſet Liers-in-wait round about Gibeah.*] This ſeems to intimate, that in the former Onſets, they had relied too much upon their Numbers: But now, tho' they were encouraged by God himſelf, they grew more humble, and leſs audacious in their Enterprize, laying Ambuſhes ſecretly in ſeveral Places, on ſeveral Sides of the City.

Ver. 30. *And the Children of Iſrael went up againſt the Children of Benjamin on the third Day, and put themſelves in Array againſt Gibeah, as at other Times.*] I ſuppoſe they appeared in the ſame Place mentioned *ver.* 22. as if they intended

intended to renew the Fight there. And this was perhaps the third Day after the laſt Battle; one having been ſpent in going to *Shiloh*, and another in Faſting and Prayer there. Or, by *the third Day*, may be meant the third Day of Battle.

Ver. 31. *And the Children of Benjamin went out againſt the People, and were drawn away from the City.*] The Children of *Iſrael* pretending to avoid fighting, and to flee from them; as we read in the next Verſe they had agreed.

And they began to ſmite of the People, and to kill, as at other Times.] In the two former Battles.

In the Highways of which one goeth up to the Houſe of God.] That is, to *Shiloh*.

And the other to Gibeah in the Fields.] So called, to diſtinguiſh it from this *Gibeah*; which, as I ſaid, ſtood upon an Hill, as the other did in lower Ground.

About thirty Men of Iſrael.] Whom they killed in the Rear of their Army, as they retreated.

Ver. 32. *And the Children of Benjamin ſaid, They are ſmitten down before us, as at the firſt.*] From this Flight they preſumed they ſhould get a new Victory over ſuch Cowards.

But the Children of Iſrael ſaid, Let us flee, and draw them from the City into the Highways.] But this was only a Stratagem of the *Iſraelites*, to draw them away from *Gibeah*, into a more advantageous Place of ſetting upon them.

Ver. 33. *And all the Men of Iſrael.*] All that were poſted in a certain Place, whither they deſigned to draw the *Benjamites*.

Roſe up out of their Place, and put themſelves in Array at Baal-Tamar.] The Sight of ſuch a Body of Men appearing unexpectedly ready to encounter them, muſt needs be a great Surprize to the *Benjamites*, who thought of nothing but purſuing thoſe that run away from them.

And the Liers-in-wait of Iſrael came forth out of their Places.] At the ſame time, they that were placed in Ambuſh behind them, roſe up to aſſault the City.

Even out of the Meadows of Gibeah.] Whether it be tranſlated the *Meadows*, or the *Plains*, or the *Flat Ground*, that lay before the City, it is not material; for the Senſe is the ſame. See *Lud. de Dieu.*

Ver. 34. *And there came againſt Gibeah Ten thouſand choſen Men out of all Iſrael.*] Some look upon theſe as a Detachment (as they now ſpeak) from the main Body at *Baal-Tamar*, who marched to aſſault the City on one ſide, while the Liers-in-wait aſſaulted it on the other.

And the Battle was ſore, for they knew not that Evil was near them.] The *Benjamites* fought ſtoutly; but were not ſenſible of the Danger they were in to be deſtroyed.

Ver. 35. *And the LORD ſmote Benjamin before Iſrael, and the Children of Iſrael deſtroyed of the Benjamites that Day, Twenty and five thouſand, and an Hundred Men; all theſe drew the Sword.*] This is a general Account of the Fight, and of the *Benjamites* Loſs; the Particulars of both are related in the following Verſes.

Ver. 36. *So the Children of Benjamin ſaw that they were ſmitten.*] There was an apparent Overthrow given them by the *Iſraelites*: The Manner of which is deſcribed from the Beginning of the Action of this Day, to the Concluſion, in the following Part of this Chapter.

For the Men of Iſrael gave place to the Benjamites.] Seemed to flee before them; as was before related.

Becauſe they truſted to the Liers-in-wait, which they had ſet beſide Gibeah.] Reſolving not to fight till they ſaw their Ambuſh had executed what was commanded againſt the City.

Ver. 37. *And the Liers-in-wait haſted and ruſhed upon Gibeah.*] Which they did with all ſpeed, as ſoon as they ſaw the *Benjamites* withdrawn a good way from the City; and fell upon the Inhabitants on a ſudden.

And the Liers-in-wait drew themſelves along, and ſmote all the City with the Edge of the Sword.] Having entred the City, they ſpread themſelves into the ſeveral Parts of it, and killed all they found therein.

Ver. 38. *Now there was an appointed Sign between the Men of Iſrael, and the Liers-in-wait, that they ſhould make a great Flame with Smoke to riſe up out of the City.*] They had agreed before-hand, that when the City was taken by the Liers-in-wait, they ſhould ſet it on fire; whereby the *Iſraelites* might know, when it was time to face about, and fight with the *Benjamites*.

Ver. 39. *And when the Men of Iſrael retired in the Battle, Benjamin began to ſmite, and kill of the Men of Iſrael, about Thirty Perſons; for they ſaid, Surely they are ſmitten down before us, as in the firſt Battle.*] Till that Sign was given, they retreated as if they were beaten, and loſt ſome Men; whereby the *Benjamites* were deceived into ſecure Hopes of a new Victory.

Ver. 40. *But when the Flame began to ariſe out of the City, with a Pillar of Smoke, the Benjamites looked behind them, and behold, the Flame of the City aſcended up to Heaven.*] It is likely the *Iſraelites* ſhouted, when they turned about to fall upon the *Benjamites*; which made them look back to ſee what unexpected Supplies they had received.

Ver. 41. *And when the Men of Iſrael turned again, the Men of Benjamin were amazed.*] At this ſudden Change, from flight to fighting.

For they ſaw that Evil was come upon them.] They being beſet by the *Iſraelites*, both behind and before.

Ver. 42. *Therefore they turned their Backs before the Men of Iſrael.*] Whom they had purſued; but now ran away from them.

Unto the Way of the Wilderneſs.] For they were beſet on all other Sides.

But the Battle overtook them.] That is, The Men of War purſued them ſo cloſely, that they could not eſcape.

And them which came out of the Cities, they deſtroyed in the Midſt of them.] Or, *they that came out of the Cities*, viz. of *Iſrael*, helped to cut them off.

Ver. 43. *Thus they incloſed the Benjamites round about, and chaſed them, and trod them down with eaſe.*] For they made no Reſiſtance, but only ſought where they might flee for Safety.

Over-

Over-againſt Gibeah, toward the Sun-riſing.] There is another Tranſlation of the latter Part of this Verſe, in the Margin of our Bibles, with which I ſhall not trouble the Reader, becauſe it makes no Alteration in the Senſe, which is to ſhew where the greateſt Slaughter of them was made.

Ver. 44. *And there fell of Benjamin Eighteen thouſand Men.*] In the Wilderneſs, Eaſtward of *Gibeah*.

All theſe were Men of Valour.] Stout Soldiers, as appears by the two Defeats they had given to the numerous Army of the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 45. *And they turned, and fled toward the Wilderneſs, unto the Rock of Rimmon.*] The Remainder of the Army of *Benjamin* endeavoured to ſave themſelves, by flying to a ſtrong inacceſſible Place, which was in that Wilderneſs.

And they gleaned of them in the Highways Five thouſand Men.] They could not flee thither in a Body, but ſcattered up and down in the Highway; where they picked up Five thouſand more, and ſlew them.

And purſued hard after them to Gidom, and ſlew Two thouſand of them.] And following them very cloſe, as far as to a Place called *Gidom*, they killed Two thouſand more.

Ver. 46. *So all which fell that Day of Benjamin, were Twenty and five thouſand Men that drew Sword.*] For they ſlew in the firſt Conflict Eighteen thouſand; and in ſeveral Parties, as they fled toward the Rock *Rimmon*, Seven thouſand more, which make up this Sum. See *ver.* 15.

All theſe were Men of Valour.] Who would not ſurrender themſelves, but choſe rather to be killed.

Ver. 47. *But Six hundred Men turned and fled to the Wilderneſs, unto the Rock Rimmon.*] Theſe ſeem to have turned into ſome nearer Way unto the ſtrong Hold, than the reſt: Or, being with the Foremoſt, and more nimble than others, (for it was accounted a rare Quality in a Soldier to be ſwift of Foot) got thither before the *Iſraelites* could overtake them.

And abode in the Rock Rimmon four Months.] From whence they durſt not adventure to ſtir, unleſs it were to fetch Proviſions; which they might eaſily do, the Rage of the *Iſraelites* being in a little time ſlaked by ſo great a Deſtruction, and turned into Compaſſion.

Ver. 48. *And the Men of Iſrael turned again upon the Children of Benjamin.*] Left their Purſuit of them in the Wilderneſs, and turned toward the Country of *Benjamin*.

And ſmote them with the Edge of the Sword, as well the Men of every City, as the Beaſt.] Thoſe before-mentioned were *Men that drew the Sword*; that is, Soldiers. But there were a great many Huſbandmen, and Shepherds, and others; whom, in their Fury, they alſo ſlew.

And all that came to hand.] Even Women and Children. For they had devoted to Deſtruction all that came not up to *Mizpeh*, when they were ſummoned (xxi. 5.) which none of the *Benjamites* did; for which reaſon they ſlew the Men, Women and Children of *Jabeſh-Gilead*, xxi. 10.

Alſo they ſet on fire all the Cities that they came to.] This was as terrible an Execution, as if they had been groſs Idolaters, whom they were commanded thus to puniſh. See *Deut.* xiii. 15, 16.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW the Men of Iſrael had ſworn in Mizpeh.*] When they firſt aſſembled there, before they began the War againſt *Benjamin*, xx. 1, *&c.*

Saying, There ſhall not any of us give his Daughter unto Benjamin to Wife.] They did not think of deſtroying the whole Tribe, when they took this Oath; but only obliged themſelves not to marry with them, no more than with the Seven wicked Nations of *Canaan*, becauſe they refuſed to puniſh that villanous Fact which had been committed among them, and reſolved to defend the Malefactors. This made the *Iſraelites* to abominate them, as People with whom it was not fit to contract an Affinity.

Ver. 2. *And the People came to the Houſe of God.*] Went up to *Shiloh*.

And abode there till Even before God, and lift up their Voices, and wept ſore.] Some Days after their Fury was over, and they coolly conſidered what they had done in the Heat of War, their Joy and Triumph for their Victory was turned into Mourning and Lamentation for the Loſs of ſo many of their Brethren: For inſtead of a Feaſt, they ſeem to have kept a Faſt; as they did before the laſt Battle, xx. 26.

Ver. 3. *And ſaid, O LORD God of Iſrael, why is this come to paſs in Iſrael, that there ſhould be this Day one Tribe lacking in Iſrael?*] This is an uſual Way of expreſſing great Grief, wherewith they bewail the Loſs of a whole Tribe, which they ſaw no means how to repair, becauſe there were no Women left in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, with whom they in the Rock of *Rimmon* might marry; and they had ſworn that none of the other Tribes ſhould give their Daughters to them; ſo that they muſt either marry with Strange People, which was againſt the Law, or remain unmarried, whereby the Tribe would be extinct. They ſeem alſo to lament their own exceſſive Wrath; for why ſhould the Women be deſtroyed with the Men, who had no ſhare in the Management of Publick Affairs; nor could be ſuppoſed guilty of refuſing to make Satisfaction for the Injury done to the *Levite*'s Concubine?

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs on the Morrow, that the People roſe early, and built there an Altar.*] There ſeems to have been no need of this, there being one ſettled Altar at the Houſe of God, according to the Law of *Moſes*; and then it was unlawful to build another. But ſome think it was gone to decay in thoſe bad Times; which is very improbable, for they lately offered Sacrifices there, xx. 26. And the daily Sacrifice, no doubt, was continued in *Iſrael*, either to the LORD, or the other Gods they joined with him. It is more likely therefore, that they erected a new Altar, upon this preſent Occaſion, when ſuch a multitude of Sacri-

fices

fices were to be offered by all the People of *Iſrael*, that the ordinary Altar was not ſufficient to contain them. Thus *Solomon* did when he dedicated the Temple, 1 *Kings* viii. 64. And by the Direction of God, it was frequently done in other Places; and not only at the Houſe of God, as by *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* vii, xi, xiv. and *David*, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. and *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xviii.

And offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings.] As they had done before the laſt Battle. For God having made them Victorious, they thank'd him for it, and prayed him to continue his Mercy to them; particularly begging his Direction, it is probable, in the preſent Strait wherein they were, about reſtoring the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 5. *And the Children of Iſrael ſaid, Who is there among all the Tribes of Iſrael, that came not up with the Congregation unto the* LORD.] When Summons went out to call them together, under a great Penalty upon thoſe who abſented themſelves. See xx. 1.

For they had made a great Oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD *to Mizpeth, ſaying, Surely he ſhall be put to death.*] This great Oath was in the Nature of a *CHEREM*, as the *Hebrews* call it; whereby it was lawful for the *whole Congregation* to devote thoſe to Deſtruction, who did not obey Publick Orders in time of War, or great Diſtreſs. See upon *Levit.* xxvii. 29.

This Oath, I take it, was made by the great Aſſembly of their Rulers (called *the whole Congregation*) before they ſummoned the People to *Mizpeh*; as the other Oath (mentioned *ver.* 1.) was made after the People were come thither, upon the *Benjamites* Refuſal to do juſtice.

Ver. 6. *And the Children of Iſrael repented them for Benjamin their Brother, and ſaid, There is one Tribe cut off from Iſrael this Day.*] They ſtill continued to lament their too great Severity againſt *Benjamin*; and begin to conſult how to repair the Breach they had made.

Ver. 7. *How ſhall we do for Wives for them that remain, ſeeing we have ſworn by the* LORD,] The *Targum* continues its uſual Style, *by the* WORD *of the* LORD.

That we will not give them of our Daughters to Wives?] This was the Queſtion debated in their Common-Council (See *ver.* 16.) how to bring themſelves out of this Difficulty, into which they were brought by their Oath; which being raſhly made, it might be thought ought not to be kept. But they had ſuch a Reverence to a ſolemn Oath, that they reſolved to do all that was poſſible to find a Way to keep their Oath, and yet not to let the *Benjamites* be without Wives.

Ver. 8. *And they ſaid, What one is there of the Tribes of Iſrael, that came not up to the* LORD *to Mizpeh?*] Some in the Council propoſed to make an Enquiry into all their Tribes, whether they could find any that had not regarded the other Oath they had made, *ver.* 5. And it appeared (as the next Words tells us) that, *Behold, there came none to the Camp from Jabeſh-Gilead to the Aſſembly.*

Ver. 9. *For the People were numbered, and behold, there were none of the Inhabitants of Jabeſh-Gilead there.*] A rare Inſtance of Piety, that none of the whole Congregation of *Iſrael* (who were now numbred) departed home, till they had been at the Houſe of God, to give Thanks for the Victory he had given them.

Ver. 10. *And the Congregation ſent thither Twelve thouſand Men of the Valianteſt, and commanded them, ſaying,*] This was the firſt Reſult of their Conſultations.

Go, and ſmite the Inhabitants of Jabeſh-Gilead with the Edge of the Sword.] This was a City on the other Side of *Jordan* in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*; who were ordered to be ſlain, as publick Enemies, becauſe they had not obeyed the Order of the whole Congregation: and, by refuſing to join with them againſt the *Benjamites*, had made themſelves Partakers of their Crimes.

With the Women and the Children.] In this, their Anger tranſported them again beyond Reaſon; for theſe had not offended. And if it be ſaid, they were all under the *CHEREM*, I do not ſee how they could juſtify their ſparing all *Virgins*, as we find they did by a Publick Decree; unleſs we ſuppoſe, that God (before whom they now were) diſpenſed in this caſe, becauſe of the Publick Neceſſity.

Ver. 11. *And this is the Thing that ye ſhall do, Ye ſhall utterly deſtroy every Male, and every Woman that hath lien by Man.*] The *Hebrew* Doctors here raiſe a difficult Queſtion, as they account it, How they could know thoſe who had lien with Man, from thoſe that had not. *D. Kimchi* fancies, that all the Women were ordered to paſs before the Ark, and they who were ſtopt there, and could go no further, were taken for Virgins. Others, that they paſſed before the Crown of the High-Prieſt, and they who had known a Man, turned Yellow or Pale. But theſe are idle Conceits, and I will mention no more of them, which are ſtill more extravagant; when the plain Account is, That they ſlew ſuch as were not commonly reputed to be Virgins, and ſaved thoſe that were. See *Wagenſeil*, in his Confutation of *Lipman*'s *Carmen Memoriale*, p. 400.

Ver. 12. *And they found among the Inhabitants of Jabeſh-Gilead, Four hundred young Virgins that had not known Man, by lying with any Male; and they brought them unto the Camp to Shiloh.*] Which ſhews, that the making them paſs before the Ark is a fooliſh Conceit; for they were looked upon as Virgins before they came to *Shiloh*, where the Ark was.

Which is in the Land of Canaan.] Which the City of *Jabeſh-Gilead* was not; but in the Land taken from the two Kings of the *Amorites*, *Sihon* and *Og*.

Ver. 13. *And the whole Congregation ſent ſome to ſpeak to the Children of Benjamin that were in the Rock Rimmon, and to call peaceably to them.*] To give them the Publick Faith, that they might ſafely return, and be received kindly by the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 14. *And Benjamin came again at that time.*] All the Six hundred Men, who had ſaved themſelves in that Fortreſs.

And

Over-againſt Gibeah, toward the Sun-riſing.] There is another Tranſlation of the latter Part of this Verſe, in the Margin of our Bibles, with which I ſhall not trouble the Reader, becauſe it makes no Alteration in the Senſe, which is to ſhew where the greateſt Slaughter of them was made.

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CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW the Men of Iſrael had ſworn in Mizpeh.*] When they firſt aſſembled there, before they began the War againſt *Benjamin*, xx. 1, *&c.*

Saying, There ſhall not any of us give his Daughter unto Benjamin to Wife.] They did not think of deſtroying the whole Tribe, when they took this Oath; but only obliged themſelves not to marry with them, no more than with the Seven wicked Nations of *Canaan*, becauſe they refuſed to puniſh that villanous Fact which had been committed among them, and reſolved to defend the Malefactors. This made the *Iſraelites* to abominate them, as People with whom it was not fit to contract an Affinity.

Ver. 2. *And the People came to the Houſe of God.*] Went up to *Shiloh*.

And abode there till Even before God, and lift up their Voices, and wept ſore.] Some Days after their Fury was over, and they coolly conſidered what they had done in the Heat of War, their Joy and Triumph for their Victory was turned into Mourning and Lamentation for the Loſs of ſo many of their Brethren: For inſtead of a Feaſt, they ſeem to have kept a Faſt; as they did before the laſt Battle, xx. 26.

Ver. 3. *And ſaid, O LORD God of Iſrael, why is this come to paſs in Iſrael, that there ſhould be this Day one Tribe lacking in Iſrael?*] This is an uſual Way of expreſſing great Grief, wherewith they bewail the Loſs of a whole Tribe, which they ſaw no means how to repair, becauſe there were no Women left in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, with whom they in the Rock of *Rimmon* might marry; and they had ſworn that none of the other Tribes ſhould give their Daughters to them; ſo that they muſt either marry with Strange People, which was againſt the Law, or remain unmarried, whereby the Tribe would be extinct. They ſeem alſo to lament their own exceſſive Wrath; for why ſhould the Women be deſtroyed with the Men, who had no ſhare in the Management of Publick Affairs; nor could be ſuppoſed guilty of refuſing to make Satisfaction for the Injury done to the *Levite*'s Concubine?

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs on the Morrow, that the People roſe early, and built there an Altar.*] There ſeems to have been no need of this, there being one ſettled Altar at the Houſe of God, according to the Law of *Moſes*; and then it was unlawful to build another. But ſome think it was gone to decay in thoſe bad Times; which is very improbable, for they lately offered Sacrifices there, xx. 26. And the daily Sacrifice, no doubt, was continued in *Iſrael*, either to the LORD, or the other Gods they joined with him. It is more likely therefore, that they erected a new Altar, upon this preſent Occaſion, when ſuch a multitude of Sacri-

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fices were to be offered by all the People of *Israel*, that the ordinary Altar was not sufficient to contain them. Thus *Solomon* did when he dedicated the Temple, 1 *Kings* viii. 64. And by the Direction of God, it was frequently done in other Places; and not only at the House of God, as by *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* vii, xi, xiv. and *David*, 2 *Sam.* xxiv. and *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xviii.

And offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings.] As they had done before the last Battle. For God having made them Victorious, they thank'd him for it, and prayed him to continue his Mercy to them; particularly begging his Direction, it is probable, in the present Strait wherein they were, about restoring the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 5. *And the Children of Israel said, Who is there among all the Tribes of Israel, that came not up with the Congregation unto the* LORD.] When Summons went out to call them together, under a great Penalty upon those who absented themselves. See xx. 1.

For they had made a great Oath concerning him that came not up to the LORD *to Mizpeth, saying, Surely he shall be put to death.*] This great Oath was in the Nature of a *CHEREM*, as the *Hebrews* call it; whereby it was lawful for the *whole Congregation* to devote those to Destruction, who did not obey Publick Orders in time of War, or great Distress. See upon *Levit.* xxvii. 29.

This Oath, I take it, was made by the great Assembly of their Rulers (called *the whole Congregation*) before they summoned the People to *Mizpeh*; as the other Oath (mentioned *ver.* 1.) was made after the People were come thither, upon the *Benjamites* Refusal to do justice.

Ver. 6. *And the Children of Israel repented them for Benjamin their Brother, and said, There is one Tribe cut off from Israel this Day.*] They still continued to lament their too great Severity against *Benjamin*; and begin to consult how to repair the Breach they had made.

Ver. 7. *How shall we do for Wives for them that remain, seeing we have sworn by the* LORD,] The *Targum* continues its usual Style, *by the* WORD *of the* LORD.

That we will not give them of our Daughters to Wives?] This was the Question debated in their Common-Council (See *ver.* 16.) how to bring themselves out of this Difficulty, into which they were brought by their Oath; which being rashly made, it might be thought ought not to be kept. But they had such a Reverence to a solemn Oath, that they resolved to do all that was possible to find a Way to keep their Oath, and yet not to let the *Benjamites* be without Wives.

Ver. 8. *And they said, What one is there of the Tribes of Israel, that came not up to the* LORD *to Mizpeh?*] Some in the Council proposed to make an Enquiry into all their Tribes, whether they could find any that had not regarded the other Oath they had made, *ver.* 5. And it appeared (as the next Words tells us) that, *Behold, there came none to the Camp from Jabesh-Gilead to the Assembly.*

Ver. 9. *For the People were numbered, and behold, there were none of the Inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead there.*] A rare Instance of Piety, that none of the whole Congregation of *Israel* (who were now numbred) departed home, till they had been at the House of God, to give Thanks for the Victory he had given them.

Ver. 10. *And the Congregation sent thither Twelve thousand Men of the Valiantest, and commanded them, saying,*] This was the first Result of their Consultations.

Go, and smite the Inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead with the Edge of the Sword.] This was a City on the other Side of *Jordan* in the Tribe of *Manasseh*; who were ordered to be slain, as publick Enemies, because they had not obeyed the Order of the whole Congregation: and, by refusing to join with them against the *Benjamites*, had made themselves Partakers of their Crimes.

With the Women and the Children.] In this, their Anger transported them again beyond Reason; for these had not offended. And if it be said, they were all under the *CHEREM*, I do not see how they could justify their sparing all *Virgins*, as we find they did by a Publick Decree; unless we suppose, that God (before whom they now were) dispensed in this case, because of the Publick Necessity.

Ver. 11. *And this is the Thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every Male, and every Woman that hath lien by Man.*] The *Hebrew* Doctors here raise a difficult Question, as they account it, How they could know those who had lien with Man, from those that had not. *D. Kimchi* fancies, that all the Women were ordered to pass before the Ark, and they who were stopt there, and could go no further, were taken for Virgins. Others, that they passed before the Crown of the High-Priest, and they who had known a Man, turned Yellow or Pale. But these are idle Conceits, and I will mention no more of them, which are still more extravagant; when the plain Account is, That they slew such as were not commonly reputed to be Virgins, and saved those that were. See *Wagenseil*, in his Confutation of *Lipman*'s *Carmen Memoriale*, p. 400.

Ver. 12. *And they found among the Inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, Four hundred young Virgins that had not known Man, by lying with any Male; and they brought them unto the Camp to Shiloh.*] Which shews, that the making them pass before the Ark is a foolish Conceit; for they were looked upon as Virgins before they came to *Shiloh*, where the Ark was.

Which is in the Land of Canaan.] Which the City of *Jabesh-Gilead* was not; but in the Land taken from the two Kings of the *Amorites*, *Sihon* and *Og*.

Ver. 13. *And the whole Congregation sent some to speak to the Children of Benjamin that were in the Rock Rimmon, and to call peaceably to them.*] To give them the Publick Faith, that they might safely return, and be received kindly by the *Israelites*.

Ver. 14. *And Benjamin came again at that time.*] All the Six hundred Men, who had saved themselves in that Fortress.

And

And they gave them Wives, which they had ſaved alive of the Women of Jabeſh-Gilead.] Which they thought they might lawfully do, notwithſtanding their Oath, becauſe it obliged thoſe only who were preſent in the Aſſembly where it was made, not the abſent, as they of *Jabeſh-Gilead* were.

And yet ſo they ſufficed them not.] For ſtill two hundred wanted Wives.

Ver. 15. *And the People repented themſelves for Benjamin.*] This gave Occaſion to a new Lamentation, whereby they teſtified to the *Benjamites*, how ſorry they were for what had been done.

Becauſe that the LORD had made a Breach in the Tribes of Iſrael.] For the Puniſhment of their Crime was approved by God, tho' they executed it with too much Severity.

Ver. 16. *Then the Elders of the Congregation ſaid, How ſhall we do for Wives for them that remain, ſeeing the Women are deſtroyed out of Benjamin?*] This made them enter into a new Deliberation in the Council of the Elders, how to get Wives for the two hundred Men remaining, ſince there were none in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, and no more to be found among themſelves, without breaking their Oath.

Ver. 17. *And they ſaid, There muſt be an Inheritance for them that are eſcaped of Benjamin, that a Tribe be not deſtroyed out of Iſrael.*] Theſe Words, *There muſt be*, are not in the *Hebrew*, where the Words run thus, *The Inheritance of them that are eſcaped, is for Benjamin*, &c. That is, the Children of *Benjamin* muſt have that Part of the Country which was given them by the divine Lot, for their Inheritance, and we muſt not give it to any other Perſons; for then a Tribe would be loſt in *Iſrael*. This was all that ſome in the Council ſaid, who propoſed no Means whereby this Tribe ſhould be reſtored, but only aſſerted, It muſt be done; leaving others to conſider how.

Ver. 18. *Howbeit, we may not give them Wives of our Daughters; for the Children of Iſrael have ſworn, ſaying, Curſed be he that giveth a Wife to Benjamin.*] Theſe Perſons, who ſpake next in the Council, only increaſed the Difficulty, by putting them in mind, not to think to help their Brethren, by breaking their Oath.

Ver. 19. *Then they ſaid.*] Then ſome roſe up in the Council, after a long Debate, and gave the following Advice.

Behold, there is a Feaſt of the LORD in Shiloh, yearly.] All the three great Feſtivals were to be obſerved in the Place where God ſettled his Habitation, which was now at *Shiloh*, where all the People aſſembled to praiſe God, and to feaſt one with another. And tho' ſome think the Feaſt of the *Paſſover* to be here meant, yet it is more commonly, and with more Reaſon, concluded, to be the Feaſt of *Tabernacles*, which was a Time of exceeding great Joy, becauſe they had newly gathered their Vintage; and then they dwelt in Booths, behind which the *Benjamites* might conveniently lurk, and watch their Opportunity to carry away the Virgins. This Feaſt of *Tabernacles* alſo, was the only Seaſon wherein the *Jewiſh* Virgins were allowed to dance.

In a Place which is on the North Side of Bethel.] This is not a Deſcription of *Shiloh*, whoſe Situation was better known than any other, (being the Place where all *Iſrael* went to worſhip;) but of the Place where they met to dance, which was not in the City, but in the Fields, where they had more Liberty, and a freer Air.

On the Eaſt Side of the Highway that goeth up from Bethel to Schechem, and on the South of Lebonah.] This Place is thus particularly deſcribed, that the *Benjamites* might know exactly, where they might moſt advantageouſly lie concealed, to obtain their Purpoſe.

Ver. 20. *Therefore they commanded the Children of Benjamin.*] They had ſome Authority, who made this Order; and *Joſephus* calls them the γερουσία, the *Senate of the Elders*, whom *Bertram* makes bold to call the LXX, as if the great *Sanhedrim* (as the *Jews* call them) was now ſettled: But I have ſhewn elſewhere, that is not probable, tho' it be certain, from *ver.* 16. that there were ſome chief Perſons in every Tribe, whom the People obeyed when there was no Judge in *Iſrael*, who all ſeem to have been aſſembled on this Occaſion.

Saying, Go and lie in wait in the Vineyards.] Which were nigh to the Place before mentioned, and, it is likely, encompaſſed the Place where they danced.

Ver. 21. *And ſee, and behold, if the Daughters of Shiloh come out to dance in Dances.*] As they ſuppoſed they would, becauſe it was the Cuſtom to expreſs their Joy in this manner: And tho' the Women were not bound to come up to theſe ſolemn Feaſts, but only the Men, yet ſome devout Women did voluntarily frequent them, as we learn from the Story of *Hannah*. And they that lived at *Shiloh*, and the Places adjacent, no doubt, obſerved ſuch Times, as the Men did, being near to the Houſe of God; tho' it muſt be confeſſed, that Parents were not wont to bring young Virgins unto theſe Feaſts.

Then come ye out of the Vineyards.] When they ſaw them ſo engaged.

And catch ye every Man his Wife of the Daughters of Shiloh.] By *the Daughters of Shiloh*, perhaps, are not meant only ſuch as lived in that City, but, thereabouts, who all met on this Occaſion.

And go ye to the Land of Benjamin.] Carry them away to your own Country; which they might the more eaſily do, becauſe Men and Women did not, in thoſe Days, dance together, but Women by themſelves. Thus they thought they kept their Oath, becauſe they did not give them Wives, but only ſuffered them to take them, and to keep them when they had them. The great *Grotius* endeavours to acquit them of violating their Oath by this Rule, That the Signification of an Oath is not to be extended, *ultra receptum loquendi morem*, beyond the received Manner of ſpeaking; therefore they were not perjured, who, when they had ſworn not to give Wives to the *Benjamites*, permitted thoſe who were ſtolen, to live with thoſe that carried them away. *Aliud enim eſt dare; aliud amiſſum non repetere:* For it is one thing to give, another not to demand that which is

taken

taken away to be reſtored. See *Lib.* 2. *de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap.* 13. *Sect.* 5. But this ſeems to me to be far from juſtifying them in this Matter; for they did not merely permit them to take theſe Virgins, but adviſe and direct, nay, rather order and *command* (as the Word is in the foregoing Verſe) to take and carry them away. And therefore what *Joſephus* ſaith to ſalve this Buſineſs, is not true, that it was done ὑπὲ προτρεπομένων ὑτε κωλυόντων, the *Iſraelites* neither exhorting to it, nor prohibiting it.

Ver. 22. *And it ſhall be, when their Fathers, or their Brethren.*] Any of their neareſt Kindred.

Come unto us to complain.] Deſiring them to do them Right; which ſhews they were Men of Authority.

That we will ſay unto them, Be favourable unto them for our ſake.] Do not proſecute them for what they have done, becauſe it was by our Advice, who did not know otherwiſe how to provide them with Wives.

Becauſe we reſerved not to each Man his Wife in the War.] If there be any Fault, it is ours, whoſe Rage carried the Slaughter too far, and left no Women to preſerve their Tribe. They adviſe them therefore to let their Anger ceaſe now (as *Joſephus* ſpeaks) becauſe they had let it break out ἀμέτρως, beyond all Bounds already.

For ye did not give unto them at this Time, that ye ſhould be guilty.] They put them in mind, that if there was any Guilt, it was not in them that had kept their Oath, and did not give Wives to the *Benjamites*, nor could help their taking them. How *Joſephus* came here to add to this Speech, that they ſaid they would tell them, they ſhould have taken care to ſet a better Guard upon their Daughters, I cannot imagine; for at ſuch Time of Mirth, they always thought themſelves ſecure from Danger.

Ver. 23. *And the Children of Benjamin did ſo, and took them Wives according to their Number, of them that danced, whom they caught.*] That is, they carried away two hundred, for ſo many they wanted. With this is commonly compared, by Interpreters, the Rape of the *Sabin* Virgins by *Romulus:* But there was a great deal of Difference; for thoſe were Strangers, over whom *Romulus* had no Power, and therefore was the Cauſe of a War; but theſe were *Iſraelites*, ſubject to the Authority of the Elders, and was done to make Peace and Quiet. Tho' the truth is, the Elders, in adviſing this, did wrong to thoſe Parents, whoſe Children were taken away without their Conſent; but this they thought better, than directly breaking their Oath, or letting a Tittle periſh; for the Preſervation of which, they were conſtrained to do ſome hard Things: But in one Thing they did very well, that they permitted them to take Wives only *according to their Number*; that is, every Man a Wife, and no more. So that tho' *Polygamy* was tolerated, yet they did not adviſe or countenance it; no, not for the more ſpeedy Reſtitution of a Tribe. It might happen, ſome of theſe young Virgins were Heireſſes, and ſo their Eſtates would be tranſlated into another Tribe: But the *Jews* ſay, that Law againſt marrying into another Tribe, and inheriting Land in another Tribe, did not belong to future Ages, but only to that wherein the Diviſion of the Land was made. See our great *Selden, de Succeſſ. ad Leges Hebr.* Cap. 18. wherein he alledges this very Example of it, *Fol.* 59.

And they went and returned unto their Inheritance.] In the Land of *Benjamin.*

And repaired their Cities, and dwelt in them.] And tilled the Land, as *Joſephus* adds; ſo that in time, this Tribe was reſtored, εἰς προτέραν εὐδαιμονίαν, to its former flouriſhing Condition.

Ver. 24. *And the Children of Iſrael departed thence at that time, every Man to his Tribe, and to his Family; and they went out from thence, every Man to his Inheritance.*] To look after his own private Affairs, the publick Concerns being now at an end.

Ver. 25. *In thoſe Days there was no King in Iſrael.*] There were Elders, *ver.* 16. who had ſome Authority; and there was an High Prieſt, xx. 28. yet for want of a King (as our great Primate *Uſher* obſerves, in his Book of *the Power of the Prince*) all Things went to wreck, and was in great confuſion: And by a King, as *Corn. Bertram* obſerves (*de Rep. Jud.* Cap. 9.) is meant a ſupreme Governor, ſuch as *Moſes* and *Joſhua* were, and after them the *Judges:* So this Word is uſed *Deut.* xxxiii. 5. The Meaning of theſe Words therefore is, That in thoſe Days there was none who had ſo much Power over all the *Iſraelites*, as to keep them in order, and not only admoniſh them of their Duty, but make all their Tribes obſerve it, by puniſhing all publick Wrongs, and all Whoredoms, and Idolatries: And, conſequently, there was no great *Sanhedrim*, as the *Jews* ſpeak of in future Times, which they would fain find in all Ages foregoing.

Every Man did that which was right in his own Eyes.] For want of ſuch a ſupreme Authority, every Tribe, and every City; nay, which is more, every private Man, (as *Bertram* there gloſſes) committed many horrid things, which were not publickly puniſhed. This was the Cauſe of *Micah*'s Idolatry, as was noted before, xvii. 6. and of the *Benjamites* Filthineſs, xix. 1. and now of theſe enormous things done by all the *Iſraelites*, in killing all the *Benjamites* without diſtinction, when the Law required the Children ſhould not ſuffer for their Parents Offence; in binding themſelves by ſuch a raſh Oath, to give them none of their Daughters to be their Wives; in killing all the Women of *Jabeſh Gilead*, who were not Virgins; and now in permitting, nay, ordering this Rape, rather than break a raſh Oath; which ſhould teach Men to be thankful for that Authority which is over them, to preſerve them from ſuch like Enormities: For which end (as the ſame *Primate* there obſerves) the Cuſtom was, among the ancient *Perſians*, to let the People looſe to do what they liſt, for five Days after their King died, that by the Diſorders which were then committed, they might ſee the Neceſſity of having a King to govern them; and when they had one, to be more obedient to him.

V.r Gucht Sculp.

A COMMENTARY UPON THE Book of *RUTH.*

THIS Book is a kind of Appendix to the Book of *JUDGES*, and a Manuduction to the Book of *SAMUEL*; and therefore fitly placed between them. It hath its Title from the Perſon whoſe Story is here principally related; which indeed is wonderful. For ſhe left her own Country, Kindred and Relations, which the *Jews* ſay (tho' I confeſs without any good Proof of it) were not only Honourable, but Royal, out of her great Affection to her Mother-in-Law, and her Religion; to live with her in the Land of *Iſrael*, in a poor and mean Condition. It is very probable, the ſame Perſon who wrote the Book of *Judges*, was the Author of this alſo, *viz. Samuel*; who by adding this to the End of that Book, brought down the Hiſtory unto his own Times; and gave us withal, the Genealogy of *David*, from *Pharez* the Son of *Judah*, that it might evidently appear, Chriſt ſprang out of that Tribe, according to *Jacob*'s Prophecy, *Gen.* xlix. 10. but by a *Gentile* Woman (that all Nations might hope in his Mercy) full of Faith, and of earneſt Deſire to enter into that Family; which made her deſpiſe the Pride of her own Nation, and chuſe to live deſpicably among the People of God.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs in the Days when the Judges ruled.*] Theſe Words direct us to the Time when the Things contained in this Book fell out, tho' we cannot certainly tell what Judge then ruled. *David Ganz* will have it to have been in the Days of *Ibzan*, mentioned *Judges* xii. 8. becauſe he was the only Judge born at *Bethlehem*; from whence he concludes him to have been the ſame with *Boaz*. But that is ſo weak a Reaſon, that *Guil. Vorſtius*, in his Annotations upon him, thinks rather it was in the Days of *Deborah* and *Barak*. I ſhall not mention his Arguments, there being a great Man of our own (the moſt Learned *Uſher*) who places this Hiſtory in the Times preceding; either in the Days of *Ehud*, when the *Moabites* oppreſſed *Iſrael*, or rather of *Shamgar* who ſucceeded him. Which is the Opinion likewiſe of *Du Pin*, who takes theſe Things to have been done about Twenty eight Years after the Death of *Joſhua*. See *Uſſerii Chronol. Sacra. Pars* 1. *Cap.* 12.

That there was a Famine in the Land.] This inclines me to think, theſe Things came t paſs in the Days of *Gideon*, for that is the only Time that we read of a Famine in the Days of

the Judges; when the *Midianites*, *Amalekites*, and the Children of the East, came *and deſtroyed the Increaſe of the Earth, and left no Suſtenance for Iſrael, nor for their Cattle.* Judges vi. 3, 4.

And a certain Man of Bethlehem-Judah.] There were two *Bethlehems*, as I have often noted: one in the Land of *Judah*, the other in the Tribe of *Zebulun* (*Joſh.* xix. 15.) They had their Name from the great Fruitfulneſs of the Place where they were ſituated; which argues this Famine to have been very ſore, that even in theſe Places there was a Scarcity of Proviſion.

Went to ſojourn in the Land of Moab, he, and his Wife, and his two Sons.] He carried his whole Family with him into the neighbouring Country of *Moab*, which was near to the Land of *Judah*, at the End of the Salt-Sea; and it ſeems had now Plenty in it, when the Land of *Iſrael* was famiſhed.

Ver. 2. *And the Name of the Man was Elimelech.*] Who, if we may believe many of the Jewiſh Doctors, was a noble and potent Perſon in his Country.

And the Name of his Wife Naomi.] They make her alſo of a noble Extraction, ſhe being (as the *Talmudiſts* ſay in *Baba Bathen*) the Niece of *Naaſſon*, Prince of the Tribe of *Judah*, and Daughter of his Brother *Salmon*.

And the Name of his two Sons, Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehem-Judah.] The Name of *Ephrathites* is given them, becauſe they were not only born, but, I ſuppoſe, bred up, and lived in the ſame Place with their Father; which from its great Fruitfulneſs was called *Ephrata*, as well as *Bethlehem*.

And they came into the Country of Moab, and continued there.] Settled their Habitation in that Country, which had not been lawful, unleſs it had been a publick Calamity, or ſome great private Neceſſity, as *Maimonides* obſerves. See *Guil. Schickard*, in his *Miſchpat Hammelech*, Cap. 3. *Theorem* 10.

Ver. 3. *And Elimelech Naomi's Husband died, and ſhe was left and her two Sons.*] She a Widow, and they Fatherleſs. This, *Joſephus* thinks, was after he had been there Ten Years; but the moſt, if not all others, think he died a little after he came into this Country.

Ver. 4. *And they took them Wives of the Women of Moab.*] Which was not lawful, unleſs they had firſt become Proſelytes to the Jewiſh Religion; as *Aben Ezra* concludes they were, from thoſe very Words from whence others prove the contrary, *ver.* 15. where it is ſaid, *Orpah returned unto her People, and unto her Gods.* This is a Teſtimony, ſaith he, that ſhe *had been converted to Judaiſm.* But the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt is quite of another Opinion, and ſaith, they tranſgreſſed the Commandment of the LORD, by taking to them ſtrange Wives. And ſo the *Midraſch* upon *Ruth*, as *Buxtorf* obſerves in his Book *de Sponſalibus & Divortiis*, Sect. 31.

The Name of the one was Orpah, and the Name of the other Ruth.] Who do not ſeem to have been of ſuch great Quality as the *Talmudiſts* fancy, but of common Rank; otherwiſe they would not have been beſtowed upon Strangers.

And they dwelt there about Ten Years.] After their Marriage.

Ver. 5. *And Mahlon and Chilion died alſo both of them.*] For their Days were cut ſhort, ſaith the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt, becauſe they married ſtrange Women: and for the ſame Reaſon (if it be true) they may be thought to have died without Iſſue; for there is not the leaſt Intimation that either of them had any.

And the Woman was left of her two Sons, and her Husband.] In a very melancholy Condition, being in a Country of Strangers.

Ver. 6. *Then ſhe aroſe with her Daughters-in-Law, that ſhe might return from the Country of Moab.*] She packed up her Goods, and made herſelf ready to leave the Country of *Moab*, and her Daughters accompanied her, it being the Cuſtom to conduct thoſe whom they loved, ſome part of their Way when they went a long Journey.

For ſhe had heard in the Country of Moab, how that the LORD had viſited his People, in giving them Bread.] They were ſuch near Neighbours, that they ſoon had Intelligence in *Moab* what was done in the Land of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore ſhe went forth out of the Place where ſhe was.*] The Neceſſity which forced her thither no longer remaining.

And her two Daughters-in-Law with her.] Who loved her as their own Mother.

And they went on the Way to return unto the Land of Judah.] This relates unto *Naomi*, for her Daughters had never been there.

Ver. 8. *And Naomi ſaid unto her two Daughters-in-Law.*] When they were come to the Borders of the Country of *Moab*, ſhe ſaid the following Words.

Go, return, each to her Mother's Houſe.] She deſires them to accompany her no further, but go back to their own Home. And it ſeems it was uſual in *Moab*, as well as in *Iſrael*, for Widows to dwell with their Parents. And the Women here alſo had Apartments diſtinct from the Men, where the Daughters lived with their Mothers, as the Sons with their Father.

The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the Dead, and with me.] She diſmiſſed them with her Bleſſing, praying God would be as good to them, as they had been good Wives to their Husbands, and good Daughters to her.

Ver. 9. *And the LORD grant that ye may find Reſt, each of you, in the Houſe of her Huſband.*] And that they might be happily ſettled in Houſes of their own, with good Husbands; whom ſhe wiſhes they might long enjoy in Peace and Quietneſs.

Then ſhe kiſſed them.] As was uſual, when Friends took their Leave one of another, or when they met together.

And they lift up their Voice and wept.] Were all extremely grieved to think of parting.

Ver. 10 *And they ſaid unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy People.*] They reſolved to accompany her to *Bethlehem*.

Ver. 11. *And Naomi ſaid, Turn again, my Daughters, Why will you go with me? Are there yet*

yet any more Sons in my Womb, that they may be your Husbands?] This ſhews, that the Cuſtom of Mens marrying their Brother's Widow, when he left no Iſſue, (which was before the Law of *Moſes*, *Gen.* xxxviii.) was ſo ancient, that it was derived into other Countries, who were not deſcended from *Abraham*.

Ver. 12. *Turn again, my Daughters, and go your Way, for I am too old to have an Husband; if I ſhould ſay I have Hope, if I ſhould have a Husband alſo to-night, and ſhould alſo bear Sons.*

Ver. 13. *Would you tarry for them till they were grown? Would you ſtay from having Huſbands?*] She perſiſts in the ſame Argument, and preſſes it home, that ſhe was too old to marry, and they too young not to marry again: But ſhould ſhe marry immediately, and be ſure ſhe ſhould have Children, nay, Sons, it would be unreaſonable for them to wait till they were fit to be their Husbands.

Nay, my Daughters; for it grieveth me very much for your Sakes, that the Hand of the LORD is gone out againſt me.] She would have them by no means think of any ſuch thing; and likewiſe repreſents to them what a mean Condition God had reduced her unto, which was the more heavy, becauſe ſhe was able to do nothing for them.

Ver. 14. *And they lift up their Voices and wept again.*] It gave them great Trouble, whether they thought of going with her, or of parting from her.

And Orpah kiſſed her Mother-in-Law.] Took her leave of her. The *Jews* obſerve three ſorts of *Kiſſes*, which were uſual and commendable among them, all others being wanton: One in Token of Reverence to any Perſon's Dignity, 1 *Sam.* x. 1. A Second at the Meeting of Friends, *Exod.* iv. 27. A Third at their Parting, of which they give this as an Example. Unto which *R. Tanchuma* adds a Fourth, ſaluting of near Relations, *Gen.* xxix. 11. which is, in a manner, the ſame with the Second. *Druſius* thinks there was another, which he calls *the Kiſs of Prayer*, which was in uſe in the Primitive Church, and taken, he thinks, from the *Jews:* But *Buxtorf* ſaith, he can find no ſuch thing in all their Books. See *Lex Talmud.* in the Word *Neſikah*, Fol. 1408.

But Ruth clave to her.] Would not part from her, but ſtedfaſtly reſolved to go with her to her own Country.

Ver. 15. *And ſhe ſaid, Behold, thy Siſter-in-Law is gone back to her People, and to her Gods.*] The principal of which was *Chemoſh*, as we read *Num.* xxi. 29. 1 *Kings* xi. 7. By this it appears, *Orpah* was not made a Proſelyte to the *Jewiſh* Religion, but ſtill continued to worſhip the Gods of her Country. Yet this did not make ſuch a Difference in the Family (as divers Religions commonly do now) but that ſhe loved her Husband entirely, and had a great Affection to his Mother, even after his Death.

Return thou after thy Siſter-in-Law.] This may ſeem ſtrange, that ſhe ſhould, in effect, preſs her to go and worſhip Idols; but her Intention was to try her, and to perſuade her to do nothing raſhly, eſpecially not to change her Religion, without due Conſideration, and weighing well her Reaſons for it: For if ſhe had been led merely by her Affection to her, to embrace alſo her Religion, ſhe might have revolted from it when ſhe died, or when ſhe ſaw her Condition very deſolate.

Ver. 16. *And Ruth ſaid, Intreat me not to return from following thee; for whither thou goeſt I will go, and where thou lodgeſt I will lodge.*] Be content, that is, with any Condition, in her Company.

Thy People ſhall be my People, and thy God my God.] This is a Reſolution to embrace the *Jewiſh* Religion entirely, ſo as to be incorporated with the *Iſraelites*, as if ſhe had been a Native among them.

Ver. 17. *Where thou dieſt, I will die, and there will I be buried; the LORD do ſo to me, and more alſo, if aught but Death part thee and me.*] She reſolves that nothing but Death ſhall make a Separation between them, and not that neither, wholly, for ſhe would lie by her in the ſame Sepulchre: And this ſhe confirms with an Oath, or ſolemn Imprecation upon herſelf, That worſe might befal her, than any thing *Naomi* could ſuffer, if ſhe did not faithfully adhere to her: Which Form of Speech we find afterwards in many places, 1 *Sam.* iii. 17. xiv. 44. xx. 13. 2 *Sam.* iii. 9, 35, *&c.*

Ver. 18. *And when ſhe ſaw that ſhe was ſtedfaſtly minded to go with her, ſhe left ſpeaking to her.*] She ſaid not a Word more to her of her leaving her, when ſhe ſaw ſhe had a ſettled and well-grounded Reſolution, to become a Proſelyte to the true Religion. So the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt explains it, repreſenting *Naomi* as declaring to her at large, That there was a great Number of Precepts (no leſs than DCXIII.) to be obſerved by thoſe who would be of her Religion. In particular, the Reſt of the Sabbath, to which they were obliged, and to worſhip one God alone, *&c.* Unto all which ſhe anſwered, *Whatſoever thy People obſerve, I will do the ſame, as if I had been one of them from the Beginning.*

Ver. 19. *So they two went until they came to Bethlehem.*] Which ſhews they were but in a mean Condition, having no Servant to wait on them, nor an Aſs to carry them.

And it came to paſs, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the City was moved about them, and they ſaid, Is this Naomi?] It being reported by them who knew *Naomi*, that ſhe was returned, all the People ran out of their Houſes to ſee her, and beholding a great Change in her Garb and Countenance, they could ſcarce believe it was ſhe. But the *Arabick* and *Syriack* Verſions take it quite otherwiſe, *That all the City rejoiced, and ſaid, This is Naomi.* And the LXX, whom they follow, to the ſame purpoſe, ἤχησε ἡ πόλις, *The City rang* with the News, and they asked if this were *Naomi*; for ſeveral had never ſeen her before, or did not remember her, but had only heard much of her.

Ver. 20. *And ſhe ſaid unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara.*] She told them her old Name was not ſuitable to her preſent Condition, which required ſhe ſhould rather be called

by

by a contrary; from whence ſome gather, that *Naomi* was not the Name given her at firſt by her Parents, but a popular Name commonly given her by her Neighbours, becauſe of her comely Preſence, and courteous Behaviour.

For the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me.] This is the Reaſon of the new Name of *Mara*, whereby ſhe would be called; which ſignifies *bitter*. *Joſephus* ſaith that *Naomi*, in their Language, ſignifies εὐτυχίαν, Proſperity, and *Mara* ὀδύνην, Grief and Pain.

Ver. 21. *I went out full, and the* LORD *hath brought me home again empty.*] The *Targum* makes this relate unto her *Husband and Children*, with whom ſhe went out to the Country of *Moab*, which now were taken away from her; but it is reaſonable to extend it to the Eſtate they carried along with them, for their Support in a ſtrange Country, where they lived to ſpend it all.

Why then call ye me Naomi, ſeeing the LORD *hath teſtified againſt me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?*] God is ſaid to teſtify againſt any Perſons, when he paſſes Sentence upon them, and judges them, by ſending Afflictions upon them; at which *Naomi* doth not murmur, but only humbly acknowledges God had inflicted grievous Puniſhments upon her, which ſhe thought teſtified his Diſpleaſure.

Ver. 22. *So Naomi returned, and Ruth her Daughter-in-Law with her, which returned out of the Country of Moab.*] As much as to ſay, This is a brief Account of *Naomi*'s Return to her own Country, together with her Daughter-in-Law, who would accompany her.

And they came to Bethlehem in the beginning of Barley-harveſt.] The Time of their Return is alſo noted, which was about the *Paſſover*; for after the Offering of the Sheaf, mentioned *Levit.* xxiii. 10, 11. on the ſecond Day of unleavened Bread, they began to cut Barley: Whence he *Chaldee* Paraphraſt thus explains theſe Words, *They came to Bethlehem in the Entrance of the Paſſover; and on that Day the Children of Iſrael began to mow the Sheaf that was to be waved, which was of Barley.*

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Naomi had a Kinſman of her Husband's, a mighty Man of Wealth.*] So *Gibhor Chail* is well tranſlated; for Riches make Men mighty and powerful. Tho' the *Chaldee* would have it ſignify a Man *mighty in the Law*, by which they do not mean a Man of great *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs*, but as that *Paraphraſt* explains it upon 1 *Chron.* iv. 22, 23. after the Manner of the *Jews*, (whoſe Heads are full of their *Academies* and *Sanhedrims*) he was the *Rab* or chief Ruler of the Academy of Wiſe Men at *Bethlehem*.

Of the Family of Elimelech, and his Name was Boaz.] Whoſe Anceſtors are mentioned in the Concluſion of this Book, and his Deſcendants alſo, who lived at *Bethlehem*, as he did.

Ver. 2. *And Ruth the Moabiteſs ſaid unto Naomi, Let me go into the Field, and glean Ears of Corn.*] This is a great Argument of her Modeſty, and dutiful Affection to her Mother-in-Law, that ſhe would not go any whither, no, not to earn ſomething for their Support, without her leave.

After him, in whoſe Sight I ſhall find Grace.] Either ſhe did not know that poor Strangers had a Right to glean, as well as the Poor of *Iſrael*, *Lev.* xix. 9, 10. or out of her great Piety ſhe would not challenge it as a Right, but as a Favour, which ſhe would thankfully acknowledge.

And ſhe ſaid, Go, my Daughter.] This is a Sign of *Naomi's* low Condition, otherwiſe ſhe would not have ſuffered her to go and ſeek for a Supply of their Needs among the pooreſt ſort of People.

Ver. 3. *And ſhe went, and came.*] Into a Field, where ſhe ſaw ſome Reapers.

And gleaned in the Field after the Reapers.] Gathered up the ſcattered Ears of Corn which fell from them, and were left behind them.

And her Hap was to light on a Part of a Field belonging to Boaz, who was of the Kindred of Elimelech.] By the Direction of God's good Providence (not by any Man's Guidance) ſhe came into a Piece of Ground which belonged to the great Man before-mentioned.

Ver. 4. *And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem.*] It is remarkable, that he followed her into the ſame Field.

And ſaid unto the Reapers, The LORD *be with you; and they anſwered him, The* LORD *bleſs thee.*] Such was the Piety of ancient Times, that they were wont to pray God to proſper the honeſt Labours of thoſe that they ſaw employed, who made a Return of the like Prayers for them, which the *Gentiles* themſelves practiſed, eſpecially in Harveſt-Time, which they would not begin, by putting the Sickle into the Corn, till *Ceres* had been invoked, as *Virgil* informs us in his *Georgicks*, Lib. 1. *ver.* 347, 348.

This is the firſt Time that we meet with this religious Salutation, *The* LORD *be with you*; which we afterwards find was familiar, and was continued even to our Saviour's Days, when the Angel ſaluted the Bleſſed Virgin after this manner, *Luke* i. 28.

Ver. 5. *Then ſaid Boaz unto his Servant that was ſet over the Reapers.*] To ſee them do their Work, and that they had Proviſion fit for them; and, it is likely, to pay them their Wages. *Joſephus* calls him ἀγροκόμον, and the *Chaldee* calls him *Rab*, the Maſter, Ruler, or Governor of the Reapers.

Whoſe Damſel is this?] Either ſhe did not appear, when all the City came to ſee *Naomi*; or *Boaz* did not take ſo much notice of her, as to know her again.

Ver. 6. *And the Servant that was ſet over the Reapers, anſwered and ſaid, It is the Moabiteſs Damſel, that came back with Naomi out of the Country of Moab.*] He did not know her Name perhaps, but he deſcribes her as a Stranger, that, out of love to her Mother-in-Law, and her Religion, had left her own Country, and come to dwell among the *Iſraelites*. So the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt makes him anſwer, *She is become a Proſelyte.*

Ver.

Ver. 7. *And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the Reapers among the Sheaves.*] What she might have demanded by the Law as her Right, she asks as a Courtesy; which, no doubt, moved the Man to be the more obliging to such a modest and well-bred Woman.

So she came.] That is, he admitted her; for perhaps they were not bound to let the Poor come immediately into the Fields, as soon as the Reapers had cut down the Corn, and bound it up in Sheaves, but when it was carried off. They might chuse also, among the Poor, whom they thought most worthy, or most necessitous.

And hath continued even from the Morning until now.] That is, all the Day; for I suppose it was in the Afternoon, when the Heat of the Day was over, that *Boaz* came to visit his Reapers. So the Servant describes her as a very diligent Woman, who had not intermitted her Labour, but only for a little time, to eat, or to rest herself.

That she tarried a little in the House.] The Meaning is, she went and staid a while in the Tent which was pitched in the Field, for such as were weary to refresh themselves; or for other necessary Occasions. So *Aben Ezra* expounds the Word *House*; in which some think *Boaz* found her resting herself, and wondering to see a Stranger there, enquired who she was.

Ver. 8. *Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my Daughter?*] A Form of Speech calling for Attention to what is said.

Go not to glean in another Field, neither go from hence.] He would not have her go to glean in any other Field, nor to stir from thence to supply any of her Wants, as appears by what follows.

But abide here fast by my Maidens.] Who reaped as well as Men, (as the next Verse shews) and their Company was the fittest for her on all Accounts. Some think this was a Labour too hard for Women, and therefore they will have it, that his Maidens only came to bring Provisions for the Men, as *Virgil* describes *Thestylis* to have done, in his second *Eclogue*, *ver.* 10.

Ver. 9. *Let thine Eyes be on the Field that they do reap, and go thou after them.*] Observe their Motions, and follow them.

Have I not charged the young Men that they touch thee not?] Give thee no Molestation, as the *Vulgar* understands it. And so the Word *touch* sometimes signifies, *to do Harm to others*, *Psal.* cv. 15. But the *Chaldee* Paraphrast extends it further, that they should *not come near her*, but keep at a Distance from her, and consequently offer no Incivility or Rudeness to her, which was too common among Rusticks, especially when they were full of Mirth, in Harvest and Vintage-time.

And when thou art athirst, go unto the Vessels, and drink of that which the young Men have drawn.] There was excellent Water at *Bethlehem*, (2 *Sam.* xxiii. 15.) which either the Reapers, or some that attended them, had brought in Vessels into the Field, to quench their Thirst when they were dry.

Ver. 10. *Then she fell on her Face, and bowed herself to the Ground.*] A Posture of the greatest Reverence and Submission, either in Civil or Religious Worship, and was used when they would express their most grateful Sense of any Favour done them. See *Gen.* xxiii. 7, 12. xxvii. 29, *&c.*

And said, Why have I found Grace in thine Eyes, that thou shouldest take Knowledge of me, seeing I am a Stranger?] To *take Knowledge* of any Person, is to shew Kindness in the Scripture Language, and is the Effect of *finding Grace*, that is, Favour with any one; which was the greater in *Boaz*, because he had never seen her before, or was not acquainted with her.

Ver. 11. *And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath been fully shewn me all that thou hast done unto thy Mother-in-Law, since the Death of her Husband.*] *Naomi* had related to some Friends, who had informed *Boaz* at large of her great Affection to her Mother.

And how thou hast left thy Father and thy Mother, and the Land of thy Nativity, and art come unto a People whom thou knewest not heretofore.] To be a Proselyte to their Religion, (as the *Chaldee* Paraphrast explains it) upon which account the greatest Kindness was due to her.

Ver. 12. *The* LORD *recompence thy Work, and a full Reward be given thee.*] He looked upon it as a very high Act of Faith and Vertue in her, to leave all that was dear to her in this World, to become a Member of their Church; which he prays God amply to requite. The *Chaldee* Paraphrast makes her say here, *That she was come from a strange People, who were made unworthy to be admitted into the Congregation of the* LORD: But he answers to her, *Our Wise Men say, That the Men of* Moab *only, not the Women, are excluded from our Society*, &c. See what I have noted upon *Deut.* xxiii. 5.

Of the LORD *God of Israel, under whose Wings thou art come to trust.*] To seek for Protection, and commit thyself unto his Care and good Providence; which was a pious Confidence so pleasing to God, that the *Chaldee* Paraphrast makes *Boaz* say, *In this thy Righteousness thou shalt be delivered from the Judgment of Hell, and thy Portion shall be with Sarah, Rebekah, Leah and Rachel*; that is, she should have an eternal Recompence. This Phrase of trusting under the Wings of the divine Majesty, is often used by the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* xvii. 8. xxxvi. 7. lvii. 1. lxi. 4. lxii. 7. xci. 4. All which Places speak of the *Shadow*, or the *Covert* of his Wings, which seem to be a Metaphor taken from the Cherubims, who spread their Wings from one Side of the holy Place unto the other, upon which the Divine Majesty sat; which Protection and Safeguard was represented in the Cloud which covered the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, *Numb.* xiv. 14.

Ver. 13. *Then she said, Let me find Favour in thy sight, my Lord, for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thy Handmaid.*] She humbly begs the Continuance

tinuance of his good Opinion of her, (tho' ſhe acknowledges herſelf, in the next Words, to be very unworthy of it) for it had given the greateſt Conſolation to her, in her deſolate Condition.

Though I be not like to one of thy Handmaidens.] So obſcure, ſhe means, being a Stranger, and of a Country under an ill Character among them, that ſhe was not equal to one of his meaneſt Servant-Maids.

Ver. 14. *And Boaz ſaid unto her, At Mealtime come thou hither.*] He enlarges his Favour to her, and orders her at the Time of Repaſt to come and eat among his Servants. I cannot deviſe how the ancient *Jews* came to apply theſe Words to the Kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, and to his ſuffering Condition here in this World; but ſo it is, that the *Midraſch*, upon this Place, makes theſe Words, *Come thou hither*, to ſignify as much, as *come to thy Kingdom*; and the *Morſel dipt in Vinegar*, to denote, *the Reproaches and Torments of the Meſſiah:* Which is an Argument that they expected ſuch a King, as ſhould be expoſed to ſuch Sufferings as our bleſſed Saviour endured, who ſaith, in the *Pſalmiſt*, *They gave me Vinegar to drink*, lxix. 21. which perhaps was the Original of this Application of *Boaz* his Words to the *Meſſiah*, whoſe Coming they longed for, and found it foretold in more Places than we are aware of.

And eat of the Bread, and dip thy Morſel in the Vinegar.] Under the Name of *Bread*, is comprehended all the Proviſion which was made for the Reapers, with which they had Vinegar for Sauce, it being very cooling and refreſhing in hot Seaſons, as the Time of Harveſt was. So *Pliny* obſerves, Lib. xxiii. Cap. 1. *Aceto ſumma vis eſt in refrigerando*; which cooling Quality is taken notice of by *Raſi*, and others, upon this Place.

And ſhe ſat beſide the Reapers.] With the Women, that is, who reaped.

And he reached her parched Corn.] This ſeems to ſignify, that *Boaz* himſelf eat with them, or ſtood by them, to ſee they were well provided; and took a particular Care of her, unto whom he reached ſome parched Corn, which was an uſual, and no mean Food in thoſe Countries, as appears from 2 *Sam.* xvii. 28. But it may be underſtood of the Servant ſet over the Reapers, (*ver.* 5.) or ſome of them, who obſerving her Modeſty, that ſhe did not carve for herſelf, reached to her ſome of the Proviſion made for them.

And ſhe did eat, and was ſufficed, and left.] There was ſuch Plenty, (*Boaz* being a great and a good Man) that more was ſet before them than they could eat; at leaſt, ſhe left ſome of that which was carved to her. This Meal, I ſuppoſe, was after the Heat of the Day was over, in the Afternoon; for then they dined, but their beſt Meal was a Supper.

Ver. 15. *And when ſhe was riſen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young Men, Let her glean even among the Sheaves, and reproach her not.*] For that looked ſomething like filching to come among the Sheaves. But *Joſephus* takes the Senſe to be, that ſhe ſhould be permitted, if ſhe pleaſed, to cut down Corn herſelf for her own Uſe; which is not likely.

Ver. 16. *And let fall alſo ſome of the Handfuls on purpoſe for her, and leave them, that ſhe may glean them, and rebuke her not.*] As if ſhe was too bold in gathering what belonged not to her.

Ver. 17. *So ſhe gleaned in the Field until Even, and beat out that ſhe had gleaned.*] It ſeems they did not in thoſe Days carry home their Gleanings as they gathered them in the Ears, but beat the Corn out with a Rod; and freeing it from the Chaff, carried it away pure, with leſs trouble than otherwiſe it would have given them.

And it was about an Ephah of Barley.] An *Ephah* is commonly taken to be about a Buſhel of our Meaſure. See my Notes on *Exod.* xvi. 36. where it appears, that an *Ephah* contained ten *Omers*, and that an *Omer* was ſufficient for one Perſon's Food for a whole Day; therefore *Ruth* now had gathered as much as would keep her and her Mother five Days.

Ver. 18. *And ſhe took it up, and went into the City, and her Mother-in-Law ſaw what ſhe had gleaned.*] That is, wondred at the Quantity.

And ſhe brought forth, and gave to her that ſhe had reſerved, after ſhe was ſufficed.] *Joſephus* thinks this is ſpoken of *Naomi*, that ſet before her Daughter-in-Law, ſome Remainders of the Victuals that her Neighbours had brought her in *Ruth*'s Abſence; but it rather ſignifies *Ruth*'s Care of her Mother-in-Law, whom ſhe had in mind, when ſhe was feaſted with the Reapers with more than ſhe could eat, (*ver.* 14.) and therefore brought what ſhe left home for her Refreſhment.

Ver. 19. *And her Mother-in-Law ſaid unto her, Where haſt thou gleaned to-day? And where wroughteſt thou? Bleſſed be he that did take knowledge of thee.*] For ſhe concluded, that without the ſpecial Favour of ſome Perſon to her, it had not been poſſible for her to have made ſuch a Day's Work.

And ſhe ſhewed her Mother-in-Law with whom ſhe had wrought, and ſaid, The Man's Name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz.] Whoſe near Relation to them *Ruth* did not yet know.

Ver. 20. *And Naomi ſaid unto her Daughter-in-Law, Bleſſed be he of the LORD.*] Or rather, *Let him be moſt bleſſed*; for *Lamed* prefixed to *Jehovah* increaſes the Senſe, as in *Gen.* x. 9. See there.

Who hath not left off his Kindneſs to the Living, and to the Dead.] Continued to be kind to the Relicts of *Elimelech* and his *Son*, as he had been to them when they were alive.

And Naomi ſaid, The Man is near of kin to us, one of our next Kinſmen.] In the *Hebrew*, *one of our Goels*, to whom of right it belonged to redeem the Land, and raiſe up the Name of his dead Brother, by marrying his Widow, according to the Command, *Levit.* xxv. 25. *Deut.* xxv. 5. See upon the 4th Chapter of this Book, Verſe 5.

Ver. 21. *And Ruth the Moabiteſs ſaid, He ſaid unto me alſo, Thou ſhalt keep faſt by my young Men.*] Tho' the Word *Nearim* be of the

Maſculine Gender, yet it ſignifies all young People, and particularly the Maidens, to whom he bid her keep cloſe, *ver.* 8. And ſo both the LXX, and the *Chaldee* here expound it; and ſo *Naomi*, it appears by the next Verſe, underſtood it.

Until they have ended all my Harveſt.] Not only the Barley Harveſt, in which they were now employed, but the Wheat-Harveſt, which followed it. See *ver.* 23.

Ver. 22. *And Naomi ſaid unto Ruth her Daughter-in-Law, It is good, my Daughter, that thou go out with his Maidens, that they meet thee not in any other Field.*] She adviſes her to accept his Kindneſs, and not to be found gleaning in any other Field, where ſhe might not be ſo welcome; and beſide, it would look like a Diſtruſt of his Kindneſs, if not a Deſpiſal of it, ſhould ſhe not do as ſhe was invited.

Ver. 23. *So ſhe kept faſt by the Maidens of Boaz to glean, unto the end of Barley-Harveſt, and of Wheat-Harveſt.*] Which continued many Days; and in all that Time ſhe found, no doubt, the ſame kind Entertainment, which is not here repeated.

And dwelt with her Mother-in-Law.] Conſtantly came home to her at Night, after ſhe had done her Labour. Or the Meaning is, when Harveſt was ended, ſhe did not gad abroad, but kept her Mother company at home; for ſo the *Hebrew*, *ſhe ſat with her Mother-in-Law.*

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN Naomi her Mother-in-Law ſaid unto her, My Daughter, ſhall I not ſeek Reſt for thee?*] A Settlement in an Houſe of her own, with a good Huſband.

That it may be well with thee.] That ſhe might live more comfortably than ſhe could do with her. The *Chaldee* underſtands it, as if ſhe confirmed it with an Oath, that ſhe would give herſelf no Reſt, till ſhe had married *Ruth.*

Ver. 2. *And now, is not Boaz of our Kindred, with whoſe Maidens thou waſt?*] She puts her in mind of what ſhe had told her before, ii. 20.

Behold he winnoweth Barley to-night in the Threſhing-Floor.] The Corn being gathered, threſhed or trodden out, it was next of all winnowed, to ſeparate it from the Chaff; and this was commonly done in the Evening, when the Heat of the Day was over, and cool Breezes began to riſe. See *Gen.* iii. 8.

Ver. 3. *Waſh thyſelf therefore, and anoint thee.*] Frequent Bathings were neceſſary in thoſe Countries, where they continue to this day for Cleanlineſs; and Anointing for ſmoothing their Skin, and making them appear more amiable.

And put thy Raiment upon thee.] Her beſt Clothes, as the *Vulgar* expreſſes it; or her Ornaments, as the *Chaldee.*

And get thee down to the Floor.] To ſome Place near it, where ſhe might ſee, and obſerve what was done.

But make not thyſelf known unto the Man.] She would have her conceal herſelf, ſo that *Boaz* might not ſee her; nor, as ſome underſtand it, any Man elſe.

Until he ſhall have done eating and drinking.] Upon ſuch Occaſions they made Feaſts for the Labourers in the Harveſt.

Ver. 4. *And it ſhall be when he lieth down, thou ſhalt mark the Place where he ſhall lie.*] To ſleep, after the Feaſt was done, and the Gueſts were gone.

And thou ſhalt go in.] To the Threſhing-Floor, where he lay down, as we read, *ver.* 7.

And uncover his Feet, and lay thee down.] She was not to lie by his Side, for that had been immodeſt; but at his Feet, in the Poſture of an humble Supplicant.

And he will tell thee what thou ſhalt do.] Either he preſently underſtood her Meaning, when ſhe told him who ſhe was, or ſhe explained it unto him; and *Naomi* did not doubt he would comply with her Deſires, and put her into a Legal Way of accompliſhing them.

Ver. 5. *And ſhe ſaid unto her, All that thou ſayeſt unto me, I will do.*] She put a great Confidence in her Mother's Prudence and Piety, and truſted God would give good Succeſs to her Deſign; which ſeemed not very modeſt, but had no other Intentions than what was agreeable to the Law of God, and accordingly proſpered.

Ver. 6. *And ſhe went down unto the Floor, and did according to all that her Mother-in-Law bad her.*] Concealed herſelf, but obſerved when he came into the Threſhing-Floor, and where he lay down to ſleep.

Ver. 7. *And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his Heart was merry.*] This is a Sign he had made a great Feaſt, that he and his Reapers, and perhaps other Neighbours, might rejoice together; and (as the *Targum* underſtands it) praiſe God for his Goodneſs in giving them Plenty, after the Famine that had been in the Land. For ſo the Words there are, *His Heart rejoiced, and he bleſſed God, who had heard his Prayer, and removed the Famine from the Land of Iſrael.*

He went to lie down at the end of the Heap of Corn.] Such was the plain Way of living in thoſe ancient Times, that the moſt wealthy Perſons looked after their own Buſineſs, both in the Field, and at Home; which made *Boaz* not go to his Houſe, but lie perhaps upon the Straw in the Floor where his Corn had been winnowed, to ſecure it from Thieves, till it could be laid up in his Barns. Theſe Threſhing-Floors were covered at top to keep off Rain, but lay open on all ſides, that the Wind might come in freely for the winnowing of the Corn; which being done, I ſuppoſe they were ſhut up at Night with Doors fitted to them, that if any body lay there, he might be kept warm; and the Corn, as I ſaid, be ſecured from the Danger of Robbers.

And ſhe came ſoftly, and uncovered his Feet, and laid her down.] Before the Doors were ſhut up, ſhe came in ſo ſoftly that none perceived her, and when he was aſleep, lay down at his Feet, not naked, as it is ſuppoſed he was, but in her Clothes, which we do not find ſhe put off; for ſhe had no Intention of lying with him,

but only giving him an Opportunity to conſider what the Law required of him. This indeed looks like a dangerous Practice, which her Mother-in-Law put her upon, expoſing both her and him to great Temptations, and therefore many have condemned it, as a very perilous Adventure; but the known Piety both of *Boaz* and *Ruth*, who were not now in their youthful Years (at leaſt *Boaz* was of a great Age) made *Naomi* confident no Sin would be committed by them.

Ver. 8. *And it came to paſs at Midnight, that the Man was afraid.*] It is a ſign he went to Bed ſober, tho' merry, in that he waked ſo ſoon, and was not drowſy, but apprehenſive of ſomething extraordinary; for going to ſleep alone, he perceived another in Bed with him. Or, all this is to be aſcribed to a Divine Motion, which ſecretly ſuggeſted ſuch Thoughts to *Naomi*, and awaked *Boaz* at a time when Men uſed to ſleep moſt ſoundly.

And turned himſelf.] Being much troubled, he turned himſelf about, to feel who, or what it was. The *Hebrew* Word *Jilaphet*, which we tranſlate *turned himſelf*, is variouſly interpreted, and hath an unuſual Signification put upon it by the *Targum*, and the *Gemara Sanhedrim*, (Cap. 2. N. 4.) where the Modeſty and Chaſtity of *Boaz* is highly extolled, and compared with that of *Joſeph*.

And behold a Woman lay at his feet.] He perceived by her Clothes, and (when ſhe ſpake) by her Voice, that it was a Woman.

Ver. 9. *And he ſaid, Who art thou?*] He had no Thoughts of abuſing her, as the *Targum* obſerves, but only enquires who ſhe was, and what her Buſineſs was there.

And ſhe anſwered, I am Ruth thy Handmaid.] She humbly acknowledges her Meanneſs, and then acquaints him with her Buſineſs.

Spread therefore thy Skirt over thine Handmaid.] In the *Hebrew*, *Spread thy Wing*; which is a Phraſe importing, taking a Perſon into one's Protection and Tuition; and here not a common one, but ſuch as was Matrimonial. Therefore the *Chaldee* plainly renders it, *Let thy Name be called upon thy Handmaid, by taking me for thy Wife.* See of this Phraſe upon *Deut.* xx. 30. From hence, at this day, when two Perſons are married among the *Jews*, the Man throws the Skirt of his *Talith* over his Spouſe, and covers her Head with it, as *Buxtorf* obſerves in his *Synagoga Judaica*, Cap. xxxix.

For thou art a near Kinſman.] This is the Reaſon of her Addreſs to him; which may be rendered, as we tranſlate it in the Margin, *One that hath Right to redeem*; for ſo the Word *Goel* ſignifies. See the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 20.

Ver. 10. *And he ſaid, Bleſſed be thou of the LORD, my Daughter.*] He was ſo far from being incenſed at her Boldneſs, that he wiſhes her all Happineſs.

For thou haſt ſhewed more Kindneſs in the latter End, than at the Beginning.] He doth not condemn her as immodeſt, but commends her true Kindneſs both to her Mother, and to her Huſband, which appeared now more than before, by her Endeavours to preſerve his Name and Family.

In as much as thou followeſt not young Men.] This is an high Commendation, that ſhe did not ſeek an Huſband to ſatisfy her Luſt, but to preſerve the Memory of him who was dead.

Whether poor or rich.] That is, of any ſort.

Ver. 11. *And now, my Daughter, fear not.*] He would not have her think he had an ill Opinion of her becauſe ſhe took this courſe, or be in doubt whether her Motion was acceptable to him; or that, being a Stranger, and poor, he would deſpiſe her.

I will do unto thee all that thou requireſt.] That is, take her to be his Wife.

For all the City of my People doth know that thou art a virtuous Woman.] She had behaved herſelf ſo, as to gain a general Report of extraordinary Virtue, as the *Hebrew* Word *Chajil* imports; which ſignifies one that doth Things *ſtrenuouſly*. The Words we tranſlate, *All the City of my People*, in the *Hebrew* are, *All the Gate of my People:* By which we rightly underſtand, all that entered in at the Gate; that is, the whole City. But the *Gate* being the Place where Juſtice was wont to be adminiſtred, the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt interprets it, *It is manifeſt unto all that ſit at the Gate of the great Sanhedrim of my People, that thou art a juſt Woman*, &c. This ſhews that *Boaz* was truly a very excellent Perſon, *who thought great Virtue to be a great Portion.*

Ver. 12. *And now it is true that I am thy near Kinſman: Howbeit, there is a Kinſman nearer than I.*] This, I ſuppoſe, was well enough known to *Naomi*; but ſhe underſtood his Diſpoſition ſo well, that ſhe thought it would be in vain to make any Application unto him.

Ver. 13. *Tarry this Night, and it ſhall be in the Morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a Kinſman, well, let him do the Kinſman's part.*] He reſolved to make no longer Delay, than was abſolutely neceſſary; but promiſes in the Morning ſhe ſhould have Right done to herſelf, and to her deceaſed Huſband, either by the next Kinſman, or by himſelf. Some of the *Jews* take the Word *Tob*, which ſignifies *Good*, and we rightly tranſlate, *Well*, to have been the Name of the other Kinſman, who was called *Tob:* And indeed, it is likely this was a Name among that People, from whence by the Addition of *iah* to it (which was very common) came *Tobiah*. *Raſi* ſaith he was the Brother of *Elimelech*; but there is no reaſon to believe this, for when it had been proper to mention his Name in the next Chapter, *ver.* 1. we only read that *Boaz* called him *Peloni Almoni*, *(Ho, ſuch a one)* which were Words uſed when they called any one indifferently.

But if he will not do the part of a Kinſman to thee, then will I do the part of a Kinſman to thee, as the LORD liveth.] He confirms his Promiſe to her with an Oath, that if the other Perſon refuſed, he would marry her.

Lie down until the Morning.] Having given her this Security, and thereby quieted her Mind, he bids her take a little bodily Reſt; which was very needful, having been, no doubt, full of

of reſtleſs and anxious Thoughts, what would become of her all the former part of the Night.

Ver. 14. *And ſhe lay at his feet until the Morning.*] In the ſame place where ſhe lay down at firſt; having no other Deſign, but only humbly to implore his Juſtice and Kindneſs unto her deceaſed Huſband.

And ſhe roſe up before one could know another.] That is, before it was light; ſo that if any body had ſeen her, they could not have known who ſhe was.

And he ſaid, Let it not be known that a Woman came into the Floor.] Some think he ſpake this to his Servants: But they were not yet ſtirring; and if they were, they could not diſcover whether ſhe was Man or Woman. It was ſpoken therefore to her, whom he would have to be careful both of her own Fame, and of his; for, as *Joſephus* here notes, *Great Caution is to be uſed to prevent ſuch Rumours, eſpecially when there is ſome ground for them,* καὶ μάλιστ' ἐπὶ γεγονόσι.

Ver. 15. *Alſo he ſaid, Bring the Veil that thou haſt upon thee, and hold it.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Mitpacath* is variouſly interpreted, it ſignifying any kind of Covering. The LXX tranſlate it περίζωμα, by which they ſeem to have meant that which we call an *Apron*, or a *Kirtle*, which is bound about one. The *Vulgar*, *Pallium*; but it is by us moſt properly render'd *a Veil*; which modeſt Women were wont to throw over their Heads, to cover their Faces.

And when ſhe held it, he meaſured ſix Meaſures of Barley, and laid it on her.] He would not let her go away without ſome Token of his Love to her; and nothing was more ready at hand in the Threſhing-Floor, than the Corn that lay there. It is not certain how much this *Meaſure* contained, but, no doubt, in the whole, he gave her as much as ſhe could well carry; and was ſo kind alſo, as himſelf to lay it upon her Shoulder. Some fancy that this Load was too heavy for her, but Barley is far lighter than Wheat: And the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt here ſaith, *Strength was given her from before the Lord to bear it.* And then adds, *Immediately there was a Prophecy that from her ſhould proceed ſix Righteous Perſons*; each of which ſhould be bleſſed with *ſix Benedictions*, David, Daniel, *his three Companions, and the King* Meſſiah.

And ſhe went into the City.] The *Chaldee* ſaith, *Boaz went* into the City; and the *Hebrew* favours this Interpretation. For the Word for *went* is in the Maſculine Gender, as in the next Words it is in the Feminine.

Ver. 16. *And when ſhe came to her Mother-in-Law, ſhe ſaid, Who art thou, my Daughter?*] It was ſo early in the Morning when ſhe returned home, that *Naomi* could not well diſcern who it was that deſired the Gate might be opened; but perceived it was a Woman, whom ſhe calls her Daughter, as they uſed to do in Civility, it appears by *Boaz* his Language, *ver.* 10. But the *Vulgar* takes it quite otherwiſe, that ſhe aſked her, *What haſt thou done, my Daughter?* That is, How haſt thou ſucceeded? And indeed, the Anſwer favours this; and the *Hebrew* Words will bear it, if *mi* be interpreted not *who*, but *what*.

And ſhe told her all that the Man had done to her.] How kindly he had treated her; and what Promiſes he had made her.

Ver. 17. *And ſhe ſaid, theſe ſix Meaſures of Barley gave he me.*] Then ſhe ſhewed her the Preſent he made her.

For he ſaid to me, Go not empty unto thy Mother-in-Law.] Without ſome Token of my Affection. Some imagine Barley (which is not ſo valuable with us as Wheat) was too mean a thing to beſtow upon her. But they do not conſider, that in thoſe Countries it was a better ſort of Corn than it is in theſe parts of the World; for Bread was commonly made of it, and that not only by the Poor, but the better ſort: Of which we find Examples, both in the Old Teſtament and the New. See 2 *Sam.* xvii. 28. 2 *Kings* iv. 42. And in the Goſpel we read of Barley-loaves, wherewith Chriſt fed the Multitude; particularly, *John* vi. 9. And indeed, *Pliny* ſaith this was the moſt ancient Food. *Antiquiſſimum in cibis Hordeum*, Lib. 18. *Nat. Hiſt.* Cap. 7.

Ver. 18. *Then ſaid ſhe, Sit ſtill my Daughter.*] She bids her trouble herſelf no farther, for ſhe had done enough.

Until thou know how the Matter will fall.] But wait and expect till ſhe ſaw the Iſſue: Which the *Targum* expreſſes piouſly, in this manner, *Till thou knoweſt how this matter will be determined from Heaven, and wonderfully diſpoſed.*

For the Man will not be in Reſt, till he have finiſhed the thing this day.] She knew him ſo well to be a Man of his Word, that he would immediately go about the Buſineſs, according to his Promiſe, *ver.* 14.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *THEN went* Boaz *up to the Gate.*] Where there was a great Concourſe of People; and where the Judges ſat. So the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt, *He went to the Gate of the Houſe of Judgment, where the Sanhedrim ſat.* See my Note upon *Deut.* xvi. 18.

And ſat him down there.] Among the Elders, as the forenamed *Paraphraſt* will have it: But that is not likely, for he called the other Kinſman to come and ſit down by him.

And behold, the Kinſman of whom Boaz *ſpake, came by.*] See iii. 12.

Unto whom he ſaid, Ho, ſuch an one, turn aſide, ſit down here.] When they could not think of a Man's Name, or did not think fit to name it, they uſed theſe Words, *Peloni Almoni*; which *Daniel* contracts into one Word, *Palmoni*, viii. 13. and is the ſame with the *Greek* ὁδεῖνα.

And he turned aſide, and ſat down.] Suppoſing *Boaz* had ſome Buſineſs with him, he did not go on his way, but turned aſide to ſpeak with him. This was about Noon, (as *Joſephus* ſaith) when greater Multitudes were wont to be aſſembled in ſuch publick Places, than at other times of the day.

Ver. 2. *And he took ten Men.*] He would have a ſufficient Number of Witneſſes of what he did; which, as *Maimonides* obſerves, was very neceſſary in the Eſpouſal of a Perſon to one's Wife. For, ſaith he, if it had been enough to do it privately, many would have taken an Harlot into their Houſes for a time, and pretend ſhe was their Wife; therefore it was ordained, that after any Man had eſpouſed a Woman, he ſhould marry her publickly, after the Example of *Boaz*, of whom we read *he took ten Men*, &c. *More Nevochim*, Pars 3. Cap. 49.

Of the Elders of the City.] How many Elders there were in every City, is not certain; inſomuch that *Bertram* conjectures, there was as many as there were Captains of Thouſands, of Hundreds, Fifties and Tens, in every City. *Joſephus* indeed ſaith, there were *ſeven*, L. 4. *Antiq.* Cap. 6. which perhaps was the determinate Number in his Time. But anciently, one would think there were more, becauſe here *Boaz* mentions *ten Elders* (who were the ſame with *Judges*) in the City of *Bethlehem*, which made *Bertram* (*de Republ. Judaica*, Cap. 9.) the more confident, that as the Captains of Thouſands, &c. in every City, were the Elders of that City, ſo there were as many in every City, of the one, as of the other. As for what the *Talmudiſts* ſay, That there were *three* Judges in Pecuniary Cauſes, and *three and twenty* in Capital, it muſt belong, if it be true, to later times.

And ſaid, Sit you down here. And they ſat down.] To hear the Cauſe he intended to bring before them.

Ver. 3. *And he ſaid unto the Kinſman*, Naomi *that is come out of the Country of* Moab, *ſelleth a Parcel of Land, which was our Brother Elimelech's.*] He calls him their *Brother*, becauſe he was near of kin to them. And he mentions *Naomi*'s Return out of the Country of *Moab*, to intimate, that her Poverty conſtrained her to ſell her Eſtate, which her Huſband left her. That Intereſt ſhe might part withal, to ſupply her Neceſſities, but it could not take away the Right of Redemption; for as Mr. *Selden* obſerves in his Book *de Succeſſionibus*, Cap. 16. both *Elimelech* the Father, and *Mahlon* the Son, (unto both which *Boaz* was of kin) gave this Patrimony to their Wives before they died: (For otherwiſe they could not have had the Poſſeſſion of it.) Or rather, the former gave his Intereſt to *Naomi*, and the latter his to *Ruth*; which, how it was done, *Maimonides* ſhews in his Treatiſe *de Donationibus*, Cap. 6.

Ver. 4. *And I thought to advertiſe thee of it, ſaying, Buy it before the Inhabitants, and before the Elders of my People.*] Before thoſe that ſat in the Gate of the Houſe of Judgment, and before theſe Elders, as the *Targum* expounds it; that is, the ten Elders before-mentioned, that the Bargain might be firmly made, and the Eſtate legally paſſed over to him.

If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it; but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know.] That is, underſtand thy Mind in this Matter.

For there is none to redeem it beſides thee, and I am after thee.] That is, no other Kinſman remaining of that Family, but they Two.

And he ſaid, I will redeem it.] For it is likely, it lay convenient for him.

Ver. 5. *Then ſaid* Boaz, *what Day thou buyeſt the Field of the Hand of* Naomi, *thou muſt buy it alſo of* Ruth *the* Moabiteſs, *the Wife of the Dead.*] For they both had an Intereſt in it; but *Boaz* prudently conceals the Name of *Ruth*, till he had conſented to buy the Land, and then tells him whom he muſt take along with it.

To raiſe up the Name of the Dead upon his Inheritance.] According to the Law mentioned *Deut.* xxv. 5, &c. as it is commonly interpreted. But it was rather, in Mr. *Selden*'s Opinion, the fulfilling of the Law mentioned *Levit.* xxv. 24, 25. Lib. *de Succeſſionibus ad Leges Hebr.* Cap. 15. Where he obſerves, that this Phraſe, *To raiſe up the Name of the Dead*, (which is mentioned alſo, *ver.* 10.) is quite different from that mentioned in *Deuteronomy*; being no more, as *R. Solomon* notes, (upon iii. 9.) than if he had ſaid, That the Name of *her dead Huſband may be had in remembrance*; *ſo that when ſhe came into that Field, Men might ſay, This is the Wife of* Mahlon. There is a long Diſcourſe alſo in *Abarbinel*, upon *Deut.* xxv. to prove that this doth not belong to that Law of a Man's raiſing up Seed to his Brother. See *Buxtorf, de Sponſal. & Divortiis*, Sect. 27. But if it do, *Grotius* thinks that Law only obliged ὁμοπάτριοι, Brethren by the ſame Father, to marry the Brother's Widow; but Cuſtom in proceſs of Time obliged the next of kin to do it. See upon *Matth.* xxii. 24.

Ver. 6. *And the Kinſman ſaid, I cannot redeem it for myſelf, leſt I marr my own Inheritance.*] He had a Wife and Children already, which made him afraid to marry a poor Woman with a ſmall Parcel of Land, which would not provide for the Children he might have by her, without diminiſhing his own Inheritance, of which he was poſſeſſed. To which the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt adds, That it might have made great Contentions in his Family: For thus he makes him ſpeak, *I cannot redeem it*, (viz. *on that Condition*) *for I have a Wife already*; *and it is not fit for me to bring another into my Houſe, for fear Brawling and Quarrelling ariſe in it, and leſt I hurt my own Inheritance.* In like manner the *Midraſch*, upon this Book, makes him diſcourſe. But *Raſi* interprets the Words, as if the Meaning was, That he *ſhould bring a Blot upon his Poſterity*, by marrying a *Moabitiſh* Woman (which he thought was forbidden by the Law) for Children are called an Heritage, *Pſal.* cxxvii. 3. But in this he acknowledges the Man was miſtaken, as many of their ancient Doctors were, for the Law did not forbid the marrying a Woman of that Country. But the plaineſt Senſe is, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, That many Inconveniencies might ariſe in his Family by this Marriage, not only by the Diſagreement of his Wives, but by the Difficulty of providing for ſo many Children as ſhe might bring him, and of giving them

them good Education, and by diſtracting his Inheritance, and ſuch like things; which he prudently conſidered, as good Reaſons of his Refuſal. See *Lib.* 1. *Uxor Hebr.* Cap. 9.

Redeem thou my Right to thyſelf, for I cannot redeem it.] Which is thus paraphraſed by the *Targum*, *Do thou therefore redeem it, becauſe thou haſt no Wife, which hinders me from redeeming.*

Ver. 7. *Now this was the manner in former times in Iſrael, concerning Redeeming, and concerning Changing.*] There was no Law, that we can find, about the following Rite, but only Cuſtom which had long prevailed; when Men redeemed Lands that had been alienated, or gave poſſeſſion of them to another Perſon.

For to confirm all Things.] To make the Bargain valid.

A Man plucked off his Shoe, and gave it to his Neighbour; and this was a Teſtimony in Iſrael.] A ſufficient Evidence, that he transferred all his Right unto that Perſon to whom he delivered his Shoe. It is not eaſy to give an Account of the Original of this Cuſtom; but the Reaſon of it is plain enough, it being a natural Signification that he reſigned his Intereſt in the Land, by giving him his Shoe, wherewith he uſed to walk in it, to the end that he might enter into it, and take poſſeſſion of it himſelf.

The *Targum*, inſtead of *his Shoe*, hath the *Right-hand Glove*; it being the Cuſtom, perhaps, in his Time, to give that in room of the Shoe. For it is leſs troubleſome to pull off a Glove than a Shoe, and deliver it to another, though it hath the ſame Signification; as now the *Jews* deliver an *Handkerchief* to the ſame purpoſe. So *R. Solomon Jarchi* affirms, *We acquire, or buy now by an Handkerchief, or Veil, inſtead of a Shoe.*

Ver. 8. *Therefore the Kinſman ſaid unto* Boaz, *Buy it for thee.*] After the accuſtomed Manner.

So he drew off his Shoe.] And gave it to *Boaz*, in token that he parted with all his Right to him. The *Jewiſh* Doctors indeed, differ very much about this Matter; for ſome ſay, He that parted with his Right to redeem the Land, pulled off his Shoe, and gave it to him that bought it; but others, that he who bought it, gave his Shoe to him that ſold it. The truth is, the Text may be either way underſtood, but it ſeems to be moſt reaſonable to think, that he who parted with his Right, parted with his Shoe alſo. See *Selden Lib.* 6. *de Jure Nat. & Gent. juxta Diſciplin. Hebr.* Cap. 5. where he obſerves again, how different this was from the Rites uſed, when one renounced his Brother's Wife. And *Abarbinel* looks upon this as a Demonſtration, that the plucking off the Shoe here mentioned, is not the ſame with that in *Deut.* xxv. For *Ruth* doth not here appear to looſe his Shoe, (as the Brother's Wife is there ordered to do, *ver.* 9.) much leſs did ſhe come to ſpit in his Face; of which there is not one Word in this Ceremony; which he ſhews wholly belongs to the Sale of Lands, or to their Redemption, and bringing them back again into the Family to which they belonged. This appears from the following Words, where Mention is made of nothing but of a Purchaſe of *Elimelech*'s Eſtate.

Ver. 9. *And Boaz ſaid unto the Elders, and to all the People, Ye are Witneſſes this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's, and Mahlon's, of the Hand of Naomi.*] She had the firſt Right in the Land after the Death of her Huſband, and her two Sons after her; which ſhe entirely parted withal by this Contract unto *Boaz*, to whom the other Kinſman had paſſed over his Right of Redemption, by the political Ceremony of plucking off the Shoe.

Ver. 10. *Mercover, Ruth the Moabiteſs, the Wife of Mahlon, have I purchaſed to be my Wife.*] He had her by the Right of the ſame Purchaſe, and did not ſucceed into the Right of a Brother, mentioned in *Deut.* xxv. for he was not Brother to *Elimelech*, but only a remote Kinſman of the ſame Family, as *Abarbinel* there obſerves, who could not enjoy the Land while ſhe lived, unleſs he would take her with it; to whom it belonged as long as ſhe lived, and was to go to her Iſſue when ſhe died.

To raiſe up the Name of the Dead upon his Inheritance.] That the Parcel of Land which he bought, might ſtill be called by the Name of *Mahlon*, whoſe Wife *Boaz* married.

That the Name of the Dead be not cut off from his Brethren, and from the Gate of his Place.] That his Name hereby might be remembred, not only in his own Family, but in all the City of *Bethlehem*; for by *the Gate of his Place*, is meant all the People that entred in at the Gate.

Ye are Witneſſes this Day.] Both that he bought the Land, and *Ruth* together with it, at ſuch a time.

Ver. 11. *And all the People that were in the Gate, and the Elders ſaid, We are Witneſſes.*] After this open Declaration, there was no need of any Inſtrument in Writing to confirm the Purchaſe.

The LORD make the Woman that is come into thy Houſe, like Rachel, and like Leah.] Such a ſolemn Benediction of thoſe who were going to be married, was very ancient, as we learn from *Gen.* xxiv. 60. and the *Jews* continue it to this day, which they ſay, was always in the Preſence of *ten* grave Perſons, at the leaſt, (as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, *Lib.* 2. *Uxor. Hebr.* Cap. 12.) conformable to this Example of *Boaz*, *ver.* 2. and the Eldeſt of them pronounced the Benediction, which was a Ratification of what was agreed: So our Mr. *Thorndike* excellently obſerves, That the Benediction, which we Chriſtians uſe in Marriage, is a Sign of the Allowance of the Church pre-ſuppoſed, as this Benediction of *Boaz* and *Ruth* pre-ſuppoſeth the Act to be allowed by the Elders, or Conſiſtory, who ſat in the Gate of *Bethlehem*. See *Rights of the Church in a Chriſtian State*, p. 241. In the *Review* of which he obſerves, That this ſeems to be confirmed by the Opinion of *Epiphanius*, who ſaith, Our Lord was invited to the Marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee*, that, as a Prophet, he might bleſs the

the Marriage; which, it is certain, the Church hath always practiſed, to ſignify, that the Marriage was approved to be made according to the Laws of God. And therefore *Conradus Pellicanus* (an eminent Man at the Beginning of the Reformation) here well notes, That *Prayers and Benedictions are never to be omitted in Marriage*.

Like Rachel and Leah.] That is, very fruitful.

Which two did build up the Houſe of Iſrael.] Were bleſſed with a numerous Poſterity. They do not mention the two Handmaids, becauſe theſe were *Jacob*'s principal Wives (and *Rachel* choſen firſt, as ſhe is here placed) whoſe Servants bare Children, not for themſelves, but their Miſtreſſes. See *Gen.* xxx. 3.

And do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem.] Theſe two are but different Names of the ſame Place, where *Boaz* and *Ruth* alſo lived, who ſeems now to have been preſent, as *Joſephus* repreſents her, and who they prayed might be a great Example of all Virtue in that City.

Ver. 12. *And let thy Houſe be like the Houſe of Pharez, (whom Tamar bare unto Judah) of the Seed which the LORD ſhall give thee of this young Woman.*] Both *Boaz*, and all the *Bethlehemites*, derived their Original from *Pharez*, whoſe Family was very illuſtrious in *Iſrael*; and therefore they could not have wiſhed *Boaz* a greater Bleſſing, than to have as noble an Iſſue as he was to *Judah*.

Ver. 13. *So Boaz took Ruth.*] Carried her home to his own Houſe, with all the Solemnity, it is likely, which was uſual in ſuch caſes.

And ſhe was his Wife.] And all other Rites, which were obſerved in thoſe days, being performed, they were compleatly made Man and Wife.

And when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her Conception, and ſhe bare a Son.] A Year after their Marriage, as *Joſephus* ſaith.

Ver. 14. *And the Women ſaid unto Naomi.*] After *Ruth*'s Delivery.

Bleſſed be the LORD who hath not left thee this day without a Kinſman.] The *Hebrew* Name of *Goel* (which we tranſlate *Kinſman*) properly belonged to *Boaz*, and not to his Son, who was now born: And yet the Child ſeems to be here meant, which made the *Arabick* Tranſlator render it, *Hath not left thee without an Heir*, who being to ſucceed his Father, what he had done, might be aſcribed to his Son.

That his Name may be famous in Iſrael.] They hoped God would make him an eminent Perſon among them.

Ver. 15. *And he ſhall be unto thee a Reſtorer of thy Life.*] Such a Comfort, as to make her, in ſome ſort, young again.

And a Nouriſher of thine old Age.] And in old Age, take care of her, and ſupport her.

For thy Daughter-in-Law which loveth thee, which is better to thee than ſeven Sons, hath borne him.] For they hoped he would inherit his Mother's Virtues, and particularly her Affection to *Naomi*, which was ſo ſurpaſſing, that it made her a greater Bleſſing to her, than a great many Sons of her own Body would have been; for they would ſcarce have been able, out of ſo ſmall a Fortune, to maintain themſelves, whereas this being the Son of a rich Father, could afford her alſo a plentiful Maintenance.

Ver. 16. *And Naomi took the Child, and laid it in her own Boſom, and became Nurſe unto it.*] Brought it up with a moſt tender Affection, for his Mother gave him ſuck; and then *Naomi* took him from her, and educated him as her own Child.

Ver. 17. *And the Women, her Neighbours, gave it a Name.*] It did not belong to the Neighbours, but to the Father, or Mother, to name the Child; but they adviſed *Naomi* to call it by a Name ſuitable to their foregoing Diſcourſe. See *Luke* i. 39, *&c.*

Saying, There is a Son born unto Naomi.] Unto whom they had promiſed ſuch great Comfort from this Child, that it moved them to deſire it might have the following Name.

And they called his Name Obed.] That is, one who ſhould be very ſerviceable unto her; for *Obed* ſignifies δελεύων, *a Servant*, as *Joſephus* interprets it. By which Name, ſaith he, *Naomi* called the Child κατάσυμβελείαν γυναικῶν, by the Advice and Counſel of the Women, ἐπὶ γηροκομίᾳ αὐτῆς τραφησάμενον, as one appointed to take care of her in her old Age. The *Targum* thus paraphraſes upon this Name, *Who ſerved the LORD of the World with a perfect Heart*; a piece of which Service conſiſted in giving due Honour unto Parents. Some make it a Queſtion, why this Child was not called *Mahlon*, according to the Law which ſeems to require it? But this hath been anſwered already, that what *Boaz* did, was not in Obedience to the Law in *Deut.* xxv. for he was not the Brother of *Mahlon* (in which caſe the Child muſt have borne *Mahlon*'s Name) but only a remote Kinſman.

He is the Father of Jeſſe, the Father of David.] For whoſe ſake this whole Book ſeems to have been written, that it might be certainly known from whom he was deſcended, the *Meſſiah* being to ſpring from him; which is the Reaſon why the following Genealogy is annexed for the Concluſion of this Book.

Ver. 18. *Now theſe are the Generations of Pharez.*] He begins no higher, becauſe every one knew that *Pharez* was the Grandſon of *Jacob*, and he the Son of *Iſaac*, &c.

Pharez begat Hezron.] In the Land of *Canaan*, before they went down into *Egypt*, as we read *Gen.* xlvi. 12.

Ver. 19. *And Hezron begat Ram.*] So he is called in 1 *Chron.* ii. 6. but in the *New Teſtament*, *Aram*, *Matt.* i. 3. *Luke* iii. 33.

And Ram begat Amminadab.] Theſe two were born in the Land of *Egypt*, where *Amminadab* alſo begat *Nahſhon*.

Ver. 20. *And Amminadab begat Nahſhon.*] Who was *Prince of the Children of Judah*, when they came out of *Egypt*, as the Author of the Book of *Chronicles* obſerves, 1 *Chr.* ii. 10. which is confirmed by *Moſes* in his Words, *Numb.* i. 7. ii. 3. vii. 12. x. 14. where we find, that in the ſecond Year after their coming out of *Egypt*, he was the principal Perſon in his Tribe.

And

And Nahſhon begat Salmon.] Who was born in the Wilderneſs, in all probability, and was called alſo *Salma*, 1 *Chron.* ii. 11.

Ver. 21. *And Salmon begat Boaz.*] Of *Rahab*, whom he took to be his Wife after the taking of *Jericho*, *Matth.* i. 5.

And Boaz begat Obed.] Here the *Targum* makes *Boaz* the ſame with *Ibzan*, *Judges* xii. 8. (which is altogether improbable) in whoſe days he ſaith the Famine, ſpoken of in this Book, happened; from which they were delivered by the Prayers of *Boaz*.

Ver. 22. *And Obed begat Jeſſe.*] Who was alſo called *Nahaſh*, as ſome think, and is expreſly affirmed by the *Targum*, becauſe *Zeruiah* and *Abigail* are ſaid to be *David*'s Siſters, 1 *Chron.* ii. 16. And *Abigail* is ſaid to be the Daughter of *Nahaſh*, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 25. But *David*'s Mother, perhaps, had a former Huſband, whoſe Name was *Nahaſh*, by whom ſhe had theſe Daughters.

And Jeſſe begat David.] Unto whoſe Time there being but *four* Generations; and *Salmon*, the firſt of the four married *Rahab*, after their Entrance into *Canaan*; from thence, to the *fourth* Year of King *Solomon*, there being four hundred and forty Years (as appears from 1 *Kings* vi. 2.) it muſt neceſſarily follow, that unleſs we ſuppoſe ſome other coming between, (for which we have no good Warrant) theſe four Perſons, *Salmon*, *Boaz*, *Obed*, and *Jeſſe*, begat a Child in their Old Age. And, indeed, *Boaz* ſuppoſes himſelf to be no young Man, when he ſpake theſe Words to *Ruth*, iii. 10. And *Jeſſe* was counted an old Man, when *David* his Son was a Youth, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 12. And therefore, that Account which Primate *Uſher* hath given of this Matter, in his *Chronologia Sacra*, Pars 1. Cap. 12. ſeems very reaſonable, that taking out of that Number of four hundred and forty, the ſeventy Years that *David* lived, and the four firſt Years of *Solomon*'s Reign; then from their coming into the Land of *Canaan*, to the Nativity of *David*, there remain three hundred ſixty and ſix, as *Aben Ezra* obſerves in the Concluſion of this Book. Now theſe Years may be thus commodiouſly diſtributed, if we ſuppoſe *Rahab* to have borne *Boaz* in the Forty-ſecond Year after they entered *Canaan*; and if we aſſign an Hundred and two Years before he begat *Obed*; and an Hundred and eleven to *Obed*, before he begat *Jeſſe*; and as many to *Jeſſe* before he begat *David*; which made the juſt Sum of *Three hundred ſixty and ſix*. And this is nothing ſtrange; for long after this time, we read of very Old Men, who might be capable to beget Children at the Age now mentioned; particularly *Jehoiadah* the High-Prieſt who lived an hundred and thirty Years, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 15. And in our Days, *Thomas Parr* lived an hundred and fifty-two Years, and begat a Child when he was an hundred and five Years old, as the ſame *Primate* there obſerves, and produces a great many other Examples of Perſons who lived to a great Age, very vigorous. And, if we could believe the *Jewiſh* Doctors, they tell us in *Juthaſm*, that *Ruth* lived till the Time of *Solomon*, and ſat with *Bathſheba*, when he cauſed a Seat to be ſet for her at his Right Hand, 1 *Kings* ii. 19. I ſhall only add, that *Bonfrerius* hath largely confirmed this Opinion of theſe Perſons begetting the Children here mentioned in their Old Age, and confuted thoſe who explain this otherways, by ſuppoſing three *Boaz's*, and other Devices, in his Commentary upon the firſt Verſe of this Book. Only he (and *Serrarius* alſo, who before him was of the ſame mind) have made a different Diſtribution of the Three hundred ſixty-ſix Years before-mentioned, by ſuppoſing other Years of their Age, wherein theſe four Perſons begat their Sons; which is not at all material.

I ſhall end all with the *Targum*'s Paraphraſe on the laſt Words of this Book; which are, *Jeſſe begat David King of Iſrael.* Which ſome *Latin* Copies following, from thence Cardinal *Cajetan* concludes, this Book was written not only after the Birth of *David*, but after he was made King of *Iſrael*; that is, after he was anointed by *Samuel* to be King of *Iſrael*.

A COMMENTARY UPON THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

THE Two Books, which bear the Name of *Samuel*, are thought by the *Talmudiſts*, in *Baba Bathra*, to have been compoſed, in part, by himſelf, (that is, the firſt Twenty-four Chapters of the Firſt Book) and the reſt by *Gad* and *Nathan* the Prophets. And ſo *Procopius Gazæus* ſaith, that this Book is called by the *Syrians*, the *Prophecy of Samuel*. This Opinion the *Talmudiſts* found upon the 1 *Chron.* xxix. 29. where it is ſaid, *Now the Acts of David, firſt and laſt, behold they are written in the Book of Samuel the Seer, and in the Book of Nathan the Prophet, and in the Book of Gad the Seer.* By which Words it is evident, that *Samuel* did write a Book, and that it contained ſome of the Acts of *David*, which, it is very probable, are theſe that we read in this Book. Beſides which, there were two other Books, written by two other Prophets, who continued his Hiſtory to the End of his Life. It muſt be confeſſed indeed, that three diſtinct Books are mentioned in that Place of the *Chronicles*; and we cannot be ſure that we have in thoſe two Books all that was contained in thoſe three; but only an Extract of the Subſtance of them, which perhaps might be made by ſome following Prophet, and divided into two Books: Which were called by the Name of *Samuel*; becauſe he was the moſt eminent Perſon of the three, and his Acts are here recorded in the firſt place. Certain it is, this Work was extant before the Book of the *Kings* was written; for Mention is there made, of what we read in this Hiſtory, 1 *Kings* ii. 27. And in the Book of the *Chronicles* ſeveral things are repeated, which we find here, in the very ſame Words. It is highly probable alſo, that *Samuel* having undertaken to write the Hiſtory of the *Judges*, (to which as an Appendix he added the Book of *Ruth*) would not leave it imperfect: But added in this Book what concerned *Eli* and himſelf; who were the laſt Judges of that Nation.

See the Preface to the Book of *Judges*.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW there was a certain Man of Ramathaim-Zophim.*] Either he was born at this Place, or lived there (perhaps both) which is called *Ramah*, ver. 19. of this Chapter; and here *Ramathaim* (in the Dual Number, as the *Grammarians* ſpeak) becauſe it was built upon two Hills; which made it appear like a double City. The Title of *Zophim* ſeems to be added to it, becauſe it being an high Place, there was a *Watch-Tower* in it: Where, upon occaſion, Men were ſet to obſerve, who approached from all Parts round about. Or, as S. *Hierom*, and others think, becauſe here was a School of the Prophets; who were wont to ſeat themſelves in ſuch Places as were remote from Company, and fit for Contemplation. Which made *Elijah* and *Eliſha* frequent Mount *Carmel*. And thus the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe tranſlates theſe Words, *There was a Man of Ramathaim, a Diſciple of the Prophets.* Who in the Book of *Ezekiel* are called *Watch-men*: And from hence ſome think came the *Greek* Word Σκοπος: Which was the Title of Aſtronomers at the firſt; who from high Places contemplated the Stars.

Of Mount Ephraim.] This is added to diſtinguiſh this from other Places, which had the Name of *Ramah* in other Tribes: Particularly in that of *Benjamin*, *Joſh.* xviii. 25.

And his Name was Elkanah, the Son of Jeroham, the Son of Elihu, the Son of Tohu.] It appears by this Genealogy, that *Samuel* was a *Levite*, of the Family of the *Kohathites*; as we read 1 *Chron.* vi. 33, 34, *&c.* See Mr. *Selden* in his Book *de Succeſſion. in Pontif. L.* 1. *Cap.* 18. where he confutes thoſe who fancy *Samuel* was a Prieſt, yea, the High-Prieſt, as *Petavius* himſelf imagined.

The Son of Zuph, an Ephrathite.] *Ephrata* is the ſame with *Bethlehem*, which was in the Tribe of *Judah*. Therefore *Zuph* is not called an *Ephrathite*, becauſe he was deſcended from the *Bethlemites* (for he was a *Levite*) but becauſe he dwelt in that Place; as the *Levites* were diſperſed through all the Tribes. So Mr. *Selden* there ſpeaks (from the *Hebrew* Doctors, and the *Targum*) *Domicilii ratione, non ſanguinis*; he is called an *Ephrathite, on the account of his Habitation, not of his Blood.*

Ver. 2. *And he had two Wives, the Name of the one was Hannah, and the Name of the other Peninnah, &c.*] *Hannah* ſeems to have been his firſt Wife: Who proving barren, his earneſt Deſire of Children moved him to take another; as *Abraham* had by *Sarah*'s Conſent. Which was not in thoſe Times diſallowed by God: Who ſaith himſelf, that he had given to *David* many Wives, 2 *Sam.* xii. 8. which ſhews it was not then a Sin in them to have more than one. See *Grotius* in his Book *de Jure Belli & Pacis, Lib.* ii. *Cap.* 5. *Sect.* 9, 10.

Ver. 3. *And the Man went up out of his City.*] For though *Ramah* ſtood high, yet *Shiloh* ſtood higher: And he firſt went down the Hill from *Ramah*, before he could go up to the other.

Yearly to worſhip, and to ſacrifice to the LORD of Hoſts in Shiloh.] Where the Tabernacle now was, and where all Sacrifices were to be offered, and no where elſe. Hither all the People were bound to reſort, at the *three* great Feſtivals, (*Deut.* xvi. 16.) and not to appear before the LORD empty. Accordingly *Elkanah* not only *worſhipped* God, with Prayers and Thankſgivings; but *offered* ſuch Sacrifices as ſuitable to the Feſtival: And it is likely, preſented other Gifts, according to his Ability, as is there required, *ver.* 17.

And the two Sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, the Prieſts of the LORD, were there.] Ready to offer ſuch Sacrifices as were brought to the Altar. Whoſe Service *Elkanah* did not refuſe to uſe, becauſe they were notoriouſly prophane; But reverenced their Office, as ſtill *Prieſts of the LORD*; from whoſe impure Hands he vouchſafed to accept the Offerings of pious People.

Ver. 4. *And when the Time was that Elkanah offered.*] His Peace-Offerings which were wont to accompany others at the great Feſtivals. For inſtance, at the *Paſſover* they offered not only the Paſchal Lamb, but ſeveral other Sacrifices; as I noted upon *Deut.* xvi. 7. All the *ſeven* Days of unleavened Bread having peculiar Sacrifices belonging to them. See *Numb.* xxviii. And ſo there was on the *ſeven* Days of the Feaſt of Tabernacles, *Numb.* xxix. Now on ſome of theſe Days *Elkanah* offered ſuch Sacrifices as might make a Feaſt, for his Family and Friends, according to the Law, *Deut.* xii. 12.

He gave to Peninnah his Wife, and to all his Sons and Daughters.] The Males only were bound to appear before God at theſe Feſtivals; but devout Perſons were wont to bring their Wives alſo with them; and their Daughters as well as Sons; eſpecially when they dwelt ſo near the Houſe of God as *Elkanah* did; whoſe Habitation at *Ramah* was not above ſeven Miles from *Shiloh*. It doth not appear that there was any peculiar Court at the Tabernacle (as there was afterwards at the Temple) for the Women to worſhip in by themſelves; but they came in with their Huſbands, and performed their Duty cloſe to them.

Portions.] Of that Part of the Peace-Offerings, which belonged to him that offered them. Which was the whole; except the Fat which belonged to the LORD, and the Breaſt and Right Shoulder, which belonged to the Prieſt, *Levit.* vii. 34. With the reſt the Sacrificer made a Feaſt for himſelf, his Family, and Friends; giving to every one a Portion of the Sacrifice: Whereby they had Communion with the LORD, by partaking with him of his Sacrifice, which had been offered to him at his Altar.

Ver. 5. *But to Hannah he gave a worthy Portion.*] Or, a double Portion; in token of his extraordinary Reſpect and Kindneſs to her.

For he loved Hannah, but the LORD had ſhut up her Womb; or, *though the LORD*, &c.] Her Barrenneſs did not make him love her leſs, but rather more; becauſe he would ſupport and comfort her under that Affliction.

Ver. 6. *And her Adverſary alſo provoked her ſore; to make her fret, becauſe the LORD had ſhut*

ſhut up her Womb.] It added to her Affliction, that *Peninnah* ſet herſelf againſt her; and was wont to twit her with her Barrenneſs, ſaying, when her Huſband ſent her a more liberal Portion of the holy Things than ſhe received; Tho' he be ſo kind to you, yet you bring him no Children, as I do: which gave her great Vexation.

Ver. 7. *And as he did ſo Year by Year, when ſhe went up to the Houſe of the* LORD, *ſo ſhe provoked her.*] She conſtantly took this Occaſion to upbraid her with her Barrenneſs, when her Huſband expreſſed ſuch extraordinary Kindneſs to her.

Therefore ſhe wept, and did not eat.] Her Grief was ſo great, that it made her turn the Feſtival into a Faſt. So *Tertullian* underſtands it, who (in his Book *de Jejuniis*, Cap. vii.) ſaith, God rewarded her Faſting and Prayers with what ſhe deſired; vouchſafing, *Inanem cibo Ventrem Filio implere, & quidem Propheta*; To fill her Belly empty of Meat, with a Son, and he a Prophet.

Ver. 8. *Then ſaid Elkanah her Husband to her, Hannah, why weepeſt thou, and why eateſt thou not, and why is thy Heart grieved, am not I better to thee than ten Sons?*] In him we have an Example of a moſt excellent Huſband; who patiently tolerated the inſolent Humour of *Peninnah*; and comforted dejected *Hannah* with Words full of tender Affection. Which was truely in St. *Peter's* Language, to dwell with his Wives κατὰ γνῶσιν, *according to Knowledge*, as *Victorinus Strigelius* here obſerves. We cannot from the laſt Words of this Verſe conclude, (as ſome of the *Hebrew* Doctors do) that *Peninnah* had *ten Sons*, (which was not ſuch a Pleaſure to her, as the Affection he had for *Hannah* would have been) for they may ſignify, according to the common Language of holy Scripture, only a great many Sons.

Ver. 9. *And Hannah roſe up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk.*] The kind Words of *Elkanah* ſeem to have perſuaded her to eat and drink chearfully. In whom we have an Example of an excellent Wife; who, ſenſible of her Huſband's Kindneſs, endeavoured to pleaſe him, by complying with his Deſires, and avoiding all things that might be grievous to him.

Now Eli the Prieſt.] He was both the High-Prieſt, and alſo the Judge at this time of the *Iſraelites*; being born in the end of *Gideon*'s Judicature, and died in the middle of the *Philiſtines* Tyranny over the *Iſraelites*; twenty Years before the great Victory *Samuel* got over them at *Eben-ezer*, as Sir *John Marſham* computes, who rightly obſerves, that whenſoever his Judicature began (which is not recorded) it conſiſted only in hearing and judging Cauſes by his Pontifical Authority. For he wrought no Deliverance for *Iſrael*, that we read of: But was ſuch a Judge as *Samuel*'s Sons were, viii. 1. and as *Samuel* himſelf was, after *Saul* began to reign. When all the Days of his Life, he continued to go about the Country and do Juſtice; which he adminiſtred alſo when he came home, at his own Houſe, vii. 15, 17.

Sate upon a Seat by a Poſt.] The *Hebrew* Word is, *upon a Throne*; it being a Seat raiſed up to ſome Height, to make him conſpicuous to all that entered into the Houſe of God; where he ſat at the Door of it. The *Jews* in *Seder Olam*, and in *Jalkut*, have a Conceit, that *Eli* was this very Day, when *Hannah* came to pray, made Judge of *Iſrael*: So that from hence they date the beginning of his Judicature. But this is a weak Conjecture, built merely on this Phraſe, *Sat on his Seat*. Where, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, he ſat as the High-Prieſt, and not as a Judge. And this was no new thing, but according to Cuſtom, that he might preſerve good Order there; give his Advice to thoſe who had occaſion to conſult him; reſolve their Doubts, and give them his Bleſſing. And he thinks that *Samuel* was born *ten* Years or more, before the Judicature of *Eli*.

In the Temple of the LORD.] It is not unuſual to call the Tabernacle by the Name of a Temple: As the Temple, when it was built, is called a Tabernacle. See *Jer.* x. 20. *Lament.* ii. 6. Yet the *Talmudiſts*, from the *Hebrew* Word *Hachil* (which is here uſed) ſay, that when the Tabernacle was removed from *Gilgal* to *Shiloh*, the Sides of it were built of Stone, and cover'd at the top with Curtains, having no ſolid Roof. And from hence they fancy it is called *Beth*, the *Houſe of the* LORD, ver. 24. which *Maimonides* interprets *an Houſe of Stone*. But there is no certainty of this: For ſuch Words as theſe have a larger Senſe. And indeed we are taught as much by the 1 *Kings* iii. 2. where it is expreſly ſaid, that there was *no Houſe built unto the Name of the* LORD, 'till the Days of *Solomon*: And 2 *Sam.* vii. 6. where *Nathan* ſpeaks in God's Name to *David*, in theſe Words; *I have not dwelt in an Houſe ſince I came out of Egypt*. See *L'Empereur* in his Preface to *Codex Middoth*.

From the firſt Words of this Verſe, it appears that *Hannah* roſe up to go to the Temple at the time of the Evening Sacrifice, for it was after they had dined.

Ver. 10. *And ſhe was in Bitterneſs of Soul, and prayed unto the* LORD, *and wept ſore.*] Her Grief returned when ſhe was alone, and thought of her Barrenneſs; which made her pray with great Vehemence, and many Tears, for a Child.

Ver. 11. *And ſhe vowed a Vow.*] As was uſual, when they earneſtly longed to obtain what they ſought with Prayers and Tears.

And ſaid, O LORD, *if thou wilt indeed look upon the Afflictions of thy Handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thy Handmaid.*] Theſe are three various Expreſſions of the ſame thing: Whereby ſhe declares, tho' with great Humility, how much ſhe was concern'd, to obtain her Requeſt, of being delivered from her Barrenneſs: For that's the Meaning of looking upon her Affliction, and remembering her. See *Gen.* viii. 1. *Exod.* iii. 7, 16.

But wilt give unto thy Handmaid a Man-Child.] She thrice calls herſelf his *Handmaid*, out of a profound Senſe of her Meanneſs, and his Majeſty: And deſires a *Man-Child*, becauſe only ſuch could wait upon the LORD in the Service of the Tabernacle; as ſhe intended her Son ſhould do, if God beſtowed one upon her.

Then will I give unto the LORD *all the Days of my Life.*] The *Levites* were not bound to ſerve at the Tabernacle 'till they were *Twenty five* Years old; and not after they were *Fifty:* But ſhe devoted him to the Miniſtry there, from his Childhood, as long as he lived.

And there ſhall no Razor come upon his Head.] She vowed he would be a *Nazarite*; Part of whoſe Deſcription this is, *Numb.* vi. 5. And ſo the beſt of the *Jewiſh* Doctors interpret it; for the Expoſition of the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt is very forced: But from hence the Opinion of the *Talmudiſts* is confuted, who ſay (in the *Miſchna*, in the Title *Sota*, Cap. iii.) that a Man might devote his Child to be a *Nazarite*, before he was of Age; but a Woman could not. Nor doth any of them take notice of this Example of *Hannah*; which hath made ſome think, that poſſibly they look'd upon this as done by an extraordinary Motion, and therefore not to be a Rule to others; eſpecially ſince ſhe did it before her Child was born. See *Jo. Wagenſeil*, in his learned Notes upon that Book, *p.* 448.

Ver. 12. *And it came to paſs, that as ſhe continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her Mouth.*] The inward Anguiſh of her Soul, it is probable, made the Motions of her Mouth, and her Countenance, very different from what is uſual.

Ver. 13. *Now Hannah ſhe ſpake in her Heart; only her Lips moved, but her Voice was not heard: Therefore Eli thought ſhe had been drunk.*] Hearing her ſay nothing, but only ſeeing her Lips move a long time; with ſuch Geſtures, it is likely, of her Body, Hands, and Eyes, as argued a very great Commotion; he took her to be diſordered with the Wine ſhe had drunk liberally at the fore-named Feaſt. For it is apt to make one talk much; and the great Agony wherein ſhe was, might ſomething diſtort her Face.

Ver. 14. *And Eli ſaid unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy Wine from thee.*] He ſeems to bid her go to Bed and ſleep; and then come and pray to God.

Ver. 15. *And Hannah anſwered and ſaid, No, my Lord; I am a Woman of a ſorrowful Spirit, and have drunk neither Wine nor ſtrong Drink.*] Of the Difference between *Wine* and *ſtrong Drink*, ſee *Numb.* vi. 3, 5. Great Affliction of Spirit makes one diſtaſte Meat and Drink.

But have poured out my Soul before the LORD.] An uſual Expreſſion for ſincere and fervent Prayer.

Ver. 16. *Account not thy Handmaid for a Daughter of Belial.*] This is a Phraſe ſignifying the moſt lewd Perſons, that regarded neither God nor Men. See *Deut.* xiii. 13.

For out of the abundance of my Complaint and Grief have I ſpoken hitherto.] The Accuſation againſt her being very foul, ſhe purgeth herſelf from it very earneſtly; but in a modeſt manner, and with due Reſpect to the Office which *Eli* held in the Church.

Ver. 17. *And Eli anſwered and ſaid, Go in Peace; and the God of Heaven grant thee thy Petition that thou haſt aſked of him.*] Her ſober and reſpectful Anſwer convinced the old Man of his Error; and moved him to diſmiſs her with his Bleſſing, and a ſolemn Prayer to God, that he would grant her Requeſt.

Ver. 18. *And ſhe ſaid, Let thy Handmaid find Grace in thy ſight.*] For which ſhe returned him moſt humble Thanks; and deſired the Continuance of his Prayers.

So the Woman went her way and did eat, and her Countenance was no more ſad.] She departed from the Temple with ſuch Satisfaction, and Aſſurance, her own Prayers and his would be heard, that there remained no more any Token of Sorrow and Grief; but ſhe eat her Meat, and looked chearfully.

Ver. 19. *And they roſe up in the Morning early, and worſhipped before the* LORD; *and returned and came to their Houſe in Ramah.*] I ſuppoſe ſhe acquainted *Elkanah* with her Prayer, and with *Eli* his Bleſſing: And it is likely, that he now made a ſolemn Vow to God, if he would be pleaſed to fulfil her Petition. See *ver.* 21.

And Elkanah knew Hannah his Wife, and the LORD *remembred her.*] According to her Prayer, *ver.* 11.

Ver. 20. *And it came to paſs, when the time was come about, after Hannah conceived.*] The uſual time that Women go with Child, before they be delivered.

That ſhe bare a Son, and called his Name Samuel.] Sometimes Fathers, and ſometimes Mothers, gave the Name to their Children. See upon *Gen.* iv. 26.

Saying, Becauſe I have aſked him of the LORD.] This was the Reaſon of his Name: Which ſhe gave him, that he as well as ſhe might keep in mind the Intereſt God had in him; from whom ſhe obtained him, by ardent Prayers. For *Saul-meel* (which is contracted into *Samuel*) ſignifies *Aſk'd of God*, as we tranſlate this word in the Margin of our Bibles. He was born (as Sir *John Maſham* computes, with great Probability) in the time when the *Philiſtines* domineer'd over *Iſrael* for forty Years together, (ſee *Judges* x. 7. xiii. 1.) but in what Year cannot certainly be determined.

Ver. 21. *And the Man Elkanah, and all his Houſe, went up to offer unto the* LORD *the yearly Sacrifice.*] At the Feaſt of the Paſſover, or ſome other of the three great Feſtivals. He is a great Example of Piety; who carried his whole Family to worſhip God with him, at thoſe ſolemn Times which the Law enjoined.

And his Vow.] Which it is likely he made, either when he ſaw his Wife was with Child; or perhaps before, when ſhe told him what hope ſhe had her Prayer would be heard, and he worſhipped God, *ver.* 19.

Ver. 22. *But Hannah went not up; for ſhe ſaid unto her Husband, I will not go up 'till the Child be weaned; and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the* LORD, *and there abide for ever.*] She was not bound by the Law to go up with her Huſband: And therefore, tho' ſhe was wont to go, ſhe reſolved as became a prudent Woman to ſtay at home, 'till the Child was ſtrong enough, not only to accompany her, but to be left at the Houſe of the LORD, and be capable of being inſtructed in the Service of God.

Ver. 23. *And Elkanah her Husband ſaid unto her, do what ſeemeth thee good; tarry until thou haſt weaned him.*] Interpreters here note, the

ſwee

ſweet Agreement that ought to be (according to the Example of this happy Couple) between Huſband and Wife.

Only the LORD eſtabliſh his Word.] We do not read of any thing the LORD had ſpoken about this Child: Unleſs *Elkanah* look'd upon what *Eli* had ſaid, as ſpoken by God, becauſe he was God's High-Prieſt. Or the *Hebrew* Words may be tranſlated, *the LORD eſtabliſh his Work*, i. e. perfect what he hath begun, by making the Child grow till he was fit for his Service. For the Word *Dabar* ſignifies any *Matter* or *Thing* as well as *Word*.

So the Woman abode.] At home.

And gave the Child ſuck till ſhe weaned him.] She herſelf was his Nurſe, and ſuckled him, after the Example of *Sarah*. (See upon *Gen.* xxi. 7.) And, it is likely, continued to do ſo (out of her great Affection to him) ſeveral Years. Some think three; but it is not improbable *ſix* or *ſeven*, as *Lyra* conjectures. And ſo long I remember one to have ſuck'd, in the Place where I was born.

Ver. 24. *And when ſhe had weaned him, ſhe took him up with her, with three Bullocks, and one Ephah of Flour, and a Bottle of Wine.*] As they were not to appear before the LORD empty; ſo, upon this Occaſion, they brought an ample Offering to him; to teſtify their Gratitude to the Divine Majeſty. And it is highly probable, that one of theſe Bullocks was wholly offered to God, as a *Burnt-Offering*; and the other two were *Peace-offerings*; or, as ſome will have it, one a *Sin-offering*, and the other a *Peace-offering*. Which had a large Meaſure of Flour for a *Meat-offering*, and of Wine alſo attending it; that they might rejoice together before the LORD, when they feaſted with him upon the *Peace-offering*.

And brought him unto the Houſe of the LORD in Shiloh; and the Child was young.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *Hanaar-naar*, the Child was a Child, *i. e.* wholly at their diſpoſal.

Ver. 25. *And they ſlew the Bullock, and brought the Child to Eli.*] They firſt performed their Duty to God, by offering an whole Burnt-offering to him; reſerving the reſt, I ſuppoſe, till they had aquainted *Eli* with God's Goodneſs to them, that they might all rejoice together.

Ver. 26. *And ſhe ſaid, O my Lord, as thy Soul liveth, my Lord, I am the Woman that ſtood by thee here, praying unto the LORD.*] Many take theſe Words, *As thy Soul liveth*, for an Oath; whereby ſhe aſſures him, that as certain as he was alive, ſhe was the Perſon whom he ſaw in that Place praying, and took for a diſtemper'd Woman. But others (particularly *D. Kimchi*) think there is nothing of an Oath in them, they being only a Form of Well-wiſhing to him; as if ſhe ſaid, I wiſh thee a long Life, that thou may'ſt educate my Son.

Ver. 27. *For this Child I prayed, and the LORD hath given me my Petition which I aſked of him.*] She had told him nothing of what ſhe prayed for, when he reproved her; but only in general, that ſhe was extremely afflicted for want of ſomething, which ſhe earneſtly begg'd of God. But now ſhe acquaints him with it, and with her Vow ſhe made, if God granted her Deſire; which ſhe was now come to accompliſh.

Ver. 28. *And therefore alſo I have lent him unto the LORD.*] Or *reſtored* him to the LORD (as the *Targum* expounds it) from whoſe Gift ſhe received him.

As long as he liveth, he ſhall be lent unto the LORD.] Or as the Words may be tranſlated, *All the Days that he ſhall be deſired for the LORD.* That is, as long as God ſhould think fit to employ him in his own Houſe; which was till he made him a *Judge*, vii. 15. Then he was not fixed at *Shiloh*, but went about the Country to *Bethel*, and *Gilgal*, and *Miſpeh*; and then ſettled at his own Houſe in *Ramah*, as we read there, *ver.* 17.

And he worſhipped the LORD there.] This ſhews that *Elkanah* was with *Hannah*, and gave his Conſent to this Dedication of their Child, to ſuch Service as God ſhould think fit to employ him in: Which he humbly prayed God to accept.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Hannah prayed, and ſaid.*] Hymns are wont to be comprehended under the Name of *Prayers*, *Pſal.* lxxi. 20. to the Compoſition of which holy Souls were ſometimes raiſed by Divine Inſpiration, in their devout Meditations upon the extraordinary Goodneſs of God to them. And indeed, it was the moſt ancient way, as I have obſerved heretofore, of preſerving the Memory of Things to Poſterity: Poets being more ancient than Hiſtorians, or Orators, as *Lactantius* obſerves, *L.* vii. *Div. Inſtit. Cap.* 23. Nor were the *Weſtern* People leſs famous for this than the *Eaſtern*: The *Germans* for inſtance having their moſt ancient Annals in Verſe; as *Hermannus Conringius* hath ſhewn out of a great many Authors in his Preface to *Corn. Tacitus, de Germanorum Moribus*.

My Heart rejoiceth in the LORD.] She was acted by the ſame Spirit which moved S. *James* to give this Direction, *Chap.* v. *ver.* 13. *Is any afflicted, let him pray*, (as ſhe did, i. 10.) *is any merry, let him ſing Pſalms*, as ſhe now doth: For ſhe was lately extremely ſad and ſorrowful, and could not eat: But now by the Goodneſs of God, is filled with Joy; which made her burſt out into this Thankſgiving.

My Horn is exalted in the LORD.] She who was bowed down and dejected, now lifts up her Head and triumphs: For *exalting the Horn* ſignifies the Height of Glory.

My Mouth is enlarged over my Enemy.] She was now furniſhed with a full Anſwer to *Peninnah*, who upbraided her with her Sterility.

Becauſe I rejoice in thy Salvation.] All this Joy and Triumph aroſe from the Goodneſs of God to her; who had delivered her from the Reproach of Barrenneſs: Which raiſed her, as appears by the Sequel, to the Expectation of far greater things.

Ver. 2. *There is none holy as the LORD.*] The *Holineſs* of God ſignifies his peerleſs Perfections; as Mr. *Mede* hath ſhewn in many Parts of his Works. See *p.* 11.

For

For there is none beſides thee.] Which Perfections are peculiar to himſelf : For though the Scripture vouchſafeth ſometimes unto the Gentile *Dæmons*, the Name of *Gods*, yet it never calls them *Holy Ones*.

Neither is there any Rock like our Rock.] See upon *Deut.* xxxii. 31.

Ver. 3. *Talk no more ſo exceeding proudly.*] This was good Advice to *Peninnah*, and ſuch like Perſons ; not to inſult over others who are not ſo happy as themſelves.

Let not Arrogance come out of your Mouth.] Or, as the *Targum* interprets it, *forbear Reproaches*. For ſo the *Hebrew* Word *Atat* ſignifies, *hard Words*.

For the LORD is a God of Knowledge.] None knows what he intends, who perhaps will exalt thoſe who are now abaſed. Or, he knows how to bring to paſs ſuch things, as Men think to be impoſſible.

And by him Acts are weighed.] Or, *by him Works are prepared :* Even when there is no Diſpoſition in Nature to them.

Ver. 4. *The Bows of the mighty Men are broken, and they that ſtumbled, are girt with Strength.*] Now the great Senſe ſhe had of God's Power, branches out itſelf into an humble Acknowledgment of this glorious Attribute, in divers Inſtances. And *firſt*, in vanquiſhing the moſt Victorious : For *Bows* were a principal Part of Warriors Weapons, *Pſal.* xliv. 6. and their *Girdles* being a principal Part of the Military Habit, is elegantly tranſlated to ſignify Strength and warlike Proweſs. Whence *Virgil* calls feeble Perſons, unmeet for War, *diſcinctos*, *ungirt*, as *Servius* obſerves. See *Bochart* in *Canaan*, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 13. whence the Apoſtle, among the Spiritual Armour, exhorts the *Epheſians* to be *girt about with Truth*, *Epheſ.* vi. For to *gird* and to *arm*, to be *girt* and to be *armed*, are the ſame thing in *Greek* and *Latin* Authors. See alſo *Pſal.* xviii. 39. lxv. 6.

Ver. 5. *They that were full, have hired themſelves for Bread ; and they that were hungry, ceaſed.*] to complain of Hunger. This Viciſſitude of Human Affairs, eſpecially the ſudden Turns there are ſometimes from a great height of Proſperity to a very low Condition, and on the contrary, are very wonderful, and ſeriouſly to be pondered ; that no Man may be proud, nor any Man deſpair. The Inſtances of theſe in Hiſtory, are to be found in a great many Authors, beſides what our own Experience may furniſh us withal.

So that the Barren hath born ſeven.] That is, many Children. She reflects upon the great Change which God had made in her own Condition. And *Procopius Gazæus* notes, that here, *Hymno Prophetiam admiſcet* ; ſhe mingles Prophecy with her Hymn of Praiſe, and foretels the Fecundity of the Church : For the Number *Seven* denotes a Multitude.

And ſhe that hath many Children is waxen feeble.] The *Jews* fancy, that every time *Hannah* bare a Child, two of *Peninnah*'s Children died. But this ſeems rather to have a general Reſpect to thoſe that have been fertile, and grow barren when God pleaſeth.

Ver. 6. *The LORD killeth and maketh alive ; he bringeth down to the Grave, and bringeth up.*] The ſame thing is repeated in different Words ; and the Senſe is, the Power of Life and Death is in the hands of God : Whom he pleaſes he takes out of the World, and whom he pleaſes he continues in it ; raiſing Men up even from the Grave, when they were dropping into it. See *Deut.* xxxii. 39. *Pſal.* xxx. 3.

Ver. 7. *The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich ; he bringeth low, and raiſeth up.*] She acknowledgeth the Power and Wiſdom of God, in making Men of different Conditions ; ſome poor, and others rich ; yea, in making the ſame Men who were very poor, to become very rich ; and they who were mean and contemptible, become great and eminent. *Theodoret* treats excellently of the wiſe Providence of God, in not making Men all alike ; but ſome of a lower, ſome of an higher Rank : *Oration.* vi. againſt the Heathens.

Ver. 8. *He raiſeth the Poor out of the Duſt, and lifteth up the Beggar from the Dunghil ; to ſet them among Princes, and to make them inherit the Throne of Glory.*] Inſtances of this in the Holy Scriptures are *Joſeph* and *Daniel* ; the one a Priſoner, the other a Captive : But preferred to the higheſt Dignity, by the Kings of *Egypt* and *Babylon*. And in theſe later Ages, *Victorinus Strigelius* obſerves a memorable Inſtance of the Truth of theſe Words, in *Matthias Corvinus*, King of *Hungary* ; who was brought out of Priſon, and ſet on the Throne, not by Sedition, nor by Civil War ; but by the unanimous Conſent of all the Eſtates of the Realm, in grateful Memory of the Benefits they had received by his Father, the Great *Hunniades*.

For the Pillars of the Earth are the LORD's, and he hath ſet the World upon them.] Theſe Words contain the Reaſon of all that precedes in the five foregoing Verſes : For the very Earth being founded, upheld, and ſupported by the LORD, no wonder that all the Inhabiters of it are in his power, to diſpoſe of them as he thinks good.

Ver. 9. *He will keep the Feet of his Saints, and the Wicked ſhall be ſilent in Darkneſs.*] Pious Affections in thoſe Days roſe up, many times, to the Height of Prophecy : Whereby God continued in that Nation his true Relation, in the midſt of their idolatrous Inclinations. Accordingly here *Hannah* begins to predict the Deliverances of the *Iſraelites*, (who were God's *Holy Ones*, or *Saints*, by being peculiarly ſeparated to him and his Service) from the hand of the *Philiſtines*, and other Enemies : Who ſhe propheſies ſhould ſtumble and fall, as Men do in the Dark, when the *Iſraelites*, by God's Direction, ſucceeded in their Enterprizes.

For by Strength ſhall no Man prevail.] As appeared afterwards in *Goliah*.

Ver. 10. *The Adverſaries of the LORD ſhall be broken in pieces ; out of Heaven ſhall he thunder upon them.*] As he did literally when *Samuel* fought with the *Philiſtines*, vii. 10. and when *David* alſo vanquiſhed them, *Pſal.* xviii. 13. *Procopius Gazæus* applies this to the Aſſumption of Chriſt, with the Miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt, and the happy Succeſs of the Apoſtles Preaching, and to Chriſt's ſecond Coming.

The LORD ſhall judge the Ends of the Earth.] As he did when he ſubdued the *Philiſtines*, who

who lived in the Extremity of the Country of *Judea*, Westward: And now sorely oppressed the *Israelites*.

And he shall give Strength unto his King.] That is, to *David*. Of whom she prophesies; who was most properly God's King, whom he appointed in the room of *Saul*; who by his Disobedience forfeited his Kingdom, and was rejected by God.

And exalt the Horn of his Anointed.] God commanded *Saul* to be anointed by *Samuel*, x. 1. but it was upon Condition, which he not fulfilling, the same Person was commanded to anoint *David*, xv. 29. xvi. 1. Upon which the Spirit of the LORD departed from *Saul*, and rested on *David*, xvi. 13, 14. Whom God so wonderfully protected, that all the Subtlety and Power of *Saul* could not destroy him: And when he came to the Throne, God wonderfully *exalted him*, as she here speaks: By enlarging his Dominion very far, and making him such a glorious Prince *(higher than the Kings of the Earth)* that he was the most eminent Type of the great King of all, *our LORD Christ*, to whom these Words in the fullest Sense belong. 'For who doth not see, saith 'St. *Austin*, (in his xvii. Book, *de Civitate Dei*, 'Cap. iv.) that the Spirit of this Woman, '(whose Name was *Anna*, which signifies '*Grace*) propheſied of the Christian Religion, 'the City of God, whose King and Founder 'is Christ; and of the Grace of God, from 'which the Proud are estranged, that they 'may fall; but the Humble are filled with it, 'that they may rise: Which is the chief Import of this Hymn. And indeed this is the first time that the Name of *Messiah* (or *Anointed*) is found in Scripture: There being no such Word in all the foregoing Books of *Moses*, *Joshua*, the *Judges*, or *Ruth*. And therefore, it is the more to be remarked: This Propheteſs being the first that mentions the *MESSIAH*, in this Song: With which the Song of the blessed Virgin hath such a perfect Resemblance, that one cannot but think *Hannah* had a respect to something higher than the Quarrel between her and *Peninnah*, and the Son which God had given her, or the great Acts of *David*: For the Words are too magnificent to be confined to so low a Sense. And therefore *Kimchi* upon these Words ingenuously acknowledges, *the King here mentioned is the MESSIAH; of whom Hannah spake either by Prophecy or Tradition.* For there was a Tradition among them, that there should a great King arise in *Israel*: And she seals up this Song, with the Mention of that King, who should save them from all their Enemies.

It may be thus paraphrased.

1. *Great is the Goodness of God to me, which makes my Heart leap for Joy; great is the Honour he hath done me: So that my Mouth, which had nothing to answer when my Enemy upbraided me, now boasts of the Favour of God to me, who to my exceeding great Joy hath bestowed a Son upon me.*

2. *For the LORD is incomparable in all Perfections, which none have but himself alone: Whose Excellencies are so transcendent, that there is none in whom we can find so secure a Sanctuary in all our Troubles, as we have in him.*

3. *Do not vaunt and brag therefore any more on this fashion, nor speak contemptuously of others: For as nothing can be hid from him; so he knows how to bring to pass the strangest Things: Nor can any Man hinder, (let their Pride, and Confidence, and Power, be ever so great) but his Counsel shall stand.*

4. *The Strength of armed Forces is good for nothing, if not prospered by him: Who brings down those who were mighty Conquerors; and advances those who were their miserable Slaves.*

5. *The Rich have been seen to fall into such Decay, as to want their necessary Food: And poor starved Wretches have come to great Plenty. As likewise barren Women, as I, have had a numerous Off-spring, and they that had many Children lost them all.*

6. *No Man can keep himself alive, when God calls him away from hence: And he unexpectedly restores Men to Life, when they were in the very Jaws of Death.*

7. *It is according as he orders, that some Men are rich, others poor: And the very same Men who now are in a low Condition, he raises up to Greatness and Splendor; and on the contrary, abaseth those that walk in Pride.*

8. *They that are in the most sordid plight, he advances when he pleases, to the most glorious State: For what can hinder him from shaking the very Foundations of the Earth, and overturning all things; which are upheld and supported only by his Almighty Power?*

9. *The best way therefore is, by Piety, to secure the Favour of God; who by preserving all his faithful Servants from falling, will fill their Mouths with his Praises: But confound the Wicked, who now boast themselves, when with Amazement they are thrown down into a miserable Condition. For let not any Man be so vain as to imagine, that by his Strength he can maintain himself in his high Station; or keep down good Men from rising up to Glory.*

10. *They that oppose God shall be broken in pieces; he will strike a Terror into them, and make them fall flat before him. For it is he that is the Judge of the World; and there is no Corner of it where Men can hide themselves from his Sentence: He will advance the King whom he shall chuse, even the LORD Christ; and make him great in spite of all Opposers: Who shall not be able to hinder his Exaltation, or the Growth and Increase of his Kingdom.*

Ver. 11. *And Elkanah went to Ramah to his House.*] When the Festival was ended.

And the Child did minister unto the LORD.] As soon as he was capable.

Before Eli the Priest.] According as he appointed him.

Ver. 12. *Now the Sons of Eli were Sons of Belial.*] Very wicked Men (see *Deut.* xiii. 13.) being impious, covetous, guilty of Violence, and filthy Lusts.

They knew not the LORD.] They were not professed *Atheists*; but they minded not the Divine Service, nor took any care to do God honour; being ignorant (as *Kimchi* expounds it) of his Law.

Ver.

Ver. 13. *And the Prieſt's Cuſtom was, when any Man offered Sacrifice.*] Brought his Peace-Offerings to be offered at the Altar.

That the Prieſt's Servant came while the Fleſh was ſeething, with a Fleſh-hook of three Teeth in his Hand.] The Perſon who brought the Peace-Offerings having the largeſt Share in theſe Sacrifices, there were certain Rooms, when the Temple was built, both in the Court of the Women, and of the Men, wherein they had liberty to boil the Fleſh, in order to feaſt with God at his own Houſe: Which Chriſtians afterward imitated in their *Feaſts of Charity*. The like Rooms there were at the Tabernacle in the outward Court of it. See *L'Empereur*, in his *Annot.* upon *Codex Middoth*, *Cap.* 2. *Sect.* 6. *p.* 80, 81.

Ver. 14. *And he ſtruck it into the Pan, or Kettle, or Cauldron, or Pot.*] There were ſeveral ſorts of Veſſels for this Uſe; according as the Fleſh to be boiled was little or much.

All that the Fleſh-hook brought up, the Prieſt took for himſelf.] This was a new Cuſtom, which they prophanely introduced: For not content with the Right Shoulder, and the Breaſt, which were theirs by the Law, (*Levit.* vii. 32.) they would take what they pleaſed of the reſt, that belonged to the People: At leaſt, ſo much as a Fork with three Teeth brought up, when they ſtruck it into the Pot where the Fleſh was boiling.

So they did in Shiloh unto all the Iſraelites that came thither.] This aggravated their Crime, that they made a conſtant Practice of it: And did not only on ſome Occaſions commit ſuch Wickedneſs.

Ver. 15. *And before they burnt the Fat.*] Which entirely belonged unto God, *Levit.* ii. 16. vii. 23, 25.

The Prieſt's Servant came and ſaid to the Man that ſacrificed, Give Fleſh to roaſt for the Prieſt.] This was an high Contempt of God, to demand their Part before God had his. For the nobleſt Gueſts at Feaſts were always ſerved firſt.

For he will not have ſodden Fleſh of thee, but raw.] The Fleſh-hook did not always bring up the beſt; therefore as ſoon as the Sacrifice was cut up, they came and took the choiceſt Pieces.

Ver. 16. *And if any Man ſaid unto him, Let them not fail to burn the Fat preſently, and then take as much as thy Soul deſireth: Then he would anſwer; Nay, but thou ſhalt give it me now; if not, I will take it by Force.*] This argues the very Height of imperious Impiety, that ſuch ſubmiſſive Language ſhould not prevail with them, to have ſo much Reſpect to God, as to let him have his Portion in the firſt place: Though they offered the Prieſt more than his Share, after God was ſerved. None knows to what pitch of Wickedneſs a Man may arrive, when once the Senſe of God is extinguiſhed, and gone out of his Mind.

Ver. 17. *Wherefore the Sin of the young Men was very great before the* LORD.] Having many grievous Aggravations.

For Men abhorred the Offering of the LORD.] Nothing brings Religion ſo much into the Contempt of the People, as the open Prophaneneſs of thoſe who are the Miniſters of it.

Ver. 18. *But Samuel miniſtred before the* LORD, *being a Child.*] Though very young, yet he carefully performed ſuch Offices at the Tabernacle, as he was capable to diſcharge: And did not follow the bad Example of his Familiars and Domeſticks; as we may ſuppoſe *Hophni* and *Phineas* were.

Girded with a Linnen Ephod.] We do not read any where of any peculiar Garments appointed for the *Levites* in their Miniſtration; but only for the Prieſts; and this was none of them, as appears from *Exod.* xxviii. 40, 41. And therefore the *Ephod* which the Prieſts are ſaid to wear in Chap. xxii. of this Book, *ver.* 18. were quite different from the *Ephod* ordered in *Exod.* xxviii. for *Aaron* the High-Prieſt alone: Which had a curious Girdle belonging to it, and the Breaſt-plate with precious Stones inſeparable from it; and was wrought with Gold, and Blue and Purple, and Scarlet, *Exod.* xxviii. 6. But the *Ephod* which the Prieſts, or any other Perſons are ſaid to wear, is (for diſtinction ſake) always called *Ephod bad*, an *Ephod made of fine Linnen*: Which was not a Sacred, but an Honorary Veſtment, (as I may call it) being a ſhort Garment hanging upon the Shoulders, down to the middle of the Back; but without any Girdle or curious Work in it: which having ſome Likeneſs to that of the High-Prieſt's, was uſed by the inferior Prieſts, to make them more reſpected as ſpecial Miniſters of God; and by other great Perſons, upon ſome ſolemn Occaſion, as *David* did, 2 *Sam.* vi. 24. And *Eli* (ſeeing ſuch a great Appearance of God in him) ordered *Samuel* to do; though it was not a Habit appertaining to the *Levites*; much leſs to him who was not of Age, according to the exact Rules of the Law to ſerve in the Tabernacle. Thus *Kimchi* and *Ralbag* underſtand it. And the LXX, in 2 *Sam.* vi. 15. tranſlate it σολὴν ἑξαλλου, an *eximious Garment*. See *Jo. Braunius de Veſt. Sacerd.* L. 2. Cap. vi. p. 602.

It ſeems no improbable Conjecture of *Fortunatus Scacchus*, That from hence was derived the *Latus Clavus* among the *Romans*, which was a Veſtment proper to their *Senators* and *Preſidents*. It was firſt brought from the *Hetruſcans*, by *Tullus Hoſtilius*, when he conquer'd them: Whoſe ancient Language agrees ſo much with the *Hebrew*, that one may well think they had many things from them. See *Myrothec.* Cap. iii. 43.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, his Mother made him a little Coat, and brought it to him from Year to Year, when ſhe came up with her Husband to offer the yearly Sacrifice.*] The *Ephod* being uſed, I ſuppoſe, only in the Service of God, it was provided at the publick Charge. But for his ordinary wearing, *Hannah* took care, at her Charge, to provide him a Coat, and other things, it is likely, ſuitable to it; that ſhe might ſtill expreſs her Piety in contributing to his Maintenance at the Houſe of God. And it is very probable, that this little Coat was woven with her own Hands; as the ancient Traditions, that Chriſt's Seamleſs Coat was woven by the bleſſed Virgin. And ſo in *Joma* the Doctors ſay, (Cap. iii.) that a Prieſt might uſe a Garment

ment in his Miniſtry, which was made by his Mother. See *Braunius* L. i. Cap. xvii.

Ver. 20. *And Eli bleſſed Elkanah and Hannah his Wife, and ſaid, The* LORD *give thee ſeed of this woman, for the loan which is lent unto the* LORD.] He gave them this Benediction by a divine Suggeſtion; and thereby verified what ſhe utter'd in her Prophetical Song, *ver.* 5.

And they went to their own home.] Their Affection to their Son did not make them ſtay there, and neglect their Domeſtick Affairs.

Ver. 21. *And the* LORD *viſited Hannah, ſo that ſhe conceived and bare three ſons, and two Daughters.*] None are Loſers, by what they lend unto the LORD.

And the Child Samuel grew before the LORD.] Not only in Stature, but in Wiſdom alſo and Virtue: See *ver.* 26. Of ſo great moment it is to ſeaſon the Minds of Children early with a ſenſe of God and of Religion: Which is likely to continue with them, and improve, as they grow in Years.

Ver. 22. *Now Eli was very old.*] Which made him liſtleſs and unactive.

And heard all that his Sons did unto all Iſrael.] Yet wanted not Information of all the forementioned enormous Practices of his Sons.

And how they lay with the Women that aſſembled.] Whoſe Impiety and Luxury proceeded ſo far, as to move them to debauch thoſe Women who came to worſhip God. Of the word *aſſembled*, ſee *Exod.* xxviii. 8. Unto which may be added, that the *Hebrew* word *Tzaba* ſignifies not only a great many gathered together, but alſo a *Station*: That is, ſtated times of attendance, which devout Women obſerved for Faſting and Prayer. For that was their Buſineſs at the Temple; unto which they reſorted at certain Times for theſe ends.

At the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation.] Theſe words ſound as if they committed this Lewdneſs in the preſence of all the People. But ſuch Beſtiality would not have been ſuffered; and therefore this refers to their *aſſembling* at the Door of the Tabernacle: From whence they led them to ſome private Room about the Tabernacle, (as there were many afterward about the Temple) where they defiled them.

Ver. 23. *And he ſaid unto them, Why do you theſe things?*] Before mentioned, *ver.* 14, 15, 16, 22.

For I hear of your evil doings by all this people.] Their Wickedneſs was ſo notorious, that there was a general Complaint of it; which ſhould have moved him to greater Severity, than meerly to reprove and chide them with ſuch Gentleneſs and Lenity, as theſe and the following Words import. Which proceeded partly from the Coldneſs of Old Age; partly from his too great Indulgence to his Children; and partly (as *Corn. Benavent. Bertram* conjectures) from his being more intent upon the Defence of their Civil Liberties, than the reſtoring Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline.

Ver. 24. *Nay, my Sons, it is no good report that I hear; ye make the* LORD*'s people to tranſgreſs.*] By making them neglect and deſpiſe the Service of God, *ver.* 17. and tempting them to Lewdneſs, *ver.* 22. This is the Language of a tender *Father*, not of a zealous *Judge*; who ought to have paſſed a publick Cenſure upon them, for their publick Crimes, by turning them out of their Office, or ſome ſharp Puniſhment; which his Office gave him Authority and Power to inflict upon ſuch infamous Offenders.

Ver. 25. *If a man ſin againſt another, the Judge ſhall judge him: but if a man ſin againſt the* LORD, *who ſhall intreat for him?*] If one Neighbour do an Injury to another, the Buſineſs may be compoſed by the Judge; who interpoſing his Authority, either takes up the difference, or ſees the Perſon ſatisfied who was offended. But if one injure the Judge himſelf, (which was the preſent Caſe) who ſhall take the confidence to ſpeak in his behalf? Was it ever heard, that any one interceeded for a Man to his Prince, when he intended to kill the Prince himſelf? *Eli* argued well; but he ſhould not have referred their Puniſhment unto God, when it was in his power to puniſh them himſelf.

Notwithſtanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father; becauſe the LORD *would ſlay them.*] The words may be render'd out of the *Hebrew* *But they would not hearken to the voice of their father; therefore the* LORD *reſolved to ſlay them.*] But according to our Tranſlation, the Senſe is right enough: For when Men have long ſinned grievouſly againſt many Admonitions (which it may be ſuppoſed their Father had given them) whereby they became incurable; God deprives them of that prudent Conſideration and Diſcretion, which would ſave them from Deſtruction. So *Raſi* upon theſe words, *The Sentence of Judgment was already ſealed againſt them.*

Ver. 26. *And the Child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the* LORD *and with men.*] The words in the *Hebrew* are, *he went on*, or grew great and tall, and *was good*, that is, acceptable, *both to God and Men.* The meaning is, he made a great Progreſs in Wiſdom and Goodneſs, as well as increaſed in Stature: So that God was well pleaſed with him, and he was well eſteemed by the People. The ſame is ſaid of our Saviour, *Luke* ii. 52. where *Theophylact* thus gloſſes, Τετέστι, καὶ τῷ Θεῷ εὐάρεστα ἐπράττε, καὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐπαινετά; i. e. *He did thoſe things that were well-pleaſing to God, and were praiſed by Men.*

Ver. 27. *And there came a Man of God unto Eli.*] That is, a Prophet who was divinely inſpired, to deliver the following Meſſage to him. Some ſay this was *Phineas*, others *Elkanah*; without any ground.

And ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD.] This is the conſtant Language of Prophets.

Did I plainly appear.] In the *Hebrew*, *Manifeſtly reveal my ſelf.*

Unto the Houſe of thy Fathers.] Unto *Aaron*, who was the Head of the Family of Prieſts. See *Exod.* iv. 27.

When they were in Egypt, in Pharaoh's houſe?] In miſerable Bondage. As much as to ſay, Have I conferred ſuch Favours upon you, and do you thus requite me? It is the way of the Prophets, when they call Men to repentance, to aggravate their Sins by an enumeration of God's great

great Benefits unto them. See *Iſaiah* i. 2, &c. and *Micah* vi. 3, 4, 5.

Ver. 28. *And did I chuſe him out of all the Tribes of Iſrael, to be my Prieſt?*] The higheſt Dignity in the Nation.

To offer upon mine Altar, to burn incenſe, to wear an ephod before me.] Theſe were the ſeveral parts of the Prieſt's Office: And the laſt contains the greateſt of them all, which belonged only to the High Prieſt; who alone appeared before God to conſult him by *Urim* and *Thummim*, when he wore the Golden Ephod, with the Breaſt-plate annexed to it: For they were inſeparable, *Exod.* xxviii. 6, 12, 28.

And did I give unto the Houſe of thy Fathers, all the Offerings made by fire of the children of Iſrael?] There were none of the Sacrifices offered at the Altar, of which the Prieſt had not ſome Share, (ſee *Numb.* xviii. 8, 9, 10, &c.) For even of the Burnt-offerings, which were wholly conſumed on the Altar, the Skin was by an expreſs Law given to the Prieſt, *Lev.* vii. 8.

Ver. 29. *Wherefore kick ye at my Sacrifice, and at my Offerings which I have commanded in my Habitation?* As refractory Oxen were wont to do, when they were prick'd with a Goad, to ſtir them up to work at the Plough: Which ſignifies the higheſt Irreverence and Contempt of God's Authority. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. i. Lib. 2. Cap. xxix. latter end.

And honoureſt thy Sons above me, &c.] By ſuffering them to continue in the Prieſt's Office, and prophanely to feaſt themſelves with the beſt of the Sacrifices before God was ſerved.

Ver. 30. *Wherefore the LORD God of Iſrael ſaith, I ſaid indeed, that thy Houſe, and the Houſe of thy father, ſhould walk before me for ever; but now, ſaith the LORD, be it far from me.*] God revokes the Decree he had made in favour of him and his Family, of being High-Prieſts throughout all Generations. Which Office was firſt ſettled upon *Eleazar*, the eldeſt Son of *Aaron*, and upon his Poſterity, for the very ſame Promiſe is made to *Phineas* the Son of *Eleazar*, (*Numb.* xxv. 15.) which is here ſaid to be made to *Eli*, who was deſcended from *Ithamar*, the youngeſt Son of *Aaron*: Unto whom the High-Prieſthood was tranſlated from the Family of *Eleazar*, for ſome Sin or other: As now it was reſolved it ſhould be tranſlated back again from the Family of *Ithamar* to that of *Eleazar*; becauſe of the horrid Sins of the Sons of *Eli*. For what Cauſe *Phineas* or his Poſterity, (for there are various Opinions about the time) loſt the Prieſthood; and how they recovered it in the time of *David*: See Mr. *Selden* L. i. *de Succeſſ. ad Pontificat.* Cap. 2, 3. And *Conſtant. L'Empereur*, in his Annot. on *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 411. Some think, that after *Phineas*, thoſe three Perſons mentioned in 1 *Chron.* vi. 45. *Abiſhua*, *Bukki*, and *Uzzi*, ſucceeded in the Prieſthood; and then came in *Eli*: But of this there is no certainty. *Procopius Gazæus* here obſerves, that this Verſe, *Latenter totius Judaici Sacerdotii finem innuit*; doth ſecretly intimate the aboliſhing of the whole Jewiſh Prieſthood. For this Promiſe, ſaith he, *Thy Houſe and the Houſe of thy Father, ſhall walk before me for ever*; was not made to *Ithamar*, but to *Aaron*: And therefore he ſhews here what ſhould befall the whole Tribe. Such conditional Decrees are frequent in Scripture; particularly in *Jerem.* xviii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

For he that honoureth me, I will honour; and he that deſpiſeth me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed.] A remarkable Inſtance of which we have in the Records of the Chriſtian Church: For *Euſebius* tells us in the time of that Perſecution which he mentions in the Eighth Book of his *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, ſome of the Paſtors of the Church, who had not governed the Flock of Chriſt as they ought to have done, were condemned to be Keepers of Camels, and of the Emperor's Horſes, (a Puniſhment among the *Romans* in thoſe Days, as *Valeſius* obſerves) ἡ θεῖα κατακρίναϛα δίκη, &c. *The divine Juſtice judging them worthy of no better Employment.* Cap. xii. *de Martyribus Paleſtinæ.*

Ver. 31. *Behold the Days come, that I will cut off the Arm of thy Father's Houſe.*] Our Arm being the Inſtrument whereby we perform all things; this Threatning ſignifies, that not long hence God would utterly take away all Power and Authority from him, and from his Family; both as he was a Prieſt, and as he was a Judge.

That there ſhall not be an old man in thy Houſe.] But his Poſterity ſhall die, as it follows, *ver.* 33. *in the flower of their age*, which was accounted a great Judgment in that Nation. So *Menaſſah Ben Iſrael*, who obſerves in his Book *de Termino Vitæ*, p. 87. that the *Gemara* upon *Jebamoth* mentions a certain Family in *Jeruſalem*, none of which commonly lived above *eighteen* Years. Of which they enquiring the Reaſon of *R. Johanan Ben Zachæi*, he bad them ſearch, if they were not of the Family of *Eli*, upon which God had paſſed this Sentence, that they ſhould die in the *flower of their age*: And it was diſcovered that they ſprang from him.

Ver. 32. *And thou ſhalt ſee an enemy in my Sanctuary.*] The Marginal Tranſlation ſeems moſt literal, *Thou ſhalt ſee the affliction of the Tabernacle.* As he did, for he ſaw the Tabernacle deprived of the Ark, which was the Glory of it; and lived to hear the Ark was taken by the *Philiſtines*, iv. 4, 11. But his Family was not thrown out of the Prieſthood, till the Days of *Solomon*.

In all the wealth which God ſhall give Iſrael.] The *Hebrew* words may be tranſlated, *After all the good God hath done to Iſrael.*

And there ſhall not be an old man in thy Houſe for ever.] He repeats the foregoing Threatning, to ſhew the certainty of it. But ſome by an *old man* underſtand an *Elder*. So the *Talmudiſts* in the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrim*, Cap. i. where they make the meaning to be, that if any of his Family did live long, they ſhould never come to Honour. For ſo they tell the Story, that *R. Johanan* miſſing of ſome Preferment that was deſigned and endeavoured for him, and taking it very heavily, the Doctors that were his Relations, prayed him not to be troubled; for we are (ſaid they) of the Family of *Eli*, of whom it is ſaid, *There ſhall be no old man of thy houſe for ever*; that is, None be promoted to any Dignity.

Ver. 33. *And the man of thine whom I ſhall not cut off from my Altar, ſhall be to conſume thy eyes, and to grieve thy heart.*] It was not a Favour to let any of them live, but a Puniſhment to thoſe who were

were grieved to see the High-Priesthood taken from their Family, and those that belonged to it reduced to great Poverty. It is usual in Scripture, to say that of the Parents, which properly belongs to their Posterity.

And all the Increase of thy House shall die in the flower of their age.] This doth not belong to all the Posterity of *Ithamar*, but only to the Family of *Eli*.

Ver. 34. *And this shall be a Sign to thee, that shall come upon thy two Sons, Hophni and Phineas, that in one day they shall die both of them.*] See iv. 11, 17.

Ver. 35. *And I will raise me up a faithful Priest, that shall do all that is in my heart, and in my mind.*] This seems to be meant of *Zadock*, who was anointed in the room of *Abiathar*, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 22.

And I will build him a sure House.] The High-Priesthood continued in his Line till the Captivity of *Babylon*, as appears from *Ezek.* xl. 16. and a long time after it, as *Josephus* shews, *Lib.* x. *Cap.* 4. And our famous *Selden*, *Lib.* 1. *de Success. in Pontif. Cap.* 5, 6. where he shows their perpetual Succession till the time of *Antiochus Epiphanes*. But *Procopius Gazæus* here notes, that tho' this, according to the History, is meant of *Zadock*, who was put into the Priesthood by *Solomon*, and in whose Line it continued; yet it belongs to none in the highest Sense, but to our LORD Jesus Christ, who offered himself to the Father for us, and is our great High-Priest for ever.

And he shall walk before mine Anointed for ever.] By the *Anointed* of God is here meant the King; for whom the High-Priest consulted God on great Occasions: And therefore is said to *walk before him*; because he directed him in his Proceedings, and showed him what he ought to do, in all difficult Cases.

Ver. 36. *And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thy House.*] The remainder of his Family who were not cut off.

Shall come and crouch to him for a piece of Silver, and for a morsel of Bread.] The *Hebrew* Word which we translate *crouch*, signifying to bow and to worship, the *Vulgar* understands these Words, as if they were spoken not of their coming to beg of the High-Priest; but to pray to God in so poor a Condition, as not to be able to bring more than a Farthing, or Mite, to the Treasury; and nothing but a Bit of Bread, (not so much as a Bird, much less a Sheep or Bullock) for a Sin-offering. But the *Chaldee* takes the Word as we do, for humbling himself to the Priest before mentioned, begging a small Relief of his great Poverty, to which he was reduced. The *Hebrew* Word for a piece of Silver is *Agorah*, which signifies a minute piece of Silver, in the very derivation of the Word, as many think. So the meaning is, he should humbly beg, tho' ever so small a Relief.

Put me, I pray thee, into one of the Priests Offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.] Begging of the High Priest that he might enjoy the meanest Pension that was allowed to those Priests who were prohibited to officiate. For so the Words may be translated, *Somewhat belonging to the Priesthood.* See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 9. *Ezek.* xliv. 13. This seems to have been fulfilled in the days of *Abiathar*, who for Treason was not only put out of his Office, but sent to live upon his own Farm in the Country; and not suffered to live upon the Portion given to Priests at the Temple, 1 *Kings* ii. 26, 27. By this means his Posterity fell into extream want; in which the just Judgment of God may be observed; that the Children of those who were so wanton, that they would not be content unless they had the choicest parts of the Sacrifice for their portion, should fall into so low a Condition, as to beg their Bread.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND the Child Samuel ministred unto the* LORD *before Eli.*] Performed such Services at the Tabernacle as *Eli* directed, being now about twelve Years old, as *Josephus* thinks.

And the word of the LORD *was precious in those days.*] God did very rarely in those days reveal his Mind to any Person. See *ver.* 21.

There was no open Vision.] Here *Vision* includes all the ways whereby God revealed himself to Men. Which he did then so seldom, that whatsoever Revelation there might be privately to some pious Persons, there was none then publickly acknowledged to be a Prophet; unto whom the People might resort to know the Mind of God. Which was the Cause that *Samuel* being twice called by God to attend unto him, thought it had been *Eli* who called him: For they were so unacquainted in these days with the prophetical Spirit, that we read of no more than two Prophets in all the days of the *Judges*, iv. 4. vi. 8.

Ver. 2. *And it came to pass at that time.*] After the Man of God mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, (*ver.* 27.) had been with *Eli*; perhaps that very Night after he had delivered his Message.

When Eli was laid down.] To sleep.

In his place.] In the Court of the Tabernacle, where there were divers Rooms for several uses of the Priests; as there were afterwards at the Temple.

And his Eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see.] Clearly to do his Duty, after it grew duskish: Which made him, it is likely, go to bed betimes, and leave Directions with *Samuel* what to do, 'till it was time for him to repose himself. And this might be the reason that *Samuel* ran so hastily to him, when he thought he call'd for him, that he might know what he wanted; Men of his Age, and dim-sighted, being less able to help themselves.

Ver. 3. *And e'er the Lamp of God went out in the Temple of the* LORD, *where the Ark of God was.*] The Lamp in the great Shaft of the Golden Candlestick, which bent towards the most holy place (called the *Western Lamp*) never went out; but some other of them did go out, when it was morning. See upon *Exod.* xxvii. 20, 21. The meaning therefore is, that e'er it was day, the LORD called *Samuel*. See Dr. *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, chap. xiv. §. 4.

And Samuel was lain down to ſleep.] In the Court of the *Levites*, as the *Targum* explains it; or in ſome other place near to *Eli*, that he might be ready to aſſiſt him on any occaſion. The Words ſeem to import, that he had watched moſt of the Night, (for ſo ſome were to do, *Pſalm* cxxxiv. 1.) and towards Morning went to repoſe himſelf. For thus the Words run in the *Hebrew*, and in the LXX, and *Vulgar: Before the Lamp of God went out, and Samuel lay down to ſleep in the Temple of the* LORD, &c. Inſomuch that *Victorinus Strigelius* tranſlates the Words thus, *And Samuel went to lie down in the Temple of the* LORD, *where the Ark of God was, before the Lamp of God went out.*

Ver. 4. *And the* LORD *called Samuel.*] Out of the moſt holy place. So the *Targum*, *A Voice was heard out of the Temple of the* LORD.

And he ſaid, Here am I.] It is likely *Eli* lay nearer the Tabernacle than *Samuel* did, and yet heard nothing: But the Voice paſſing him by, was directed to *Samuel*, who alone heard it. Theſe Words, *Here am I*, are a Form of Speech, ſignifying Attention to what was ſaid, and Readineſs to do what ſhould be commanded.

Ver. 5. *And he ran unto Eli and ſaid, Here am I, for thou calledſt me.*] He thought *Eli* had ſome Miniſtry wherein to employ him, and therefore ſtarted up preſently, and ran to know what his Pleaſure was. Which ſhows the great readineſs and promptneſs of his Obedience; which made him come, yea run at his firſt Call.

And he ſaid, I called not, lie down again: and he went and lay down.] He thought he might dream.

Ver. 6. *And the* LORD *called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel roſe and went to Eli, and ſaid, Here am I, for thou didſt call me*, &c.] He was ſure there was no body yet come to the Temple; it being Night, and the Doors ſhut; and therefore concluded it could be none but *Eli* that called him: And it is probable, the Voice was like that of *Eli*'s.

Ver. 7. *Now Samuel did not know the* LORD.] He had not yet learned to *know Diſcipline from before the* LORD; as the *Targum* interprets it: That is, how God was wont to teach and inſtruct Men in his Will: Which the next Words explain.

Neither was the Word of the LORD *yet revealed unto him.*] He was unacquainted with the way, wherein God made known his Mind unto the Prophets; becauſe he had never ſpoken to him before: So that he did not know how to diſtinguiſh between the Voice of God, and of a Man. *Maimonides* expounds it, he did not underſtand that the LORD was wont to ſpeak with a ſoft, whiſpering Voice; which was therefore called *Bath-col.*

Ver. 8. *And the* LORD *called Samuel again the third time; and he roſe and went to Eli, and ſaid, Here am I, for thou didſt call me: And Eli perceived that the* LORD *had called the Child.*] This repetition of the Voice ſo oft, awakened *Eli* to think that this was no Fancy of the Child's; and therefore ſince he knew that he did not call him, he concluded the LORD did; and by this means he was diſpoſed to give credit to what *Samuel* ſhould tell him, as an Oracle of God.

Ver. 9. *Therefore Eli ſaid unto Samuel, Go lie down; and it ſhall be if he call thee, that thou ſhalt ſay, Speak* LORD, *for thy Servant heareth.*] He tells him, in effect, that it was the Voice of God which he heard; and inſtructs him how to behave himſelf, when he called again; and to anſwer, that he was ready to perform whatever he commanded.

So Samuel went and lay down in his place.] Which was not far, as I ſaid, from the place where *Eli* lay.

Ver. 10. *And the* LORD *came and ſtood.*] This Word *ſtood* (*Kimchi* thinks) denoteth ſome glorious appearance of God to him; becauſe this is the ſame Word which is uſed in *Numb.* xxii. 22, 23, 31. where the Angel is ſaid to *ſtand* to oppoſe *Balaam*'s Proceedings. And ſo the *Targum*, *The* LORD *was revealed, and ſtood and called*, &c.

And called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel.] Only he repeats his Name, to move the greater Attention.

Then Samuel anſwered, Speak, for thy Servant heareth.] He omits the Name of the LORD, in his Anſwer which *Eli* directed him to make: Either out of fear, or uncertainty, whether it was the LORD that ſpake to him, or no.

Ver. 11. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Iſrael, at which both the Ears of every one that heareth it ſhall tingle.*] Which in our Language we expreſs thus, *It ſhall ſtun all that hear it:* As a Man is, when a clap of terrible Thunder ſtrikes his Ears, which even deafens him, ſo that he can hear nothing elſe. This was fulfilled, when the doleful News came, that the Ark was taken, and both *Eli*'s Sons ſlain, and he fell down and brake his Neck, *&c.*

Ver. 12. *In that Day I will perform againſt Eli all the things that I have ſpoken concerning his Houſe.*] By the Man of God in the foregoing Chapter.

When I begin, I will alſo make an end.] He doth not mean, that he would begin and make an end at once; but that he would perſevere in his Puniſhments, and not deſiſt when he began, till all his Threatnings were fulfilled, *viz.* in the Death of *Eli*, and of his Sons; and the ſlaughter of Eighty-five Prieſts of this Family by *Doeg*, and the thruſting *Abiathar* (who eſcaped that Slaughter) out of his Office, and ſo depriving that Family of its Dignity and Honour.

Ver. 13. *For I have told him, that I will judge his Houſe for ever, for the Iniquity which he knoweth.*] For he could not be ignorant of the Crimes committed ſo publickly; and of which there was ſuch a general Complaint.

Becauſe his Sons made themſelves vile.] Or, they made light of God and of his People; having no regard to either of them. Or, they made the Service of God vile in the Eyes of the People; as the Words may be tranſlated, and as the LXX underſtand them.

And he reſtrained them not.] He did not *frown upon them*, as it is in the *Hebrew*. Which doth not ſignify, that he ſhewed no ſign of diſpleaſure againſt their wickedneſs, (for he did chide them, tho' too gently, for it,) but he did not ſeverely reprove them; and when that would

not

not reſtrain them, turn them out of their Office, or ſuſpend them 'till they were reformed. For which cauſe God paſſed this ſevere Sentence upon the whole Family; that they ſhould loſe the Dignity of the High-Prieſthood, and be made as vile and contemptible as they had rendered God's Service.

Ver. 14. *And therefore I have ſworn unto the Houſe of Eli, that the Iniquity of Eli's Houſe ſhall not be purged with Sacrifice, nor Offering for ever.*] By *Iniquity* is meant the *Puniſhment* of Iniquity; which he threatens ſhould not be removed, or mitigated, by any ſort of Sacrifices, or Oblations, that could be brought to the Altar: But only (as the *Gemara* upon *Roſh Haſhanah* ventures to ſay) *by the Law, and by the Retributions of the Saints.* By the *Law* they mean not merely the Study of the Law, but the Practice of it, by obſerving God's Commands: And by *Retributions of the Saints*, Works of Charity, Bounty, and Liberality, beyond what the Divine Law required. See Dr. *Windet, de Vita functorum ſtatu*, p. 193.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel lay down until the Morning, and opened the Door of the Houſe of the LORD.*] This was one of the Works of the *Levites*, to open and ſhut the Door of the Court of the LORD's Houſe.

And Samuel feared to ſhew Eli the Viſion.] Having no Command from God to do it; and being loth to grieve the old Man by telling him bad News.

Ver. 16. *Then Eli called Samuel, and ſaid, Samuel, my Son; and he anſwered, Here am I.*] The old Man being ſo ſolemnly threatned by the late Meſſage from God to him; was afraid he was concerned in what the LORD had now ſaid to *Samuel.*

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid, What is the thing that the LORD hath ſaid unto thee; I pray thee hide it not from me: God do ſo to thee, and more alſo, if thou hide any thing from me*, &c.] He adjures him to declare to him all that he had heard, and conceal nothing; which obliged him to ſatisfy his deſire, as *Micaiah* and our bleſſed Saviour did in the like Caſe.

Ver. 18. *And Samuel told him every thing, and hid nothing from him: And he ſaid, It is the LORD, let him do what ſeemeth him good.*] This Sentence being denounced by a Child, who had his dependance upon *Eli*, far from any Secular Cunning, being unable to diſcern between the Voice of the LORD, and the Voice of his Tutor, 'till he inſtructed him; was a great deal more terrible to *Eli* than the Meſſage of the Prophet had been, and wrought a greater Effect upon him. For he humbly acknowledged the Juſtice of God, and ſubmitted to his Sentence (as many of the Fathers think) with a truly penitent Heart. For now he knew (as our Dr. *Jackſon* obſerves) that the Sentence was irreverſible, being confirmed by an Oath, (*ver.* 14.) And the Humility and Modeſty of *Eli*'s Anſwer, perſwaded that excellent Perſon, that the fearful Sentence denounced againſt him, extended no further, than to the irreverſible depoſition of him and his Family from the Prieſthood, unto a poor and mean Eſtate, wherein they were to live hereafter. *Conſecration of the Son of God*, chap. xviii. parag. 5.

Ver. 19. *And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him.*] There were manifeſt Tokens that God favoured him, as he did *Joſeph*, *Gen.* xxxi. 2. The *Targum* hath it *MEMRA, the Word of the LORD was his help:* Or he revealed more and more of his Mind to him: ſo that *Iſrael* knew God intended him for the Office mentioned in the next Verſe.

And did let none of his Words fall to the ground.] A Metaphor from Arrows ſhot out of a Bow, which hit the Mark. And they may refer either to the Words of *Samuel*, or of God; which is the ſame. This proved him to be a Prophet, or a Man divinely inſpired.

Ver. 20. *And all Iſrael, from Dan even to Beerſheba.*] The whole Country of *Judæa*. See *Judg.* xx. 1.

Knew that Samuel was eſtabliſhed to be a Prophet of the LORD.] Settled to be a conſtant Prophet, who ſupplied the want of *Urim* and *Thummim*, when the Ark was taken from them.

Ver. 21. *And the* LORD *appeared again in Shiloh; for the* LORD *revealed himſelf to Samuel in Shiloh, by the word of the* LORD.] Having begun to appear in *Shiloh*, he continued this great Favour: For he revealed himſelf to *Samuel*, not by *Dreams and Viſions*, but by ſpeaking to him in an *audible Voice*, as he had done, *ver.* 4, *&c.* And indeed he ſeems to have been the firſt Prophet, that was raiſed up to be a publick Inſtructer and Governour of God's People. Others there had been before him; but not with ſo high an Authority, and publick Approbation. And therefore St. *Peter* ſaith, (*Acts* iii.) *All the Prophets from Samuel ſpake of thoſe Days:* As if he was the firſt eminent Prophet whom the LORD raiſed up to them after *Moſes.*

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *AND the word of Samuel came unto all Iſrael.*] The Revelation of God's Mind and Will, which had been very ſcarce among them in former Days, (iii. 1.) now grew very plentiful: For as *Samuel* himſelf was ready to inſtruct every one that came to him; ſo he ſet up Colleges of the Prophets (as we read in the following parts of this Book) who in time were ſettled in divers parts of the Country, for the better preſerving and ſpreading the Knowledge of God among the People, x. 5. xix. 18, 19, 20, *&c.* Which made *Abarbinel* diſcourſe on this manner, upon the foregoing Words; *In the days of Eli the Word of the* LORD *was ſcarce, and Viſion was ſeldom: But when Samuel appeared, not only he propheſied frequently, but many of the Iſraelites, by his means were endued with the ſame Spirit, according to theſe Words*, and the LORD appeared more frequently in *Shiloh*, (ſo he underſtands them) becauſe the LORD was revealed to *Samuel in Shiloh. Which ſignifies, that the Influence of the Spirit which deſcended upon Samuel in Shiloh reached unto others, becauſe of its abundance, who were diſpoſed to receive it: ſo that they alſo propheſied.*

And Iſrael went out againſt the Philiſtines to battel.] This was in the middle of that Forty

Years Dominion that the *Philiſtines* had over the *Iſraelites*, mentioned *Judges* xiii. 1. unto which they were encouraged, perhaps, by the Death of the Lords of the *Philiſtines*; and the great Slaughter which *Sampſon* had made of them at his Death, *Judges* xvi. 27, 30.

And pitched beſides Eben-ezer.] Thus this place was called when this Book was written; and ſo denominated from the famous Battel which *Samuel* fought with the *Philiſtines*, twenty Years after this, vii. 12.

And the Philiſtines pitched in Aphek.] In a place in the Tribe of *Judah*, as we read *Joſh.* xv. 53. upon the Confines of the *Philiſtines* Country. But ſee xxix. 1. of this Book.

Ver. 2. *And the Philiſtines put themſelves in array againſt Iſrael; and when they joined battel, Iſrael was ſmitten before the Philiſtines*, &c.] Tho' *Samuel* was eſtabliſhed a Prophet, and it was ſo publickly known, that all *Iſrael* came to conſult with him (as the foregoing Verſe ſeems to import) yet the *Elders* did not take his Advice about this War; as *Ralbag* thinks. Whoſe Opinion is more probable than theirs, who think they did adviſe with him, and that he bad them fight, on purpoſe that the Sentence upon *Eli*'s Sons might be fulfilled.

Ver. 3. *And when the People were come into the Camp, the Elders of Iſrael ſaid, Wherefore hath the* LORD *ſmitten us to-day before the Philiſtines.*] They thought the Juſtice of their Cauſe was ſufficient to entitle them to the Favour of God, tho' they themſelves were wicked. Thus *Brutus* cried when he fell, *O* Jupiter! *what is the Cauſe of ſo great Calamity?* Not reflecting upon his horrible Exactions in *Cyprus*; and his great Ingratitude to *Cæſar*, whom he ſlew in the Senate.

Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD *out of Shiloh, that when it comes among us, it may ſave us out of the hands of our Enemies.*] This was as fooliſh as the other, to confide in God's Help, when they lived in open Diſobedience to him.

Ver. 4. *So the People ſent to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the Ark of the Covenant of the* LORD.] This being done without any Warrant from God, provoked him, rather than procured his Preſence with them. But they ſeem to have done it in imitation of *Joſhua* marching with the Ark againſt *Jericho*: For which he had a Divine Authority, but they had none. *Strigelius* therefore well applies to this the Obſervation of *Polybius*, That *many not ſtudying to imitate the Lives of excellent Men, but only ſome of their extraordinary Actions, have done nothing but expoſe their own Folly to the World.*

Which dwelleth between the Cherubims.] Or, *upon the Cherubims*, as the *Chaldee*, the LXX, and the *Vulgar* here tranſlate it. But *Lud. De Dieu* is not ſatisfied with this Senſe; for he thinks the Divine Majeſty did not ſit upon the Wings of the *Cherubims*, but under them; in the Space between them and the Ark, which was his Foot-ſtool: And therefore he tranſlates theſe words, *Who inhabiteth the Cherubims*; which were as a Canopy over the SCHECHINAH. But I have followed the ancient Tranſlation, in my Notes upon *Exod.* xxv. 22.

And the two Sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were there with the Ark of the Covenant of God.] Which they were ordered to bring out of its Place (into which the *Levites* might not enter) and to accompany it unto the Army.

Ver. 5. *And when the Ark of the Covenant of the* LORD *came into the Camp, all Iſrael ſhouted with a great ſhout.*] As if they had already gotten the Victory.

So that the Earth rang again.] It was ſo loud, that it might be heard a great way off. See 1 *Kings* i. 40. and what I have noted there.

Ver. 6. *And when the Philiſtines heard the Noiſe of the ſhout, they ſaid, What means the Noiſe of this great ſhout in the Camp of the Hebrews? And they underſtood that the Ark of the* LORD *was come into the Camp.*] They ſent to get Intelligence; or were informed of it by ſome Deſerters.

Ver. 7. *And the Philiſtines were afraid, for they ſaid, God is come into the Camp*]. The Symbol of God's Preſence; which perhaps they imagined the *Iſraelites* worſhipped as their God.

And they ſaid, Wo unto us, for there hath not been ſuch a thing heretofore.] In all the Battels that they or their Neighbours had fought with the *Iſraelites*, they never heard of ſuch a thing as this; which they thought muſt produce ſome extraordinary effect.

Ver. 8. *Wo unto us, who ſhall deliver us out of the hand of theſe mighty Gods?*] They fought with Men before, but now with God, before whom none could ſtand. The *Hebrew* Words *Adirim Elohim*, which we tranſlate *mighty Gods*, are tranſlated by *Theodoret*, the *ſtrong God*: Which agrees with what goes before, *God is come into the camp*: And with the *Targum*, *Who ſhall deliver us out of the Hand of the* WORD *of the* LORD, &c.

Theſe are the Gods.] Or, *this is the God.*

That ſmote Egypt with all the Plagues in the Wilderneſs.] They ſeem not to have perfectly underſtood the ſacred Story; but thought all thoſe Plagues which are there ſpoken of, had fallen on the *Egyptians*, while the *Iſraelites* were in the Wilderneſs; where they were when their laſt Plague befel them, by their being drowned in the Red Sea: But *Jonathan* thus paraphraſes it, *Who ſmote the Egyptians with all manner of Plagues; and did wonders for his people in the deſart.*

Ver. 9. *Be ſtrong, and quit your ſelves like Men, ye Philiſtines.*] Theſe Words were ſpoken by their Great Commanders; as the foregoing Words, in all likelihood were: who underſtood what had been done in Foreign Countries.

That ye be not Servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you: Quit your ſelves like Men, and fight.] When they were recovered out of the Fright, which ſeized on them at firſt, they conſidered, that notwithſtanding the Power of their God, they had made the *Iſraelites* ſubject to them, and alſo overthrown them in a late Battel: And therefore their preſent danger ſhould only raiſe their Courage, and make them fight more valiantly.

Ver. 10. *And the Philiſtines fought.*] They gave Battel to the *Iſraelites*.

And the Iſraelites were ſmitten, and they fled every Man unto his Tent.] They were ſo routed,

 that

that they did not flee to their Camp, with an intent to renew the Fight (as they did before, *ver.* 3.) but disperſed themſelves to their own home. And hitherto many of them dwelt in Tents, as I obſerved before: See *Joſh.* xxii. 14. *Judges* vii. 8. xx. 8.

And there was a great ſlaughter; for there fell of Iſrael thirty thouſand Footmen.] There fell but *four thouſand* in the former Battel, before the Ark came among them, *ver.* 2. ſo little did the bare Preſence of the Ark profit wicked Men, that it rather did them hurt.

Ver. 11. *And the Ark of God was taken, and the two Sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, were ſlain.*] It is likely that (as *Joſephus* ſaith) *Eli* parted with the Ark from the Tabernacle very unwillingly; but when he could not help it, he charged his Sons, who went along with it, to loſe their Lives rather than loſe it.

Ver. 12. *And there ran a Man of Benjamin out of the Army, and came to Shiloh the ſame day.*] Some of the *Jews* have a fancy that this Man was *Saul:* For no other reaſon that I can find, but becauſe he was of that Tribe, and a proper Man, who, it is likely, could run ſwiftly. How far *Shiloh* was from *Aphek*, or from *Eben-ezer* (both which were in the Tribe of *Judah*, as *Shiloh* was in *Ephraim*) near to which this Battle was fought, is not certain; but not ſo diſtant, but that a Man might run the ſame day from the one to the other.

With his Clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.] According to the manner of thoſe who bewailed any great Calamity. *Joſh.* vii. 6. *Job* ii. 12. *Ezek.* xxvii. 30. From which laſt Places it appears, it was a Cuſtom among other Nations. And is moſt lively expreſſed by *Virgil* in *Æneid.* xii. *ver.* 609, 610, 611. where *Latinus* is repreſented as rending his Clothes, and throwing duſt upon his grey Hairs, when he lamented his private and the publick Loſſes. *Tiraquellus* hath heaped up a great many Examples of this, in his Annotations on *Alex. ab Alexandro*, lib. 3. cap. 7.

Ver. 13. *And when he came, lo, Eli ſat upon a ſeat by the way-ſide, for his heart trembled for the Ark of God.*] He had cauſed a Seat, I ſuppoſe, to be ſet for him, by the ſide of the Gate that entred into the City, (*ver.* 18.) that he might hearken after News; being extremely concerned, above all things, for the Ark of the Covenant of God.

And when the man came into the City.] He paſſed by *Eli*, and ſaid not a word to him, tho' he ſaw him ſitting there; becauſe he was loth he ſhould be ſurpriſed with ſuch ſad Tidings. Or, perhaps, he came into the City at ſome other Gate.

And told it, all the City cried out.] Looking upon themſelves as put out of the Divine Protection, becauſe they had loſt the Symbol of his Preſence; and the Book of the Covenant, the Bleſſings of which they could no longer claim.

Ver. 14. *And when Eli heard the noiſe of the crying, he ſaid, What means the noiſe of this tumult? And the man came in haſtily and told Eli.*] They about him had not the heart to reſolve his Queſtion, but brought the Man ſpeedily to acquaint him with the Truth.

Ver. 15. *Now Eli was ninety eight years old, and his Eyes were dim, that he could not ſee.*] He was not able to diſcern the Sadneſs that was in the Peoples Countenances, but only heard their Shrieks and Lamentations.

Ver. 16. *And the Man ſaid, I am he that came out of the Army, and I fled to-day out of the Army.*] The Man repreſents himſelf as an Eye-witneſs of what had paſſed, that he might gain the more Credit to what he ſaid: And adds, that he brought the freſheſt News.

And he ſaid, What is there done, my Son?] He ask'd if they had fought, and with what Succeſs.

Ver. 17. *And the Meſſenger anſwered and ſaid, Iſrael is fled before the Philiſtines, and there hath alſo been a great ſlaughter among the people, and thy two ſons Hophni and Phineas are dead; and the Ark of God is taken.*] He hid nothing from him; but reſerved the worſt News 'till the laſt.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs when he made mention of the Ark of God, that he fell from off the ſeat backward, by the ſide of the gate.*] At the Entrance of the City, where his Chair was ſet.

And his neck brake, and he died.] Tho' he was too indulgent a Father, yet he was highly commendable in this, that he was not ſo much affected with the loſs of his Sons, and the Slaughter of the People, as with the loſs of the Ark of God. For he kept up his Courage, and did not fall, 'till he heard that mentioned. The more publick any Concern is, the more it is laid to heart by Men of worthy Spirits. Such an one was *Eli*, with whom God was angry upon his Sons account; otherwiſe he was adorned with many Virtues, as *Procopius Gazæus* obſerves.

For he was an old Man and heavy.] Being oppreſſed with Grief, he ſwooned away; and being both very old, and very unwieldy, his Fall was the more dangerous, and the *Vertebræ* of his Neck the more eaſily diſplaced.

And he judged Iſrael forty years.] This aggravated the Calamity of his Family, that having been ſo long in the higheſt Station, it fell into great Afflictions in a moment. See upon Chapter the firſt, *ver.* 9. The Jews obſerve in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 13. that on the day he died, God forſook the Tabernacle in *Shiloh*, having *delivered his ſtrength into captivity*, &c. *Pſal.* lxxviii. 60, 61.

Ver. 19. *And his Daughter-in-law, Phineas's wife, was with child, near to be delivered; and when ſhe heard the tidings, that the Ark of God was taken, and that her Father-in-law and her Huſband were dead, ſhe bowed herſelf and travelled; for her pains came upon her.*] The great Anguiſh of her Mind brought on her Labour: and, as *Joſephus* thinks, two Months before her Time. Which doth not well agree with what is ſaid in the beginning of this Verſe, that ſhe was *near to be delivered.* The *Hebrew* Word which we tranſlate *bowed herſelf*, ſignifies ſhe *fell on her knees.* For ſo the manner was in thoſe Countries: which *Ludolphus* confirms in his *Æthiopick* Hiſtory, and his Commentary upon it. *L.* 1. *Cap.* 14. *N.* 101.

Ver.

Ver. 20. *And at the time of her death, the Women that ſtood by her.*] Aſſiſted at her Labour.

Said unto her, Fear not, for thou haſt born a Son.] The mention of which they thought would have revived her, according to what we read in the Goſpel of St. *John*, xvi. 21.

But ſhe anſwered not, neither did ſhe regard it.] Being ſo overcome with Sorrow and Grief, that ſhe minded nothing that was ſaid or done about her.

Ver. 21. *And ſhe named the Child Ichabod, ſaying, The Glory is departed from Iſrael; becauſe the Ark of God was taken, and becauſe of her Father-in-Law and her Huſband.*] Only having a little recovered her Spirits, ſhe lamented this chiefly, that God was gone from them: For ſo the Word *Glory* frequently ſignifies in Scripture, *Pſal.* cvi. 20. *Jerem.* ii. 11. The *Hebrew* Word אי alſo ſignifies the ſame with לא *not*, as *Ludolphus* obſerves in his Commentary upon his *Æthiopick* Hiſtory, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* xvi. 106. And ſo *Bochartus* here tranſlates *Ichabod*, by *Inglorious*, or without Glory: That is, ſaith he, *without the true God.* P. 1. *Hieroz.* L. 2. Cap. 34.

Ver. 22. *And ſhe ſaid, The Glory is departed from Iſrael; for the Ark of God is taken.*] She ſeems to have expired with theſe Words; which ſhe repeats again, becauſe this chiefly lay at her Heart; as the Concerns of Religion do in all pious Spirits.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. AND *the Philiſtines took the Ark of God.*] Why God ſuffered the Ark of his Preſence to fall into the hands of thoſe uncircumciſed People, *Abarbinel* gives four or five Reaſons. The *Iſraelites* were ſuch great Sinners, that they were unworthy of his Preſence among them. The Idolatry of *Micah* remained to this day in the Land; therefore he fulfilled his Threatning, *Levit.* xxvi. 19, 31. The Sin alſo of the Prieſts highly provoked him to deliver up the Ark, which was in their hands, when they were killed. And the *Iſraelites* greatly offended in carrying the Ark into the Battle, without asking Counſel of God: who reſolved to demonſtrate his Power even among the Enemies of *Iſrael.*

And brought it from Eben-ezer.] Where the *Iſraelites* were encamped before the Battle, iv. 1. and whither it is poſſible they fled, to ſave the Ark, when their Army was overthrown.

Unto Aſhdod.] One of the five Cities of the *Philiſtines*, where ſome of the *Anakims* were left unſubdued by *Joſhua*, (*Joſh.* xi. 22.) and was in future times the principal City of the Country, called *Azotus.* And perhaps it was ſo now; which might be the reaſon the Ark was carried thither, rather than to any other City; being ſituated alſo in the middle of the five Principalities; and having a famous Temple in it (mentioned in the next Verſe) whither all the Country reſorted.

Ver. 2. *And when the Philiſtines took the Ark of God, they brought it into the Houſe of Dagon, and ſet it by Dagon.*] The Heathen were wont to offer part of the Spoil that they took in War, unto their Gods: And what could there be more acceptable than this to *Dagon*, who ſeemed to have triumphed over the God of *Iſrael?* Thus we read in After-ages, how Conquerors triumphed not only over the People whom they vanquiſhed, but over their Gods alſo. As *Iſaiah* repreſented *Bel* and *Nebo* carried Captive, when *Babylon* was taken, xlvi. 1, 2. And *Jeremiah* ſaith the ſame of *Chemoſh*, the God of *Moab*, and *Malcolm* the God of *Ammon*, xlviii. 7. xliv. 3. And ſee *Daniel* xi. 8. Thus the *Romans* did very frequently, as *Bochartus* ſhews in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 34. Yet there are ſome who imagine, that their ſetting the Ark by *Dagon*, (on the ſide of him) ſignified that they intended to do ſome honour to it, as having the Preſence of God in it. Concerning *Dagon*, ſee what I have noted upon *Judges* xvi. 23. and Mr. *Selden*, *Syntag.* 2. *de Diis Syris*, Cap. 3. where he confutes thoſe who think *Dagon* hath his Name from *Dagan*, which ſignifies *Corn*, (as if he were the Inventer of it, and confirms the Opinion of thoſe who think he had his Name from *Dag*, which ſignifies a *Fiſh*; Fiſhes and Pigeons being ſacred to him. Some take this Idol to have been the ſame among the *Syrians*, with *Triton* among the *Europeans*, or with *Neptune*, or (as *Scaliger* will have it) with *Venus*, who was worſhipped under the Name of *Atergatis*, and *Adargatis:* which are only the Corruption of the *Hebrew* Words *Addir-daga*, i. e. *Magnificent Fiſh*, as Mr. *Selden* there obſerves: Tho' *Bochart* thinks this was a different Goddeſs from *Dagon.* P. 1. *Hieroz.* Lib. 1. Cap. 6.

Ver. 3. *And when they of Aſhdod aroſe early in the morning.*] To go to pray at the Temple.

Behold, Dagon was faln with his Face to the earth, before the Ark of the LORD.] In a Poſture of the moſt humble Adoration; which was Proſtration; acknowledging the God of *Iſrael* to be above all Gods. In this ſome of the Jews think there was a *Miracle in a Miracle*, as they ſpeak: For whereas the Ark was ſet *by Dagon*, (*i. e.* on one ſide of him) when *Dagon* fell, it was not right forward, but he was turned about with his Face towards the Ark. See *Buxtorf de Arca Fœderis*, p. 171.

And they took Dagon and ſet him in his place again.] Looking upon it as a Miſchance.

Ver. 4. *And when they roſe early on the morrow morning, behold Dagon was faln with his Face to the Ground before the Ark of the* LORD.] Which ſhewed his former Fall was not by Chance, but by the Power of God, before whom he could not ſtand.

And the Head of Dagon, and both the Palms of his Hands, were cut off upon the threſhold.] It is likely *Dagon* ſtood on high, upon ſome Pedeſtal or Altar; from whence he was not only thrown down, but his Head and his Hands thrown out of the Door, with the greateſt Contempt; being cut off upon the Threſhold of the Temple. A Token (as moſt Interpreters think) that this Idol was void of Wiſdom and Power, his Head and his Hands (which are the Seat of thoſe Qualities) being gone. Some have a Fancy that *Dagon* had Feet alſo upon his

 Tail:

Tail: From whence the LXX it is likely here adds, that both his Feet were cut off alſo. Which hath no ground at all in the *Hebrew* Text: See *Selden* in the fore-named Book; and *Voſſius de Idolol.* L. 2. Cap. 16.

Only the ſtump of Dagon was left him.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *only Dagon was left to him.* That is, ſaith *Kimchi*, *nothing but the Form of a Fiſh remained*; all that reſembled a Man being broken off. Thus the LORD ſhewed there was no God beſides him: His Ark, tho' taken captive and carried into a ſtrange Land (as St. *Chryſoſtom* diſcourſes, Orat. v. *adverſus Judæos*) throwing down their Idol twice, and thereby demonſtrating, that the *Iſraelites* were not overthrown, for want of any Power in their God to defend them, but for the Iniquity of thoſe that worſhipped him.

Ver. 5. *Therefore neither the Prieſts of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's houſe, tread on the Threſhold of Dagon, unto this day.*] Out of Reverence to it; looking upon it (as *Abarbinel* gloſſes) as an holy thing, by the touch of *Dagon*'s Head and Hands. So fooliſhly did they pervert the meaning of God; that inſtead of thinking *Dagon* to be no God, they honoured the very Threſhold of his Temple, as if it had ſome Divinity in it. For it is an idle Conceit which the *Jews* have in *Jalkut*, that forſaking *Dagon*, they worſhipped his *Threſhold*. See *Buxtorf* in his *Hiſt. Arcæ*, Cap. xix. p. 172. This Superſtition continued for ſome Ages, as *Bochartus* gathers from *Zephan.* i. 9. where God ſaith he will puniſh thoſe *that leap on the Threſhold*, after the manner of the *Philiſtines*, as he expounds it after the *Targum*, P. i. *Hierozoic.* Lib. 2. Cap. 36.

From thoſe Words, *unto this day*, *Hobbs* and ſuch-like Writers frame an Argument, that this Book was not wrote by *Samuel*; not conſidering that theſe things happened when *Samuel* was but a Youth, and that this was written when he was old; ſo that there was a conſiderable ſpace of time between them.

Ver. 6. *But the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Aſhdod.*] Since they were ſo blind, as not to ſee his hand in throwing down their God, *&c.* he ſmote them with ſuch ſore Plagues in their own Bodies, as made them ſenſible of his Power.

And he deſtroyed them.] With a Peſtilence, I ſuppoſe, of which many died. See *ver. ult.*

And ſmote them with Emerods, even Aſhdod and the Coaſts belonging to it.] Not only the People of the City, but of the Villages belonging to it, were ſmitten with this Plague. About which Interpreters differ very much: Some taking this Diſeaſe for a *Dyſentery*, which was ſo violent that it rotted their Guts, and made them fall down and come out. Whereupon others think it was that which we call *Procidentia ani*, the falling of the *Fundament*: But moſt Interpreters, both antient and modern, take it as we do, for the *Emerods*. For it was ſome Diſeaſe in the Hinder-parts, as appears from the Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, lxxviii. 66. as they are commonly underſtood. See my Notes on *Deut.* xxviii. 27. and *Nic. Fuller Miſcell.* L. 5. Cap. 3. eſpecially *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. i. L. 2. Cap. 36. where he gives a large account of the *Hebrew* Word *Apholim*, which is uſed only here, and in the fore-named place of *Deuteronomy*.

At the end of this Verſe, the *Vulgar* and the LXX alſo add, that a great number of Mice ſtarted up out of the Earth, and over-running their Fields, made great waſte there. But, as *Lyra* well obſerves, this Gloſs in all likelihood being written in the Margin, out of Chap. vi. *ver.* 4, 5. it crept at laſt into the Text, tho' it be neither in the *Hebrew*, nor the *Chaldee*, nor *Syriac*, nor *Arabic*. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozoic.* P. 1. Lib. 3. Cap. 34.

Ver. 7. *And when the men of Aſhdod ſaw that it was ſo, they ſaid, The Ark of the God of Iſrael ſhall not abide with us; for his hand is ſore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.*] Now their Eyes were opened to ſee, that tho' they had vanquiſhed the *Iſraelites*, they could not ſtand before the God of *Iſrael*. And it ſeems no unreaſonable Conjecture, that they ſpeak here, and in the following Verſe, concerning the Ark, with a Note of Diſtinction; calling it, *the Ark of the God of Iſrael*, ver. 8, 10, 11. vi. 3. And *the Ark of the LORD*, vi. 8. For other Nations had ſuch Arks, and for the ſame uſe, to put their Myſteries in them: As in this was the Tables of the Covenant alone. *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates what Traſh and other filthy ſtuff was in the μυςικαὶ κίςαι, the *myſtical Coffers* of the Heathen. From whoſe Superſtition that the *Iſraelites* might be preſerved, God perhaps appointed this Ark to be made by *Moſes*. See his Προτρεπτικὸς λόγος, p. 13, 14.

Ver. 8. *They ſent therefore and gathered the Lords of the Philiſtines unto them, and ſaid, What ſhall we do with the Ark of the God of Iſrael?*] They deſired a general Council might be held, to conſult what to do in this caſe, whether to keep the Ark, or how to diſpoſe of it.

And they anſwered.] *i. e.* The Lords of the *Philiſtines* (who in the Language of that Country were called *Sarnim*, the ſame with *Sarim* in *Hebrew*) came to the following Reſolution.

Let the Ark of the God of Iſrael be carried about unto Gath; and they carried the Ark of the God of Iſrael about thither.] They ſeem to be poſſeſſed with a ſuperſtitious Conceit, that there was ſomething in the place, which was offenſive to him; and that he might be better pleaſed with another: Juſt as *Æneas* and his People indited their Beds and their Houſes, of the Diſaſters that befel them; and *Cadmus* forſook his own City,

——— *tanquam fortuna locorum*
Non ſua ſe premeret ———

As if the ill Luck which hunted him, had been the Place's, not his own: As our Dr. *Jackſon* obſerves out of *Ovid*, in his *Original of Unbelief*, Chap. xviii. Paragr. 4.

Gath was the next City to *Aſhdod*, Northward of it: In which ſome of the *Anakims* alſo remained. *Joſh.* xi. 21.

Ver. 9. *And it was ſo, that after they had carried it about, the Hand of the LORD was againſt the City, with a very great Deſtruction.*] A great many died of the Peſtilence, as they had done at *Aſhdod*.

And he ſmote the Men of the City both ſmall and great, and they had Emerods in their ſecret parts.] They that did not die, were ſorely tormented by *Emerods* ; which was a Diſeaſe they had never known before ; as ſome underſtand the laſt Words. Or, they had thoſe the Phyſicians call *blind Emerods :* which do not ſwell outwardly, but lie hidden within ; and are the moſt grievous, and hard to be cured of all other.

Ver. 10. *Therefore they ſent the Ark of God to Ekron.*] The laſt City of the *Philiſtines* Northward : Where in After-times (if not now) the famous God called *Baalzebub* was worſhipped, 2 *Kings* i. 2.

And it came to paſs as the Ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, ſaying, They have brought about the Ark of the God of Iſrael to us, to ſlay us and our People.] Theſe ſeem to be the Words of the Governors of the City ; who had learned from the Experience of the other great Cities, that no place was ſecure from the Stroke of the God of *Iſrael.*

Ver. 11. *So they ſent and gathered together all the Lords of the Philiſtines.*] As they of *Aſhdod* had done, *ver.* 6.

And ſaid, Send away the Ark of the God of Iſrael, and let it go again to its own place, that it ſlay us not, and our People.] Deſtroy the whole City.

For there was a deadly deſtruction throughout all the City, and the hand of God was very ſore upon them.] Which made them deſire it might be ſent out of the Country, and not to the other Cities in the South, *Gaza* and *Aſcalon.*

Ver. 12. *And the Men that died not, were ſmote with Emerods ; and the Cry of the City went up to Heaven.*] This is the Explication of the foregoing Words : Some were ſtruck with the Peſtilence as ſoon as the Ark came thither, and others lingered under intolerable Pains, which made them cry out in an inexpreſſible manner : For this is an hyperbolical Speech ; things that are exceeding great beyond expreſſion, being ſaid to reach up to Heaven, *Deut.* i. 28. Thus *Virgil*, L. 2. *Æneid.* in many places, *ver.* 223, 338, 488.

Clamores ſimul horridos ad ſydera tollit.
——— Sublatus ad æthera clamor.
——— Ferit aurea ſydera clamor.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Ark of the LORD was in the Country of the Philiſtines ſeven Months.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Sadeth*, which we tranſlate *Country*, ſignifying a *Field* (as the LXX here tranſlates it, ἐν ἀγρῷ) *Theodoret*, and *Procopius Gazæus*, think, that the *Philiſtines* being ſo plagued by the Ark in their Cities, ſent it into the *open Fields :* But were diſappointed of their hope, of being freer from the hand of God there, than in their Cities ; for Mice ſprung up out of the Ground, and waſted their Corn and their Fruits, as the LXX here add, at the end of this Verſe, as they did in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 6. καὶ ἐξέζεσιν ἡ χὴ αὐτῶν μυίας, *and their Land bubbled up Mice.* But the *Chaldee* hath no ſuch thing ; and ſaith expreſly, the Ark was *in the Cities of the Philiſtines ſeven Months.*

Ver. 2. *And the Philiſtines.*] That is, the Lords of the Country.

Called for the Prieſts.] Who were beſt ſkill'd in ſacred Rites and Ceremonies.

And the Diviners.] Who were a kind of Prophets, pretending to know the Will of God, and to foretel future Events. See *Deut.* xviii. 12. of this Word *Koſemim*, which we tranſlate *Diviners.* From whence *Bochartus* thinks the *Roman* Word *Caſmilli* is derived ; being as much as *Koſme-el*, the *Miniſter of God.*

Saying, Tell us what we ſhall do to the Ark of the LORD ?] They never called it the *Ark of the LORD* 'till this time : But now were ſtruck with ſome apprehenſion that the LORD was above all Gods.

Tell us wherewith we ſhall ſend it to its place.] They did not call them to be reſolved by them, whether they ſhould ſend it home, or no, (for upon that they ſeem to have been reſolved already, *ver.* 11.) but in what manner it ſhould be ſent, and whether accompanied with any Preſents to obtain his Favour.

Ver. 3. *And they ſaid, If ye ſend away the Ark of the God of Iſrael ?*] Againſt which Reſolution they had nothing to object, but rather approved it.

Send it not empty.] They anſwer directly to the Queſtion, firſt in general ; that it muſt not be ſent back without ſome Offering.

But in any wiſe return him a Treſpaſs-offering.] Concerning the *Hebrew* Word *Aſham*, which we tranſlate *Treſpaſs-offering*, and how it differs from a *Sin-offering*, ſee upon *Levit.* v. 15. It ſeems to be preſented by the *Philiſtines*, as an Acknowledgment that they had offended the God of *Iſrael*, by bringing his Ark from its proper Place ; for which they begged his pardon by this Offering.

Then ye ſhall be healed ; and it ſhall be known to you, why his Hand is not removed from you.] It ſeems their Plagues ſtill continued (notwithſtanding their Reſolution to ſend home the Ark) but they hoped by this Offering they would be removed ; and the Reaſon would appear why they were removed no ſooner : For theſe Diviners were not ſure from whence theſe Plagues came : But by this means they thought they ſhould either be healed, or know the Ark was not the cauſe of their Sickneſs.

Ver. 4. *Then ſaid they, What ſhall be the Treſpaſs-offering, which we ſhall return to him?*] It is very obſervable what Reverence they had to their Prieſts and Prophets, without whoſe Advice they would do nothing : And therefore deſire to be particularly informed, what the Treſpaſs-offering ſhould be ; that they might not ſend one that was improper. All Nations thought their Gods were to be appeaſed, when they were angry, by honorary Gifts, as many have obſerved : Particularly *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 36. And of that Opinion they were in theſe antient times. But wiſe Men ſtill give it in charge, *Ne quis impius oblatis donis Deum placare audeat :* That *no wicked Man ſhould preſume to attempt to appeaſe God, by the offering of Gifts*, as *Cicero* ſpeaks, L. 2. *de Legibus.*

They

They answered, Five golden Emerods, and five golden Mice, according to the Number of the Lords of the Philistines.] Who were five, and were to be at the charge of offering one for each of them. This also was a Custom among the ancient Heathens to consecrate unto their Gods such Monuments of their Deliverances, as represented the Evils from which they were freed. As they dedicated to *Isis* and *Neptune* a Table, which contained the express Image of the Shipwreck, which they had escaped: And Slaves and Captives, when they had regained their Liberty, offered their Chains. Which Christians in the fifth Century began to imitate, as *Bochartus* observes (in the forenamed Place) out of *Theodoret*. Accordingly the *Philistines*, hoping shortly to be delivered from the *Emerods* and *Mice*, wherewith they were sorely afflicted, sent the Images of them unto that God from whom they expected Deliverance. And this is still practised among the Indians, as *Tavernier* relates in his Travels to their Country, *p.* 92. where he saith, That when any Pilgrim goes to a *Pagod* for the Cure of any Disease, he brings the Figure of the Member affected; made either of Gold, Silver, or Copper, according to his Quality; which he offers to his God, and then falls a singing, as all others do after they have offered. Mr. *Selden* also hath observed, that *Mice* were used among the ancient Heathen for Lustration and Cleansing, *de Diis Syris*, Syntag. 1. Cap. 6.

For one Plague was on you all, and on your Land.] The Plague of *Emerods* upon their own Bodies; and the Plague of *Mice* upon their Land.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore ye shall make Images of the Emerods and Images of your Mice, which mar the Land.*] By this it appears that their Country was infested by *Mice*, which had eaten their Corn in the Field, and other Fruits of the Earth. Which is a Plague which divers ancient Authors mention, as sent upon several Countries, by the Anger of their Gods: Particularly upon a City in *Mysia*, and upon the Country of *Troas*, as is observed by *Huetius*, in his *Quæstiones Alnetanæ*, Lib. ii. Cap. 12. N. 12. And *Bochart* hath collected a great many more Examples of such Devastations, in *Spain*, *Italy*, *Thrace*, &c. made by Mice: Which have the Name of *Achbar* in *Hebrew* (as he thinks) signifying *a Destroyer of the Field*, *Hieroz.* P. 1. L. 3. Cap. 34.

And ye shall give Glory unto the God of Israel.] That is, acknowledge him, by this Present to him, to be the Inflicter of these Plagues, and to have Power to remove them; begging his Pardon, and seeking for healing from him. For thus this Phrase signifies in the like case, *Revel.* xvi. 9. where St. *John* complains, that after many Plagues Men did not *repent, to give glory unto God:* That is, by repenting, to acknowledge his Sovereign Authority, Justice, Holiness, *&c.*

Perhaps he will lighten his Hand from off you, and from off your Gods, and from off your Land.] For they had all suffered; their Gods, as well as themselves, and their Land.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore then do ye harden your Hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their Hearts, when he had wrought wonderfully among them.*] These Words seem to import, that some of them were loth to send the Ark away with such Presents; and objected against it: Which moved the Priests and Diviners, to bid them take heed, lest they brought upon themselves the Fate of *Pharaoh*, and his People. With whose History these Men were acquainted; and being discreet Persons, made a good use of the Examples of former times: And believed as much as many of the *Israelites* did, or rather more.

Did they not let the People go, and they departed?] When it was too late, they consented to what was demanded. The *Jews* say in *Jalkut*, that the *Philistines* at first said among themselves, this is the God who smote the *Egyptians* with ten Plagues: But they are all ended. Whereupon God said, *Do you imagine I have not one Plague more? I will send such an one upon you, as never was from the beginning of the World*, &c. See *Buxtorf. Hist. Arcæ Fœderis*, cap. 19. If they had any such Thoughts, their Priests pertinently enough put them in mind of the *Egyptians:* That they might not make themselves like them in hardness of heart; as God had made them like in their Plagues.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore make a new Cart, and take two Milch Kine, on which there hath come no Yoke.*] Both these were in honour of the Ark; that they employed nothing about it, which had ever served for any other use. And there was another Reason also for the latter of these; that they might be the more certain they were led by the God of *Israel*, if they went directly unto his Country: For Kine unaccustomed to the Yoke, are wont to run back, and turn out of the way into which they are put.

And tie the Kine to the Cart, and bring their Calves home from them?] This would make it still more wonderful, if they did not return to their Calves, when they heard them bleat after them; which they naturally would have done, if a greater Power had not drawn them a contrary way.

Ver. 8. *And take the Ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the Cart; and put the Jewels of Gold, which you return him for a Trespass-offering, in a Coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go.*] They had either heard, or by their present Sufferings were made to fear, that it was dangerous to look into the Ark; and therefore they did not open it, to put their Present within it; but put it in a Coffer by the side of it. It is probable the word *Argaz* (which we meet withal no where else) in the Language of the *Philistines* signifies either a *Coffer*, or a *Purse*, or a *Wallet*, as *Josephus* translates it: And *Bochartus* thinks it likely, that these Golden Jewels were put into little Bags, which hung on either side the Ark.

Ver. 9. *And see if it go by the way of its own Coast.*] Without any Guide: And being set (as *Josephus* saith) in a Place where three ways met.

To Bethshemesh.] A City in the Tribe of *Judah*, in the Confines of both Countries.

Then he hath done us this great Evil; but if not, then we shall know that it is not his Hand that smote us; it was a Chance that happened to us.] From some unknown Cause.

Ver. 10. *And the Men did ſo, and took two Milch Kine, and tied them to the Cart; and ſhut up their Calves at home.*] The Men of *Ekron* did all this, as the Prieſts had directed.

Ver. 11. *And they laid the Ark of the LORD upon the Cart, and the Coffer, with the Mice of Gold, and the Images of their Emerods.*

Ver. 12. *And the Kine took the ſtraight way, to the way of Bethſhemeſh, and went along the high way, lowing as they went; and turned not aſide to the right hand, or to the left.*] Tho' they had no Driver or viſible Director; and had ſuch ſtrong Attractives to draw them back, and there were ſo many other ways in which they might have gone; yet they went directly towards *Bethſhemeſh*, without the leaſt deviation; lowing all the way after their Calves, which had been taken from them: Unto whom their Natural Affection would have inclined them to return, if by an higher Hand they had not been led forward to the Land of *Judah*.

And the Lords of the Philiſtines went after them to the Borders of Bethſhemeſh.] To obſerve, (as the Prieſts adviſed, *ver.* 9.) whether of themſelves they would go thither.

Ver. 13. *And they of Bethſhemeſh were reaping their Wheat-Harveſt in the Valley.*] Which being about *Pentecoſt*, it ſhews the Ark was taken Captive in the latter end of the foregoing Year. Compare this with *ver.* 1.

And they lift up their Eyes and ſaw the Ark, and rejoiced to ſee it.] Come back to them in ſuch a wonderful manner, without any viſible Conductor.

Ver. 14. *And the Cart came into the Field of Joſhua a Bethſhemite, and ſtood there.*] This was another marvellous thing, that the Kine went no further; being come into a Territory of a City of the Prieſts, (for ſo *Bethſhemeſh* was. See upon *Joſh.* xxi. 16.) who were to take care of the Ark of God.

Where there was a great Stone.] Which ſeems to have been the Boundary of the two Countries.

And they clave the Wood of the Cart, and offered the Kine a Burnt-offering unto the LORD.] The great Stone, I ſuppoſe, ſerving inſtead of an Altar; whereon they offered a whole Burnt-offering of Praiſe and Thanks to God for his Goodneſs: For they thought in reaſon that this Cart, and theſe Kine, ſhould never be converted to any common uſe, and therefore employed them in making this Sacrifice. In which the Prieſts did not ſin, tho' Cows were not, by the Law, allowed to be offered to God; and no Offering was to be made, but in the Place which God had choſen. For this was to be underſtood of ordinary Offerings, not of ſuch as an extraordinary occaſion might require: And beſides, the Ark being here, God was ſo alſo, (who as yet appointed no Place for its future Reſidence, now *Shiloh* was deſtroyed) and ſo their Sacrifices, they thought in reaſon, might be here acceptable to him. And they the rather choſe to offer theſe Cows to God, becauſe they belonged to him, and therefore were to be his Sacrifices; they having drawn his Ark, and been particularly directed by him.

Ver. 15. *And the Levites took down the Ark of the LORD, and the Coffer that was with it, wherein the Jewels of Gold were.*] It was not the Buſineſs of the *Levites* to take down the Ark; but of the Prieſts: Who after they had diſpoſed it to be fit for the *Levites* to take it upon their ſhoulders, the *Kohathites* were to carry it. See *Numb.* iv. 15.

And put them upon the great Stone.] Where, it is probable, they had before offered up the Kine, inſtead of an Altar.

And the Men of Bethſhemeſh offered Burnt-offerings, and ſacrificed Sacrifices the ſame day unto the LORD.] The *Sacrifices* (which they are ſaid to *ſacrifice*) were *Peace-offerings*; which they added to their whole Burnt-ſacrifices, that they might make a Feaſt upon them; as an Expreſſion of their great Joy to ſee the Ark returned to them in ſuch a miraculous manner.

Ver. 16. *And when the five Lords of the Philiſtines.*] Who ſtood upon the Borders of their Country, *ver.* 12.

Had ſeen it.] Beheld all the forenamed Wonders.

They returned to Ekron the ſame day.] And reported, no doubt, what they had ſeen: Which convinced them, that their Plagues came from the God of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 17. *And theſe are the golden Emerods which the Philſtines returned for a Treſpaſs-offering unto the LORD. For Aſhdod one, for Gaza one, for Aſkelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one.*] Each City of this Country, I ſuppoſe, was at the charge of preſenting one Emerod. Which Cities are not reckoned in the order wherein they lay; but *Aſhdod* being the City to which the Ark was firſt brought, it is mentioned firſt. But from South to North they lay in this order, *Gaza*, *Aſkelon*, *Aſhdod*, (which, as I ſaid, was in the middle of them) *Gath* and *Ekron*.

Ver. 18. *And the golden Mice, according to the number of all the Cities of the Philiſtines, belonging to the five Lords; both of fenced Cities and of Country Villages, even unto the great Stone of Abel, whereon they ſet down the Ark of the LORD: Which Stone remaineth to this day in the Field of Joſhua the Bethſhemite.*] As the golden Emerods were made at the publick Charge of thoſe Cities, ſo were the Mice alſo: Unto the making of which, the Villages likewiſe contributed. For their Fields being principally afflicted by the Mice, as the Cities were by the Emerods; and they being all Sharers, ſome way or other, in the publick Calamities, it was thought reaſonable they ſhould all join in this Treſpaſs-offering: Which was an Offering of the whole Nation, as far as ever their Coaſt extended, and that was to the great Stone mentioned, *ver.* 14. which is there called *Eben Gedolah*, the *great Stone*: But he *Ebelgedolah*, the *great weeping*, from the Lamentations which were here made, upon the following occaſion mentioned in the next Verſe.

Ver. 19. *And he ſmote the Men of Bethſhemeſh, becauſe they had looked into the Ark of the LORD.*] Which God had forbidden, not only to the common People, but to the Sons of *Levi* alſo, *Numb.* iv. 20. But their Curioſity made them forget their Duty: Being deſirous either to ſee whether the *Philiſtines* had taken out of the Tables the Covenant; or that they might have a view of ſuch

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an antient Sacred Monument, written by God's own Hand. Out of this Story, as *Bochartus* ingeniously conjectures, the *Greeks* forged the Fable of *Bacchus*; who was very angry with the *Athenians*, because they did not receive his Mysteries with Pomp, when they were brought out of *Bœotia* into *Attica*; and smote them with a sore Disease in their Secret Parts. In his *Canaan*, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 18. in the latter end.

Even he smote of the People fifty thousand, and threescore and ten Men.] This Translation is made by an unaccountable transposition of the words: which in the *Hebrew* lie exactly thus; He smote of the People, *threescore and ten men, fifty thousand men.* Which the *Gemara*, with *Jarchi* and *Kimchi*, and the *Targum* expound, *He smote all the Sanhedrim, which were Seventy Men, and fifty thousand of the common People.* (See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *de Synedr.* Cap. 19. N. 3.) But as it is a question whether there was any such *Sanhedrim* in these days, and it is certain there was not at *Bethshemesh*; so it is not likely it was such a populous Place, nor is there any Particle to couple the last Sum with the foregoing. Therefore *Bochart*'s Interpretation is far more reasonable, which is this, He smote *threescore and ten men*; *fifty out of a thousand men.* God was so indulgent, that is, as not to slay all that were guilty, but only *seventy* of them; observing this proportion, that out of a *thousand* Offenders, he smote only *fifty* Persons; that is, a *twentieth* part. So that of *fourteen hundred* that deserved Punishment, he smote only *seventy* Men; which is the *twentieth* part of that Number. And this Interpretation is very easy, not only supplying the Particle *Mem* before *Eleph*, making the sense to be *out of a thousand.* And he instances in many places of Scripture, where this Particle is manifestly wanting, to make out the true meaning. See his *Hieroicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 36. *p.* 370. where he shows that *Josephus* thus understood these Words, *Lib.* 6. *Antiq. Cap.* 2. where he saith God smote Ἑβδομήκοντα τῶν ἐν τῆς Βηθσάμης κώμης, *Seventy of those of the Village of Bethshemesh.* And thus *Abarbinel* also understands the first Words, that he smote at *Bethshemesh* only seventy Men; the other number, he thinks, refers to those who were slain in the Country of the *Philistines*; the Story whereof is now finished. For the Particle *Beth*, he thinks, signifies as much as *with*, in this manner: *Together with the seventy of Bethshemesh, he smote in all fifty thousand, because of the Ark.* But *Bochartus*'s Interpretation is most natural; which is highly applauded by another Person of very great Learning: *Johan. Wagenselius*, who in his Annotations upon the *Gemara* of *Sota*, (Cap. 7. Sect. 15.) saith, *Ipsa veritas militat*, Truth it self defends this Opinion of *Bochartus.* And indeed it cannot be conceived, there should be so many, as our Translation supposes, to be slain at *Bethshemesh*, and the Coasts thereof, being but a Village: Or if there had, it is very improbable that God would smite so many at once: For there would have been none left to make Lamentation. Therefore as the *Romans* decimated the Soldiers that had offended; that is, put every tenth Man to death; so God here punished half so many for this Offence of looking into the Ark.

And the People lamented, because the LORD *had smitten of the People with a great Slaughter.*] It was a great Slaughter, considering the smallness of this Place; as *Abarbinel* glosses upon these Words; who takes it, as *Josephus* doth, for a Village. And it is not strange, that some should be smitten with Death; for it was always accounted in all Nations, a great Prophaneness for any one that was not initiated, to look into their Mysteries: To prevent which hereafter, God made so many Examples of his Displeasure in this place. Instances of those among the Heathen, who were struck blind, or upon whom some other Calamity fell, upon such account, the Illustrious *Spanhemius* hath noted in his Observations upon *Callimachus* his Hymn in *Lavacrum Palladis*, ver. 34. yea, tho' they did it ignorantly, as he shews upon *ver.* 78, & 82. *p.* 606. See also *Huetius* in his *Alnetanæ Quæstiones*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. p. 200.

Ver. 20. *And the Men of Bethshemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy* LORD *God? And to whom shall he go up from us?*] They seem, by this, to be sensible of their Rashness, and acknowledge the Holiness of God to be such, that they were not worthy of his Divine Presence among them: But desire that some who could do him honour better than they, might take the Ark into their Care. But *Abarbinel* thinks they were only struck with a great fear, as the *Philistines* were when God plagued them: Which made them send the Ark from one Place to another; as they of *Bethshemesh* now sent to those of *Kirjath-jearim*, to come and fetch the Ark to their City; fearing more of them should die, if it staid with them at *Bethshemesh.*

Ver. 21. *And they sent Messengers to the Inhabitants of Kirjath-jearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the Ark of the* LORD, *come ye down and fetch it unto you.*] This was a City which stood upon a Hill, and therefore they desired them to *come down* from thence. And being a strong Place, there they thought the Ark might be secure, in case of any new Incursions of their Enemies. See concerning this City, *Josh.* xv. 9, 10. where it is called also *Kirjath-Baal*, xviii. 14. and *Baalah*, or *Baal-Judah*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 2. 1 *Chron.* xiii. 6.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Men of Kirjath-jearim came, and fetch'd up the Ark of the* LORD.] They chearfully received the Message; and were so far from thinking themselves in danger by entertaining it, that they thought it a Blessing, and kept it with them till the Reign of *David.*

And brought it to the House of Aminadab, in the Hill.] In the highest Part, I suppose, of the City: As *David* afterwards placed it upon Mount *Sion.*

And sanctified Eleazer his Son to keep the Ark of the LORD.] Which belonged to the *Levites*: Therefore *Aminadab* was of that Tribe, otherwise he could not have consecrated (*i. e.* set apart,

apart, or ſolemnly appointed) his Son to *keep the Ark*, *i. e.* to attend it, and ſee that no Rudeneſs was offered to it ; as well as to keep a Guard about it, to defend it from violence. If it be enquired why they did not carry the Ark to *Shiloh*, its ancient Seat ; the Anſwer is, that the *Philiſtines* had deſtroyed that Place ; and the *Tabernacle* upon the Death of *Eli*, was removed from thence unto *Nob* ; where it remained till the Death of *Samuel*. And after his Death, it was carried to *Gibeon*, where it remained *fifty* Years, according to the account of the Author of *Seder Olam Rabba*. All which time the *Ark* was in *Kirjath-jearim*, 'till *David* brought it firſt to the Houſe of *Obed-Edom*, and then to his own City. After which the *Tabernacle* ſtill remained at *Gibeon* till *Solomon*'s Temple was built, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 39. 2 *Chron.* i. 3. where we read, that even after the Death of his Father, *Solomon* ſacrificed at *Gibeon*, the Tabernacle being there.

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim the time was long, for it was twenty Years.*] This is not to be underſtood of the whole time that the Ark remained here : For it continued, as I ſaid before, in this Place, till the time of *David*, (2 *Chron.* vi. 3.) which was about *forty ſix* Years : therefore it refers to the following Words.

And all the Houſe of Iſrael lamented after the LORD.] Or rather, (as Dr. *Lightfoot* tranſlates them) *Then all the Houſe of Iſrael*, &c. Their Idolatry had taken ſuch deep root in them, that neither the loſs of the Ark, nor the ſlaughter of ſo many *Iſraelites* wrought upon their Hearts : But it was twenty Years before they minded the Ark, or took any notice of it : Then they were awakened to ſome ſenſe of their Duty, and began to ſeek the Favour of God, and lament their Apoſtacy from him. See his *Annot.* on this Place, and upon *Acts* iii. 24. *p.* 758. And one Reaſon why they did not regard the Ark, was perhaps, becauſe it was now ſeated in the Borders of the Country of the *Philiſtines*, of whom they were afraid. And this is the ſenſe of *Abarbinel*. For tho' others think, that from the Day that the Ark came to *Kirjath-jearim*, the *Iſraelites* began to lament their Sins, and to turn to God ; having heard of the Miracles that had been done in the Land of the *Philiſtines*, *&c.* yet he doth not approve of this Opinion ; but will have their Lamentation to begin after the Ark had been twenty Years at this Place : Where it remained many more Years than twenty.

Ver. 3. *And Samuel ſpake unto all the Houſe of Iſrael.*] Who were aſſembled at ſome ſolemn Feſtival ; or were ſummoned by him to attend him : For after the Death of *Eli* he began to judge *Iſrael*.

If you return to the LORD *with all your heart.*] By this it appears, that his Reproofs, and Inſtructions, and the Repreſentation he had made of their Sin, and of their Danger, had touched their Hearts, and made them begin to lament themſelves, and ſeek his Favour : Whereupon he exhorts them, to give this following Proof of their Sincerity.

Then put away the ſtrange Gods and Aſhtaroth, from among you.] By the *ſtrange Gods* I take *Baalim* to be meant : Which are frequently joined with *Aſhtaroth*, as they are in the very next Verſe to this, where their Obedience to this Exhortation is reported. And ſee upon *Judges* ii. 12, 13, 17. *Judges* iii. 7. viii. 33.

And prepare your Heart unto the LORD.] By ſerious Reſolutions.

To ſerve him only.] As it follows in the next Verſe.

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And I will pray for you unto the LORD.] To accept of their Repentance, and pardon their Sins, and eſtabliſh them in their good Reſolution to ſerve the LORD alone ; and to deliver them out of the hand of the *Philiſtines*. For all which he could have prayed alone by himſelf ; but he thought their Publick Prayer would be more effectual.

Ver. 6. *And they gathered in Mizpeh, and drew Water, and poured it out before the* LORD, *and faſted on that Day, and ſaid there, We have ſinned againſt the* LORD.] This being a Day of Humiliation, Faſting and Prayer, as appears by the latter part of theſe Words, Interpreters commonly expound the former Part of them, as belonging to the ſame matter. And ſome think, as the *Targum* doth, that by *pouring out Water*, is to be underſtood the Tears of Contrition, which were drawn from the bottom of their Hearts, and fell from their Eyes before the LORD. Others think they waſhed their Bodies in Water, ſignifying the Purification of their Souls from the filthineſs of Sin. And others, (which *Bochartus* himſelf thinks more probable) that this Water was poured on the Ground, in token of the Expiation of their Sin, which they deſired and hoped might be remembred no more : as Water poured on the Ground could no more be ſeen. Unto which they think a Place in *Job* alludes, xi. 16. But we no where find any ſuch Rite as this among the *Jews*, either in ancient, or later times. And the Conjecture of *Fortunatus Scacchus* ſeems more ingenious, That an Altar being to be erected to offer Sacrifice, they poured out Water to cleanſe the Ground, that it might not be ſet up in an impure Place, *Myrothec. Ælæochriſm. Sacr.* 2. Cap. 31. But after all, I think the Interpretation which *Conſtantine L'Empereur* hath given of theſe Words (in his Annot. on *Codex Middoth*, Cap. 2.) is far more reaſonable ; which is, that they *poured out Water* in token of Joy, after they had faſted and confeſſed their Sins, (for he tranſlates the Words, *Poſtquam jejunarunt*, *after they had faſted on that day*,) as they were wont to do in the Feaſt of Tabernacles : Unto which he refers thoſe Words in *Iſa.* xii. 3. in which the Prophet foretels the Joy that ſhould be in the Days of the Meſſiah, by ſaying, *Ye ſhall draw Waters*

Waters with Joy out of the Wells of Salvation: Alluding to a known Rite among the *Israelites*, in the Feast of Tabernacles, unto which our Saviour is thought to allude, *John* vii. 37, 38. And there is the greater Reason for this Interpretation, because *Samuel* had just before promised them, that the LORD would deliver them from the *Philistines*, if they heartily repented: Which made them rejoice in hope of it, because they did now sincerely turn to him.

And Samuel judged the Children of Israel in Mizpeh.] When they were reconciled to God, he reconciled them one to another, by determining their Differences, and doing right where any one was wrong'd: Or he declared the Law to them whereby they were to be judged; and perhaps punished some gross Idolaters, or other great Offenders.

Ver. 7. *And when the Philistines heard that the Children of Israel were gathered together at Mizpeh, the Lords of the Philistines went up against Israel.*] Being ignorant of the true Reasons of this Meeting, the *Philistines* imagined the *Israelites* assembled to consult about War, and so resolved to be beforehand with them, and surprize them.

And when the Children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines.] Being unarm'd, I suppose, or not prepared to give them Battle.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Israel said unto Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hands of the Philistines.*] According to the Promise made to them, *ver.* 3.

Ver. 9. *And Samuel took a sucking Lamb.*] For after a Lamb was *eight* days old, it was fit to be sacrificed unto God, *Exod.* xxii. 30. *Levit.* xvii. 27. The *Hebrew* Word *Tale*, is the Name for the youngest Sheep; as *Ajil* is for the eldest; and *Chebes* for one between both.

And offered it for a Burnt-offering wholly unto the LORD.] Whereby he supplicated the Divine Mercy, as the Son of *Sirach* explains it, *Ecclus.* xlvi. 16. *He called upon the mighty LORD, when his Enemies pressed him on every side,* ἐν προσφυρᾷ, *by the Obligation of a sucking Lamb.*

And Samuel cried unto the LORD God of Israel, and the LORD heard him.] Which is a demonstration that tho' he was not a Priest, nor this place appointed for Sacrifice; yet as a Prophet, he had Authority from God, to build an Altar any where, and to make his Supplication in this manner. Thus other holy Men, *Gideon* and *Manoah*, were warranted to offer extraordinary Sacrifices, in places which God had not before appointed. And it is probable, that God answer'd *Samuel*, as he did *Manoah*, by Fire consuming the Sacrifice, in testimony of God's acceptance, *Judges* xiii. 20. And thus we read of an Altar he built in another place, *ver.* 17. as *Elijah* did in following times.

Ver. 10. *And as Samuel was offering up the Burnt-offering.*] Before it was consumed.

The Philistines drew near to Battle against Israel.] Hoping to find them unprepared. The Son of *Sirach* saith, they of *Tyre* joined with the *Philistines* in this Action, *Ecclus.* xlvi. 17.

But the LORD thundered with a great Thunder on that Day, upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.] They were affrighted, like Men out of their Wits, with Thunder and Lightening; which killed many of them, before the *Israelites* could come up to fight them. For together with this horrible Tempest, *Josephus* saith, there was an Earthquake, and that the Earth opened in several Places, and swallowed up some of them; who, like blind Men, ran into those Gaps.

Ver. 11. *And the Men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and pursued after the Philistines.*] Having *Samuel* to lead them, as their Captain, according to *Josephus*.

And smote them, until they came under Bethcar.] A place in the Confines of the Tribe of *Judah*. This Victory was the more wonderful, because we do not find the *Israelites* came appointed with any Weapons to *Mizpeh*: But, as far as can be gathered by the Relation of the Fight, they smote them with their own Weapons; which the *Philistines* threw away when they fled, and which were found among those that were slain by the Lightening.

Ver. 12. *And Samuel took a Stone and set it up between Mizpeh and Shen.*] So *Jacob* and *Joshua* had done, as Monuments of God's Mercy to them, and their Obligations to him.

And called the Name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.] That is, thus far we have gotten the better: For they were not utterly destroyed, but driven quite out of their Coasts, as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 13. *So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the Coast of Israel.*] He put an end to the *forty* Years Tyranny of the *Philistines*, mentioned *Judges* xiii. 1. (See my Notes there, and upon *ver.* 5. of that Chapter) and *Judges* xv. 20.

And the Hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the Days of Samuel.] As in this Battle he gave them such an overthrow, that they were quite driven out of the Country of *Israel:* So during *Samuel*'s Government, 'till *Saul* was made King, we never read that they attempted with an Army to invade them; but then they did, xiii. 19.

Ver. 14. *And the Cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel, were restored to Israel.*] They not only expelled the *Philistines*, but recovered also several places of which the *Philistines* had possessed themselves, during their Dominion over them.

From Ekron even unto Gath, and the Coasts thereof, did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines.] *Ekron* was in the Tribe of *Judah*; *Josh.* xv. 45. which the *Philistines* now forsook out of fear, as some think; or were driven out of it for the present, tho' it was not long before they got possession of it again.

And there was Peace between Israel and the Amorites.] Not by Compact and Covenant; but by the Inclination of both sides, they abstained from all hostile Actions. The *Amorites* were not the only Remainders of the old Inhabitants of *Canaan*; but being the most powerful among them, they had long given Name to the rest, *Gen.* xv. 16. And now the *Philistines* were thus subdued, none of them, who used to infest the *Israelites*, durst stir to give them any molestation, but sat quiet and still.

Ver.

apart, or ſolemnly appointed) his Son to *keep the Ark*, *i. e.* to attend it, and ſee that no Rudeneſs was offered to it ; as well as to keep a Guard about it, to defend it from violence. If it be enquired why they did not carry the Ark to *Shiloh*, its ancient Seat ; the Anſwer is, that the *Philiſtines* had deſtroyed that Place ; and the *Tabernacle* upon the Death of *Eli*, was removed from thence unto *Nob* ; where it remained till the Death of *Samuel*. And after his Death, it was carried to *Gibeon*, where it remained *fifty* Years, according to the account of the Author of *Seder Olam Rabba*. All which time the *Ark* was in *Kirjath-jearim*, 'till *David* brought it firſt to the Houſe of *Obed-Edom*, and then to his own City. After which the *Tabernacle* ſtill remained at *Gibeon* till *Solomon*'s Temple was built, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 39. 2 *Chron.* i. 3. where we read, that even after the Death of his Father, *Solomon* ſacrificed at *Gibeon*, the Tabernacle being there.

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim the time was long, for it was twenty Years.*] This is not to be underſtood of the whole time that the Ark remained here : For it continued, as I ſaid before, in this Place, till the time of *David*, (2 *Chron.* vi. 3.) which was about *forty ſix* Years : therefore it refers to the following Words.

And all the Houſe of Iſrael lamented after the LORD.] Or rather, (as Dr. *Lightfoot* tranſlates them) *Then all the Houſe of Iſrael*, &c. Their Idolatry had taken ſuch deep root in them, that neither the loſs of the Ark, nor the ſlaughter of ſo many *Iſraelites* wrought upon their Hearts : But it was twenty Years before they minded the Ark, or took any notice of it : Then they were awakened to ſome ſenſe of their Duty, and began to ſeek the Favour of God, and lament their Apoſtacy from him. See his *Annot.* on this Place, and upon *Acts* iii. 24. *p.* 758. And one Reaſon why they did not regard the Ark, was perhaps, becauſe it was now ſeated in the Borders of the Country of the *Philiſtines*, of whom they were afraid. And this is the ſenſe of *Abarbinel*. For tho' others think, that from the Day that the Ark came to *Kirjath-jearim*, the *Iſraelites* began to lament their Sins, and to turn to God ; having heard of the Miracles that had been done in the Land of the *Philiſtines*, *&c.* yet he doth not approve of this Opinion ; but will have their Lamentation to begin after the Ark had been twenty Years at this Place : Where it remained many more Years than twenty.

Ver. 3. *And Samuel ſpake unto all the Houſe of Iſrael.*] Who were aſſembled at ſome ſolemn Feſtival ; or were ſummoned by him to attend him : For after the Death of *Eli* he began to judge *Iſrael*.

If you return to the LORD *with all your heart.*] By this it appears, that his Reproofs, and Inſtructions, and the Repreſentation he had made of their Sin, and of their Danger, had touched their Hearts, and made them begin to lament themſelves, and ſeek his Favour : Whereupon he exhorts them, to give this following Proof of their Sincerity.

Then put away the ſtrange Gods and Aſhtaroth, from among you.] By the *ſtrange Gods* I take *Baalim* to be meant : Which are frequently joined with *Aſhtaroth*, as they are in the very next Verſe to this, where their Obedience to this Exhortation is reported. And ſee upon *Judges* ii. 12, 13, 17. *Judges* iii. 7. viii. 33.

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Ver.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel judged Iſrael all the days of his Life.*] From theſe Words Mr. *Hobbs*, and his Followers, draw an Argument, that this was written by ſomebody after the Death of *Samuel*. Which is a very weak Proof: For the ſenſe may be no more than this; that *Samuel* was ſo diligent in the Diſcharge of his Office, that he gave himſelf no Reſt, but ſate to judge Cauſes every day.

Ver. 16. *And he went from Year to Year, in a Circuit, to Bethel, and Gilgal, and Mizpeh, and judged Iſrael in all thoſe places.*] Ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἡγιασμένας τάτοις, *In all theſe ſanctified places*, as the LXX tranſlates theſe laſt Words, (tho' there be no ſuch thing in the *Hebrew*) becauſe, as Mr. *Mede* conjectures, here were *Proſeucha's*, *i. e.* Places of Prayer, in thoſe ancient Days. But we may more certainly gather from hence, that there was no ſuch High Court then eſtabliſhed (which they call the *Sanhedrim* in following Ages) to judge all Cauſes; at leaſt, not ſuch inferior Courts, as were appointed by the Law in *Deut.* xvi. 18. as the High Court is in *Deut.* xviii. 8. For if there had, there would have been no need of *Samuel's* riding Circuit every year about the Country, to do Juſtice; as other *Judges* had done. *Judges* v. 10. x. 4. xii. 14.

Ver. 17. *And his Return was to Ramah; for there was his Houſe, and there he judged Iſrael.*] The Power of the *Judges* was greateſt in War: But when it was over, they ſtill retained ſuch an Authority, that all difficult Cauſes (at leaſt) were brought before them. They were conſulted alſo in all Political Affairs: And that they might know where to reſort to *Samuel*, when he had ended his Circuit, he kept his conſtant ſtation at *Ramah*.

And there he built an Altar unto the LORD.] There being no Declaration yet made, where God would have the Ark to be fixed, after the Deſtruction of *Shiloh*, he built an Altar where he himſelf conſtantly reſided. Becauſe it was fit, when they conſulted about any publick Buſineſs, concerning the Good of the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, that there ſhould be a publick Invocation of God's Direction and Bleſſing: Which was done by Sacrifice, as appears from *ver.* 9.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs when Samuel was old.*] The *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba*, and other Books, make *Samuel* to have lived no more than *fifty two* Years; when he could not be ſaid to be old. Therefore *Abarbinel* forſakes the Doctors in this, and ſhews their Proofs of it to be very weak; and thinks that he rather lived 'till he was *Seventy*, if not Eighty Years old. But leſs than *Seventy*, he affirms, *none of the Prophets or good Men lived.*

That he made his Sons Judges over Iſrael.] When he could not well ſuſtain all the Labour, he took them to aſſiſt him: both when he went his Circuit, and in hearing Cauſes at home. Or, perhaps, when he was old, he went Circuit no more; but ſettled them in a convenient Place (as it follows in the next Verſe) where People might have Juſtice done them, either by him, or by them.

Ver. 2. *Now the Name of his firſt-born was Joel, and the Name of his ſecond Abijah; they were Judges in Beerſheba.*] As his conſtant Reſidence was at *Ramah*; ſo he ordered theirs to be at *Beerſheba*. Whereby, as *Corn. Bertram* obſerves, (Cap. 9. *de Repub. Jud.*) the Country was divided into two parts, for the greater Convenience of the People; that the Cauſes of all thoſe who dwelt between *Dan* and Mount *Ephraim*, might be brought to be judged by *Samuel* at *Ramah*; and the Cauſes of thoſe between Mount *Ephraim* and *Beerſheba*, might be judged by his Sons.

Ver. 3. *And his Sons walked not in his Ways; but turned aſide after Lucre, and took Bribes, and perverted Judgment.*] Covetouſneſs made them take Bribes (contrary to the Law, *Exod.* xviii. 8.) and they made them *pervert Judgment*. See *Exod.* xxiii. 21. *Deut.* xvi. 19. *Procopius Gazæus* here aſks this Queſtion: Why God did not puniſh *Samuel*, as he did *Eli*, for the Wickedneſs of his Sons? Unto which he anſwers, that *Samuel's* Sons were not ſo bad as *Eli's*: For taking Bribes privately, was not like open profaning the Tabernacle, and making the Worſhip of God contemptible. And beſides, it is poſſible *Samuel* might be ignorant of this Corruption in his Sons: Who did not live near him, but he in *Ramah*, and they at *Beerſheba*.

Ver. 4. *And all the Elders of Iſrael gathered themſelves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah.*] All the great Men who were diſſatisfied with the Management of Affairs, came to *Ramah*: Which was one of the Places where *Samuel* judged the People, and determined their Controverſies, vii. 16, 17.

And they ſaid unto him, Behold thou art old, and thy Sons walk not in thy ways, make us a King to judge us, like all the Nations.] The Weakneſs of *Samuel's* Body, and the ill Diſpoſition of his Sons Minds, they make their pretence of demanding what they had long deſired to have. The *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrim*, Cap. 2. Sect. 6. according to the Tradition of *R. Eliezer*, ſaith, the Elders were in the right, in *deſiring a King to judge them*: For according to the Opinion of ſome of their Doctors, this was one of the *three* things God commanded to be done, when they came into *Canaan*, that they ſhould make them a King. The only Error was, which aroſe, they ſay, from the Perverſeneſs of the vulgar People, that they deſired a King, like *all the Nations*. But theſe are mere Fancies; for God gave no ſuch Command, as their beſt Authors, *Bechai*, *Nachman*, *Ralbeg*, and others acknowledge. But their own Pride and Vanity ſuggeſted theſe Deſires to them, that they might not want that outward Pomp and Show which was among their Neighbours. Fear alſo of a potent Enemy, who was about to invade them, might make them think a King neceſſary to lead them on ſucceſsfully to encounter him, (*ver.* 20. and xii. 12.) But above all, this proceeded from their Inſenſibility of the great Honour they enjoyed above all Mankind, in being under the peculiar Government of God: For whom they had ſo little Regard, that

that he ſaith, *ver.* 7. they *deſpiſed him*; that is, made nothing of ſuch a King as they could not ſee. But that he had the Supreme Power over them was apparent, in that when they prayed *Samuel* to make them a King, immediately he prayed to God; ſhewing it was not in his power to do it, but in God alone.

Ver. 6. *But the thing diſpleaſed Samuel, when they ſaid, Give us a King to judge us; and Samuel prayed unto the* LORD.] To give him Direction what to do in this caſe: But thus far the *Elders* were in the right, that they came to the Prophet to aſk a King: For none, as I ſaid, could make one, but the LORD alone, who was their Sovereign.

Ver. 7. *And the* LORD *ſaid, Hearken unto the Voice of the People, in all that they ſay unto thee.*] Theſe are the Words of an angry Sovereign, (*Hoſea* xiii. 11.) being as much as to ſay, Let them have their Will. Which he indulged to them, partly to puniſh them; and partly to preſerve them from Apoſtaſy from their Religion. For being as violently ſet upon having a King after the manner of the *Egyptians*, as they had been to follow their Gods, they might have thrown off the Law itſelf, and conformed entirely to the Cuſtoms of other Nations, if they had not been humoured: For they were ſo ſet upon it, as appears from *ver.* 19. that after the Prophet had repreſented to them, how much they would loſe by having their Deſires granted, they perſiſted in them, ſaying: *Nay, but we will have a King*, &c. Which expreſſes a Reſolution to have one whatſoever became of them.

For they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me; that I ſhould not reign over them.] Theſe words ſhew, that *Samuel* took it very heavily, that they ſhould be diſſatisfied with his Government: But God tells him, he himſelf had more Reaſon to be angry; for in truth, they had thrown off his Authority, who was their King: (as *Samuel* tells them afterwards xii. 12.) and therefore was highly offended they ſhould deſire any other. Which the *Jewiſh* Doctors abovemention'd (*ver.* 5.) juſtly make an Argument that God did not command them in the Book of *Deuteronomy* to make them a King; becauſe he was diſpleaſed when they deſired to have one. For the Supreme LORD of the World was their Sovereign, who governed them by *Judges*, whom he raiſed up and extraordinarily inſpired, when he ſaw occaſion: As he had before conducted them by *Joſhua* and *Moſes*, who never ordained any thing of moment without a ſpecial Command for it from God: Who reſerved to himſelf the ſole Power of eſtabliſhing Laws, and appointing Magiſtrates, and making War, as appears by the War againſt the *Midianites*, *Numb.* xxxi. For there is no truth in their Opinion, who imagine that the Government of the *Iſraelites*, before they had a King, was an *Ariſtocracy*. *Joſephus* indeed ſeems to ſay ſo, in one or two places of his *Antiquities*: But in his Book againſt *Appion* (a very Learned Gentile) wherein he writes moſt accurately, he makes it a diſtinct Sort of Government, different from all other; which he truly calls by a new Name, ΘΕΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ, *the Government of God*, lib. 2. For God exerciſed the Supreme Authority among them, by his expreſs Command. Which being without Example, that it may not ſeem incredible to thoſe, who are wont to detract from the Sacred Hiſtory, it may be fit to obſerve, (to uſe the words of *Hermannus Conringius*, in his Animadverſions on *Machiavel's Princeps*, cap. vi.) that the Dæmons who were worſhipped as Gods by the Gentiles, attempted to imitate this, by ſetting up a like Government. So that memorable Hiſtory of the Original of the Commonwealth of the *Cyrenians* in *Egypt*, mentioned by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, *Pauſanias*, *Juſtin*, and others. And that Hiſtory of the Beginning of *Heraclea* in *Pontus*, which *Juſtin* relates, *Lib.* xvi. *Cap.* 3. For this Republick being raiſed by the expreſs Command of Dæmons, was upon that account, they ſay, exceeding flouriſhing. No leſs memorable is the Republick of the *Mexicans* in *America*, erected by the Command of their Dæmon *Vitzipultzi*; who above all others endeavoured to imitate the Miracles wrought by God for the *Iſraelites*. Many others, he there ſhews, pretended to this; tho' all was tranſacted by themſelves.

Ver. 8. *According to all the works that they have done, ſince the day that I brought them out of Egypt, unto this day; wherewith they have forſaken me, and ſerved other Gods; ſo do they alſo unto thee.*] No wonder they deſired another ſort of Ruler than *Samuel*; for they had choſen other Gods. And this had been their wicked Humour ever ſince they were delivered from the Tyranny of *Pharaoh*.

Ver. 9. *Now therefore hearken unto their voice.*] Since they had no greater regard unto God, and his Miniſter; he reſolved to let them exchange his Government, for ſuch an one as the Nations had; who often oppreſſed them.

Howbeit, yet proteſt ſolemnly unto them: and ſhew them the manner of the King that ſhall reign over them.] He continuing ſtill their King, God was ſo very gracious, as to order *Samuel* to lay before them at large, into what Servitude they were going to throw themſelves by caſting off the Government of *Judges* ſet over them by God himſelf; and ſubjecting themſelves to the Power of ſuch Kings as ruled in other Nations.

Ver. 10. *And Samuel told all the words of the* LORD *unto the people, that aſked of him a King.*] How ill God took it, looking upon it as a rejection of himſelf; who had hitherto governed them moſt graciouſly, and often delivered them from the heavieſt Oppreſſions. For he either ſtirred up ſome Perſon, by an immediate ſignification of his will and pleaſure, to be their *Judge*: Or when there was none, he was ready to rule their Proceedings himſelf, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, directing them what Courſe to follow, in the publick Concerns of the Nation. Theſe two things plainly demonſtrated (as our Mr. *Thorndike* hath well obſerved) that God was their King, whom they now caſt off. See *Review of the Rights of the Church*, p. 68, 133.

Ver. 11. *And he ſaid, This ſhall be the manner of the King that ſhall reign over you.*] And moreover he declared what kind of Government they choſe, inſtead of God's. There are various

various Opinions about the *Jus Regium*, the Royal Power here mentioned. Which containing divers Particulars that ſeem arbitrary and unjuſt, Interpreters have choſen to expound the *Hebrew* Word *Miſhpat*, not by *jus*, but by *mos* and *conſuetudo*; that is, not by *Right*, but by *Manner* and *Cuſtom*. And ſo the Words may be tranſlated, as *Joſeph Scaliger* obſerved long ago from many Inſtances, (*Epiſt.* xv.) particularly *Gen.* xl. 13. and in this Book xxvii. 11. See *Petavius* alſo upon *Epiphanius*, *Hæreſ.* lv. N. 9. But there is no neceſſity of this, as *Grotius* rightly obſerves, and from him *Conringius*. For *Samuel* doth not ſpeak of a juſt and honeſt Right of a King to do theſe things (for his Right is quite otherwiſe deſcribed, in that part of *Moſes*'s Law, which concerns the King's Duty) but ſuch a Right as the Kings of the Nations had then acquired: For they deſired ſuch a King as their Neighbours had; who were all under the abſolute Dominion of their Princes. Which *Ariſtotle* calls, δεσποτικὴν ἀρχήν. Lib. v. Polit. cap. 10. Οἱ περὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν ὑπομένουσι μὲν δεσποτικὴν ἀρχήν, ἠδέν, δυσχεραίνοντες, *They of* Aſia *endure a Deſpotick Government, nothing at all complaining.*

He will take your Sons, and appoint them for himſelf.] To attend him as the Guards of his Body, and in other Offices. This ſhews that he ſpeaks of an arbitrary Power, which Kings in thoſe days uſed. And therefore *Abarbinel* obſerves that *Samuel* doth not ſay abſolutely, *I will ſhew you the Manner or Right of the King*, (as if it were a Right belonging to all Kings) but *that ſhall reign over you*; that is, of ſuch a King as you deſire, who will adminiſter Affairs in this faſhion.

For his Chariots, and to be his Horſemen.] To look after his Chariots and his Horſes. For ſo the Word *Paras* ſignifies, (as *Lud. De Dieu*, and *Bochartus* have obſerved) and theſe Words ſhould be thus tranſlated, *For his Chariots and his Horſes.*

And ſome ſhall run before his Chariots.] Be his Footmen.

Ver. 12. *And he will appoint him Captains over thouſands, and Captains over fifties.*] Others ſhould be diſpoſed of to Military Offices, higher or lower, as pleaſed him, (xiv. 52.) who were to be perfectly ſubject to him, and diſplaced by him, when he thought good.

And will ſet them to ear his Grouud, and to reap his Harveſt.] Others ſhould be made Huſbandmen, to plough his Ground, and reap his Corn on his own Terms; when, perhaps, their Labour was neceſſary about their own Fields.

And to make him Inſtruments of War, and Inſtruments of his Chariots.] Others he would make Artificers: Which was not very agreeable to that Nation; who were inclined from their beginning, rather to look after the Breed of Cattle.

Ver. 13. *And he will take your Daughters to be Confectioners, and to be Cooks, and to be Bakers.*] He would exerciſe, he ſhews, as Arbitrary Power over the Women, as over the Men; whom he would make to ſerve in ſuch Employments as he thought fit; either for nothing, or ſuch Wages as he pleaſed to give them.

Ver. 14. *And he will take your Fields and your Vineyards, and your Olive-yards, even the beſt of them, and give them to his Servants.*] Beſtow them on ſuch of his Courtiers as he thought good to raiſe to great Eſtates. Which is not to be underſtood, as if he ſhould challenge a Right to take their Lands from them, (for the contrary appears from the Story of *Ahab*, who without a very wicked Contrivance could not poſſeſs himſelf of *Naboth*'s Vineyard) but that he ſhould take the Fruit of them, when he thought it neceſſary, eſpecially in time of War, to gratify his Soldiers. To this Caſe *Abarbinel* confines the Senſe of theſe Words.

Ver. 15. *And he will take the tenth of your Seed, and of your Vineyards.*] This was part of the *Jus Regium* in the Eaſtern Countries, (ſee my Notes upon *Gen.* xxviii. 22.) to have the tenth part of the Fruit of the Land for the King's ſhare: And if they contented themſelves with this Portion, they were accounted good Kings. As *Cypſelus* King of *Corinth*, is obſerved by *Ariſtotle* to have exacted no more of his Subjects than the Tenth of their Fruits. Such Capitations and Taxes, as *Bodinus* ſpeaks, (Lib. vi. *de Repubi.* cap. 2.) which are uſual now, being unknown in thoſe days.

And give to his Officers, and to his Servants.] This Revenue being brought into his Exchequer, he therewith paid his Bed-chamber-men, and other Servants, their Salaries. I call them *Bed-chamber-men*, becauſe the *Hebrew* Word (which we tranſlate *Officers*) ſignifies *Eunuchs*, (as the LXX here tranſlate it) who commonly attended them in their Chambers. And it was the more grievous to have ſuch Men maintained out of this Revenue, becauſe they were Strangers: For it was not lawful for the *Jews* to make any of their Nation an Eunuch. This Revenue itſelf alſo proved a heavy Burden upon the *Jews*, becauſe this tenth Part was exacted out of the remainder, after the tenth Part had been paid to the *Levites*, as *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel* obſerve.

Ver. 16. *And he will take your Men-ſervants, and your Maid-ſervants, and your goodlieſt young Men.*] The moſt beautiful and proper Perſons he could find.

And your Aſſes, and put them to his Work.] Either at the Plough, or for Carriage, or any other Employment wherein they were neceſſary.

Ver. 17. *And he will take the tenth of your Sheep, and ye ſhall be his Servants.*] So ſubject to him, that if he pleaſed, they ſhould be no better than his Slaves. I know none that hath diſcourſed this whole matter ſo perſpicuouſly and fully, as the late Learned *Puffendorf*, whoſe Words I ſhall tranſlate, as I find them in his Book, *De Rebus geſtis Philippi.* This People, ſaith he, had hitherto lived under Governours raiſed up by Divine Inſtinct, who had exacted no Tribute of them, nor put them to any Charges. With which Government they being not contented, but deſiring to have a King like other Nations, that ſhould live in Pomp and Splendor, and keep ſtanding Forces about him, to be ready to reſiſt any Invaſion: *Samuel* informs them, what it was they deſired, that they might conſider, when they underſtood it, whether they would perſiſt in their Choice: If they would have a King magnificently attended, then he tells them, the King will take their

Sons

Sons, and put them in his Chariots, *&c.* v. 11. If they would have him keep up conſtant Forces, then he muſt appoint them for Colonels and Captains, and employ thoſe in his Wars, who were wont to follow their Family-Buſineſs, *ver.* 12. And ſince after the manner of other Kings he muſt keep a ſtately Court, they muſt be content that their Daughters *(ver.* 13.*)* ſhould ſerve in ſeveral Offices; which the King would think below the Dignity of his Wives and Daughters. Many Miniſters alſo in ſeveral Employments both in War and Peace, muſt have Salaries to ſupport them; which muſt be paid out of their Fields and Vineyards, *ver.* 14. For which Services he tells them, the King will exact the Tenth of all belonging to them, that he may maintain his Royal Expences. In one word, if you will have a King, he muſt be maintained, after a Royal Manner, out of your Eſtates.

Ver. 18. *And ye ſhall cry out in that day, becauſe of your King which you have choſen.*] This ſhews that in all the foregoing Verſes, *Samuel* deſcribes the uncontroulable Power which the *Eaſtern* Princes exerciſed over their Subjects; who were patiently to bear whatſoever their Princes impoſed upon them, without any Power to help themſelves. For, as *Grotius* obſerves, this *Miſhpat* doth not ſignify a true Right, but ſuch a Fact as hath *Effectum Juris*, (the Effect of Right) *viz.* an Obligation of not reſiſting: Which is the Reaſon that *Samuel* adds theſe Words; that the People loaded with intolerable Oppreſſions, ſhould implore the Help of God, becauſe there was no human Remedy left for their Relief. See Lib. 1. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 4. Sect. 3. This plainly confutes the Fancy of the *Jews* concerning their *Sanhedrim*, and their Power to ſcourge Princes: For as *Samuel* conſulted no body in making a King, but God alone; ſo when he was made, he got ſuch a Power, that it is ridiculous to think that High-Court could controul him.

And the LORD will not hear you in that day.] But leave them under this heavy Yoke; becauſe they would not hearken unto him, when he repreſented to them what would be the Effect of that Power which they deſired him to ſet over them.

Ver. 19. *Nevertheleſs the People refuſed to obey the Voice of Samuel; and they ſaid, Nay, but we will have a King over us.*] This Deſcription of the Government of the *Eaſtern* Kings, did not deter them from perſiſting in their Deſires. But they peremptorily demanded a King, tho' *Samuel* told them, that this *Demand* was a throwing off the Government of God. Who always heard their Cry, when they were oppreſſed by their Enemies; but now would leave them without any Help, when they groaned under the Oppreſſion of their Kings. Which Obſtinacy, as an excellent Perſon of ours (Dr. *Jackſon*) ſpeaks, did prognoſticate that incurable and deſperate Diſeaſe, which had its fatal Criſis in their rejecting *Chriſt*: who was both Prieſt and Prophet, and their lawful King. In caſting off whom, they could not but caſt off God, that he ſhould not reign over them. And ſo a great Admirer of his paraphraſeth the *Seventh* Verſe of this Chapter: *Let it not grieve thy Spirit, that they grow weary of thee: But let them have their Will, for ſo will they ſerve the LORD and thy Redeemer.*

Ver. 20. *That we may be like all other Nations.*] Strange Blindneſs! that they could not ſee it was their ſingular Felicity, that they were not like other Nations: But had God for their Governor, who never failed, in time of need, to raiſe up Men of wonderful Worth, to be their Deliverers. It was their vain-glorious Humour therefore that made them think, they were inferior to other Nations, unleſs they ſaw a Prince ſet over them ſhining in Gold and Jewels, living in a ſumptuous Palace, attended with Guards richly cloathed, appearing in great Pomp and State, as they did in other Countries; which they fancied would be for the Glory of their Land.

To judge us, and go out before us, and fight our Battels.] There was anciently a Reſpect to their Military Virtue, in the choice of their Kings; the very Word *REX*, among the *Romans*, having its Original from their Abilities to govern Armies, and keep them in good Order and Diſcipline. Such were all thoſe great Men whom God had raiſed up, as there was occaſion, to judge *Iſrael*. Who had been ſo ſucceſsful when they fought for them, that they were always victorious; which they could not promiſe themſelves their Kings wou'd be; the very firſt of which was ſlain in Battel.

Ver. 21. *And Samuel heard all the Words of the People, and rehearſed them in the Ears of the LORD.*] As he had told all the Words of the LORD unto the People, *ver.* 10.

Ver. 22. *And the LORD ſaid unto Samuel, Hearken unto their Voice, and make them a King.*] Such as they deſired, like thoſe of other Nations: For ſo it appears in the following Hiſtory, many of them were, as *Samuel* had predicted. Witneſs the Words of the People to *Rehoboam*, concerning *Solomon's* Government, 1 *Kings* xii. 4. And the Tyrannical Words of *Jezabel* to *Ahab* about *Naboth's* Vineyard, 1 *Kings* xxi. 7. And all the Violence of *Manaſſeh*, who ſhed innocent Blood very much, 'till he had filled *Jeruſalem* with it, 2 *Kings* xxi. 16. And what *David* himſelf did, in the matter of *Uriah*, when he had defiled his Wife, 2 *Sam.* xi. 15, 16.

And Samuel ſaid unto the Men of Iſrael.] To the Elders of the People, who had attended him about this Matter.

Go ye every Man unto his City.] He bad them leave the Buſineſs unto him; and God, he doubted not, would ſet a King over them.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *NOW there was a Man of Benjamin, whoſe Name was Kiſh, the Son of Abiel, the Son of Zeror, the Son of Bechorath, the Son of Apiah a Benjamite.*] In this Genealogy there is no difficulty but one; which is, that in two places of the *Chronicles* it is ſaid, that *Ner* begat *Kiſh*, 1 *Chron.* viii. 37. ix. 39. But by *begetting* there muſt be meant, the giving him his Breeding and Education. For it is evident

Ner was *Kiſh* his Brother, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 51. *D. Kimchi* will have it that he had two Names, *Abiel* and *Ner*.

A mighty Man of Power.] This ſeems not to be meant of his Wealth or Intereſt in his Country (for *Saul* himſelf ſaith, he was of a mean Family, *ver.* 21.) but of his great Strength, Courage, and Fortitude; which is therefore mentioned, becauſe it hath been often obſerved, that *fortes creantur fortibus*.

Ver. 2. *And he had a Son whoſe Name was Saul, a choice young Man, and a goodly; and there was not among the Children of Iſrael a goodlier Perſon than he: From his ſhoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the People.*] They deſired a King like the reſt of the Nations, who look'd upon Perſons of an heroick Stature and Countenance, to be mark'd out for Empire. Whence the Saying of *Euripides*, Εἶδος ἄξιον τυραννίδος; and that of *Curtius*, *Quippe hominibus barbaris in corporum majeſtate veneratio eſt.* But no Words are more memorable, to this purpoſe, than thoſe of *Pliny*, in the Concluſion of his fourth Chapter of his Panegyrick to *Trajan*; where he ſaith, the Strength and Tallneſs of his Body, the Nobleneſs of his Aſpect, the Dignity of his Mouth, the Gracefulneſs of his Speech, *&c. Nonne longe lateque principem oſtentant?* Do they not every where proclaim a Prince? This was a thing ſo carefully provided for in ancient Times, to have a goodly Race of Kings, that the *Lacedemonians* ſet a Fine upon their King *Archidamus* (as *Plutarch* tells us in the beginning of his Book, περὶ παιδῶν ἀγωγῆς) for marrying a Wife of a low Stature; who was likely to bring them, οὐ βασιλέας ἀλλὰ βασιλίσκους, *not Kings but Kinglings*, to reign over them.

Ver. 3. *And the Aſſes of Kiſh, Saul's Father, were loſt.*] Wandered out of their Paſture.

And Kiſh ſaid unto Saul his Son, Take now one of the ſervants with thee, and ariſe, go and ſeek the Aſſes.] It is no wonder that he was employed in this Enquiry, for I ſuppoſe he had the Charge of looking after his Father's Cattle; which was an Employment the greateſt Men did not diſdain in antient Time: As we learn from the Hiſtory of *Hercules* and *Paris*, and others among the *Greeks*. And in *Judea* Aſſes were a conſiderable part of their Subſtance: For the greateſt Perſons rode upon Aſſes 'till the time of *Solomon*, when Horſes began to be multiplied. *Judg.* x. 4.

Ver. 4. *And they paſſed thro' Mount Ephraim, and they paſſed thro' the Land of Shaliſha, but they found them not; then they paſſed thro' the Land of Shalim, and there they were not*, &c.] They ſearched, that is, all the mountainous Country of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, which lay next to *Benjamin*, after they had firſt gone thro' that Tribe, as it here follows:

And they paſſed thro' the Land of Benjamin, &c.] Or, *they had paſſed thro' the Land of Benjamin*; where hearing no Tidings of them, they went into the next Country, to ſee if they were ſtray'd thither.

Ver. 5. *And when they were come to the Land of Zuph.*] A Territory in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, where ſome of *Samuel*'s Anceſtors had lived, (i. 1.) and *Ramah*, where *Samuel* now dwelt, ſeems to have been in it; as we may gather from the next Verſe.

Saul ſaid to his ſervant that was with him, Come, let us return.] Being uncertain whither to go next, after they had ſought ſo many places in vain.

Leſt my Father leave caring for the Aſſes, and take thought for us.] Be afraid that we are loſt. The *Hebrew* Word, as Dr. *Hammond* obſerves (upon *Pſal.* xxxviii. 18.) ſignifies Solicitude of Mind, mixed with Grief and Sorrow.

Ver. 6. *And he ſaid unto him, Behold now, there is in this City a Man of God.*] A Prophet.

And he is an honourable Man.] A Perſon of great Fame, and held in high Eſteem.

All that he ſaith comes ſurely to paſs.] Which procured him ſuch Honour.

Now let us go thither, peradventure he will ſhew us our way we ſhall go.] To find the Aſſes.

Ver. 7. *Then ſaid Saul to his ſervant, But, behold, if we go, what ſhall we bring the Man?*] This was a part of the Honour they did to Great Men, in thoſe Countries, to make them a Preſent, when they had occaſion to addreſs themſelves to them. Particularly Prophets were thus honoured; being *Men of God:* before whom they were not to appear empty. Thus alſo they demonſtrated their Reverence to their King, in the next Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 27.

For the Bread is ſpent in our Veſſels, and there is not a Preſent to bring to the Man of God: What have we?] Proviſion for their Table was as acceptable a Preſent as Money: Which appears from what *Jeroboam*'s Wife brought to *Abijah* the Prophet, 1 *Kings* xiv. 3.

Ver. 8. *And the ſervant anſwered Saul again, and ſaid, Behold, I have here at hand a fourth part of a ſhekel of ſilver, that will I give to the Man of God, to tell us our way.*] A ſmall Preſent, but as acceptable as the Widow's Mite; being all they had left in their Travels.

Ver. 9. *Before time in Iſrael, when a Man went to enquire of God.*] By conſulting a Prophet.

Thus he ſpake, Come, let us go to the Seer: For he that is now called a Prophet, was before time called a Seer.] Tho' the word *Nabi*, (a *Prophet*) had been antiently known, as appears by the Books of *Moſes*; and uſed in *Samuel*'s Days, as appears from many places in this Book; yet the more common Word, which now prevailed, when *Saul* was anointed King (for in all Languages Words are in and out of faſhion, in ſeveral times) was *Roeh* (a *Seer.*) But in following Years, when *Samuel* wrote this Book, *Nabi* was become the more uſual Word in all Mens mouths. This is a fair Account of theſe Words, from whence ſome argue that *Samuel* was not the Author of this Book, nor *Moſes* the Author of the *Pentatench*: Where *Abraham* is called *Nabi*, (xx. 7.) which ſhews that this was no new Word in theſe days, as they would have this place underſtood. But it might be ſufficient to anſwer unto this, that *Nabi* did not ſignify in antient times, one that foretold things to come; but only one that was familiar with God, and was inſtructed in his Will, that he might inſtruct others. But now in *Samuel*'s time

time it came to be appropriated to the revealing future things, and foretelling what ſhould come to paſs, or revealing Secrets, which none could know but God.

Ver. 10. *Then ſaid Saul to his ſervant, Well ſaid, let us go: ſo they went to the City, where the Man of God dwelt.*] That is, to *Ramah*.

Ver. 11. *And as they went up the Hill to the City, they found young Maidens going down to draw Water.*] At the Fountain, which (as uſual) was at the bottom of the Hill.

And ſaid unto them, Is the Seer here?] Of which there might be ſome doubt; becauſe ſome time he was wont to go Circuit about the Country.

Ver. 12. *And they anſwered them, and ſaid, He is; Behold, he is before you, make haſte now.*] That is, they could not fail to find him, if they loſt no time, but went ſpeedily to the City, before he went to ſacrifice; when it would not be proper to interrupt him.

For he came to-day to the City.] He either lived without the Gate of the City; or returned from his Country Circuit.

For there is a Sacrifice of the People to-day.] Either at ſome ſolemn Feſtival (the *New Moon* ſome imagine) or upon ſome ſpecial Occaſion of Prayer and Thankſgiving to God; for the People of that City, or for all *Iſrael*.

In the High-place.] All Sacrifices were regularly to be offered before the Ark, in the place which the LORD ſhould chuſe. But while this Choice ſtood ſuſpended, becauſe *Shiloh* was laid deſolate, and no other place appointed; they ſacrificed in other places, where neither the Ark nor the Tabernacle were: The Tabernacle being void of the Ark, which was its principal Furniture; and the Ark being without an Houſe for God to dwell in. What Place then, in this Condition, could be more commodious, than thoſe Cities where the Prieſts and Levites lived; to which the People went for Inſtruction? and they choſe the higheſt Parts of thoſe Cities for this purpoſe. *Corn. Bertram, (Cap. 11. de Repub. Jud.)* imagines, that from this Example High-places came to be in uſe in After-ages, (unleſs we ſuppoſe them to be the Relicks of the *Canaanites*, or more antient People) for this is the firſt time we read of an High-place among the People of God. Yet we read before of the thing, tho' not of the Name. See *Judges* vi. 20. xiii. 19. and ſo early as *Abraham*'s time we read (*Gen.* xxii.) he was directed to Mount *Moriah* to offer his Son. The ſame learned Man alſo thinks, that this was the beginning of *Synagogues* and *Schools*, as our Mr. *Thorndike* doth in his *Religious Aſſembly*, p. 29. For tho' when the Ark was ſettled, it became unlawful to offer Sacrifices in High-places; yet it was no offence to continue there for publick Prayer, and the Praiſes of God, and the Learning of the Law.

The *Jewiſh* Doctors take this *High-place* to have been ſome Houſe, where after they had ſacrificed, they feaſted when they had done. And ſo the *Targum* here tranſlates theſe words, *the Houſe of Feaſting*.

Ver. 13. *As ſoon as ye be come into the City, you ſhall ſtraightway find him.*] For on this day he appeared publickly.

Before he go up to the High-place to eat, for the People will not eat until he come; becauſe he doth bleſs the Sacrifice.] That is, the Feaſt upon the Sacrifice. Which were Peace-offerings; the greateſt part wherof belonged to him that brought the Sacrifice; wherewith he entertained his Friends.

And afterward they eat that be bidden.] The Gueſts of him that offered the Sacrifice; who, at this time, I ſuppoſe, was *Samuel*. For God having told him, that he ſhould that day ſee the Man, whom he intended for their King, it is likely he appointed more Sacrifices to be added unto thoſe which were uſually offered at ſuch times, at his own Charge. That there might be the greater Feaſt, unto which he invited *the People, (ver. 24.)* that is, the principal of the People, and placed the Gueſts *(ver. 22.)* and carved at the Table, *(ver. 23.)* which are all Tokens that he was at the Expence of the Sacrifice, and made this Feaſt for his Friends.

Ver. 14. *And they went up into the City; and when they were come into the City, behold Samuel came out againſt them, for to go to the High-place.*] Met them directly in his way to the Feaſt: For ſo God in his Providence had diſpoſed things, as it follows in the next Words.

Ver. 15. *Now the LORD had told Samuel in his Ear, a day before Saul came, ſaying.*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *He revealed or uncovered the Ear of Samuel*; as is noted in the Margin. Now that was done in order to tell him ſomething: and therefore the meaning is, God told him a Secret; uſing, in all likelihood, a whiſpering Voice.

Ver. 16. *To-morrow about this time, I will ſend thee a Man out of the Land of Benjamin.*] This ſhews ſtill, that all was done by God's direction.

And thou ſhalt anoint him to be Captain over my People Iſrael, that he may ſave my People out of the hand of the Philiſtines.] Who had grievouſly oppreſſed them for forty Years together: And tho' driven out of the Country by *Samuel*, yet were ready to invade them again; as they did, it appears, by the following Hiſtory.

For I have looked upon my People, becauſe their Cry is come unto me.] Tho' he would not hear their Cry to relieve them from the Oppreſſion of their Kings, (viii. 18.) yet he was ſo gracious as to make thoſe Kings Inſtruments of their Deliverance from the Oppreſſion of their cruel Neighbours.

Ver. 17. *And when Samuel ſaw Saul, the LORD ſaid unto him.*] With ſuch a low Voice as he heard the Day before, *ver.* 15.

Behold the Man whom I ſpake to thee of, this ſame ſhall reign over my People.] The Word we tranſlate *Reign*, ſignifies ſomething of Coercion, and Reſtraint, as is obſerved in the Margin: And denotes he ſhould rule them with an abſolute uncontroulable Power, ſternly and rigidly, after the manner of the *Eaſtern* Monarchs. Which was, as I ſaid, a Puniſhment for throwing off the kind and gentle Government of God.

Ver. 18. *Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the Gate.*] He came up to him, as he was going out of his Houſe.

And

And ſaid, Tell me, I pray thee, where the Seer's Houſe is.] It is an Argument that *Saul* had led a very private Life, ſince he had never ſeen *Samuel*, who went about into ſo many places to judge the People.

Ver. 19. *And Samuel anſwered Saul and ſaid, I am the Seer, go up before me unto the High-place.*] This ſeems to be ſpoken out of Reſpect to him.

For thou ſhalt eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let thee go, and tell thee all that is in thine Heart.] All that he deſired to know. This ſhews it was a Supper, not a Dinner, to which he invited him; otherwiſe he might have diſmiſs'd him as well after Dinner, as the next Morning: But the Cuſtom of that Country was to make their Entertainment in the Evening, when Buſineſs was over.

Ver. 20. *And as for thy Aſſes which were loſt three days ago.*] This ſatisfied him he was a Prophet, that he knew what he came to him for, tho' he had not told him.

Set not thy mind on them, for they are found.] He frees his mind from all care about the Aſſes; that he might eat and drink the more cheerfully at the Feaſt.

And on whom is all the Deſire of Iſrael? is it not on thee, and on all thy Father's Houſe?] The meaning is, all *Iſrael* deſire a King, and there is none fitter for it than thy ſelf; whoſe Family God is reſolved to advance.

Ver. 21. *And Saul anſwered and ſaid, Am I not a Benjamite, of the ſmalleſt of the Tribes of Iſrael? and my Family the leaſt of all the Families of the Tribe of Benjamin?*] He thought no Perſon more unfit for the Dignity; both becauſe the Tribe of which he was, had been lamentably impaired in the time of the *Judges* (Chap. xx.) and his own Family was very inconſiderable in this little Tribe.

Wherefore then ſpeakeſt thou ſo unto me?] He concluded therefore, that *Samuel* did but jeſt with him.

Ver. 22. *And Samuel took Saul, and his Servants, and brought them into the Parlour; and made them ſit in the chiefeſt Place among them that were bidden.*] He convinced him he was in earneſt, by ſetting him uppermoſt at the Table, in the moſt honourable Place among the Gueſts.

Which were about thirty Perſons.] The principal Perſons, I ſuppoſe, of the City; who were Witneſſes of the extraordinary Reſpect which he paid him.

Ver. 23. *And Samuel ſaid unto the Cook, Bring the Portion which I gave thee, of which I ſaid, Set it by thee.*] The Maſter of the Feaſt diſtributed to every one their Portion; or ordered what Diſh ſhould be ſet before them: And *Samuel* had commanded the Cook (before they ſat down) not to ſet one Diſh upon the Table, but keep it 'till he called for it.

Ver. 24. *And the Cook took up the Shoulder, and that which was upon it.*] The Left Shoulder and Breaſt: For the Right Shoulder and the Right Breaſt belonged to the Prieſt, *Levit.* vii. 33, 34.

And ſet it before Saul.] As the principal place was given him at the Feaſt, ſo the principal Diſh alſo was ſet before him; to expreſs ſtill the great Regard he had to his Perſon.

And Samuel ſaid, Behold that which is left.] Reſerved on purpoſe for his Entertainment.

Set it before thee and eat.] Let it ſtand, as it is ſet before thee, and eat of it, as thy Portion.

For unto this time hath it been kept for thee, ſince I ſaid, I have invited the People.] The plaineſt Tranſlation of theſe Words, is that of *Lud. de Dieu*; *Eat, becauſe till this appointed time it hath been reſerved for thee, when I ſaid I have invited certain Perſons.* That is, beſides the thirty Perſons, he told the Cook he had invited ſome others (which was *Saul* and his Attendant) for whom he would have this Shoulder to be reſerved. For by inviting *the People*, he underſtands only theſe two Perſons; the word *People* ſometimes ſignifying (as he ſhews) very few. He thinks indeed the Feaſt was not made by *Samuel*, who brought along with him only theſe two Gueſts: But that ſeems to me, not to agree with the whole Story.

And Saul did eat with Samuel that day.] Who entertained him very nobly; for the Left Shoulder was always accounted the beſt part of the Sacrifice: Being the ſame with that which the Prieſt had for his Portion. And therefore ſet before the King, if he was preſent at the Feaſt, and thence called by *Joſephus* Μηρὸς Βασιλικὴ, *The Royal Portion:* For the Arm and Shoulder, as *Philo* diſcourſes, were the Symbols of Strength and Fortitude.

Ver. 25. *And when they were come down from the High-place into the City, Samuel communed with Saul upon the top of the Houſe.*] Concerning his Advancement to the Royal Dignity, and his Adminiſtration of the Government.

Ver. 26. *And they roſe up early. And it came to paſs about the Spring of the day.*] Before the People of the Place were ſtirring.

That Samuel called Saul to the top of the houſe, ſaying, Up, that I may ſend thee away.] According to his Promiſe, *ver.* 19.

And Saul aroſe, and they went out both of them, he and Samuel abroad. For *Samuel* intended, out of Reſpect to him, to conduct him part of his way. But went without any of his uſual Attendants; that what he did, might, for the preſent, be kept a Secret.

Ver. 27. *And as they were going down to the End of the City, Samuel ſaid to Saul, Bid thy Servant paſs on before us, (and he paſſed on) but ſtand thou ſtill a while, that I may ſhew thee the Word of the LORD.*] Which he would have none to hear, but himſelf: Becauſe he now meant only to give him private Satisfaction, that God had choſen him to be the King of his People; before whom afterwards he was publickly choſen by Lot.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *THEN Samuel took a Vial of Oil.*] It was the Buſineſs of a *Prophet* to anoint a King, as *Abarbinel* obſerves upon *Exodus* xxx. Which he proves from this Example of *Samuel*'s anointing *Saul*, and afterwards *David*; and *Nathan*'s anointing *Solomon*, and the Prophet (which the *Hebrew* Doctors ſay was *Jonah*) anointing *Jehu*, 2 *Kings* ix. 1, 6. This

This Unction seems to have been made in the open Fields: But that it was done at a Fountain, because *Solomon* was there anointed, cannot be proved (as the *Hebrew* Doctors would have it) from that single Instance; which will not make a general Rule. Nor can it be proved, that this was Sacred Oil taken from the Tabernacle, but rather Common: For *Samuel* was no Priest, and therefore could not meddle with that which was kept there; nor was he now near unto that place.

And poured it upon his Head.] There is no Order of God, that we read of, for the anointing of Kings: But it had been an ancient Custom, two hundred Years before this time, as appears from the Parable of *Jotham*. See on *Judges* ix. 8. And it was now used by *Samuel*, that their King might be like the Kings of other Nations, as they desired. In after-times they were far superior to them, if we may believe the *Hebrew* Doctors; who say the Family of *David* had the Privilege to be anointed with the same holy Oil, wherewith the High-Priest was anointed. For tho' the Law appropriated it unto him, yet there was a Dispensation with the Law, manifested by some Prophet. For certain it is, that *Solomon* was anointed with Oil taken from the Tabernacle, 1 *Kings* i. 39. Only they say there was a difference in the Form of anointing: The King being anointed in the Form of a Crown incircling his Head; but the High-Priest in the Form of a Cross, by one Line drawn with the Oil running down his Forehead, and by another drawn by the Oil between his Eye-brows: Which they call in the Form of the *Greek* Letter *Chi*, having no mind to mention the name of the Cross. See *Selden's Titles of Honour*, p. 144. *De Succeſſ. Pontific.* lib. 2. cap. 9. *Schickard's Jus Regium*, cap. 1. Theorem. 4.

And kissed him.] In token of Subjection and Reverence to him: According to the custom of antient times (see *Gen.* xli. 40.) and in those following, *Psal.* ii. 12. This the *Jews* call *Neshikah Shel Gedolah*, the Kiss of Greatness or Majesty; in our Language, *the Kiss of Homage.*

And said, Is it not because the LORD *hath anointed thee to be Captain over his Inheritance?*] That is, doubt not, but by Authority from God thou art made the Ruler of his People. This was a thing not easily to be believed, and therefore he gives him *three* or *four* Signs, in the following Verses, to confirm his Faith. But it must not be imagined, that now he was inaugurated; for that was done afterwards, according to this prophetical Prediction: Which was kept so private, that it shewed he intended no more now, than to assure *Saul* he should be made King, and publickly install'd their Sovereign.

Ver. 2. *And when thou art departed from me to-day, thou shalt find two Men by Rachel's Sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin, at Zelaah: and they will say unto thee, The Asses which thou wentest to seek are found; and lo, thy Father*, &c.] He foretelling *Saul* so exactly, how many Persons he should meet, and the Place where, and what they would say to him, was an Argument that he was a Prophet; and therefore was to be believed in what he said to him from God concerning the Kingdom. *Rachel's* Sepulchre was in the way to *Bethlehem*, (*Gen.* xxxv.) which was in the Tribe of *Judah*, but in the Border of *Benjamin*.

Ver. 3. *Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the Plain of Tabor: and there shall meet thee three Men going up to God to Bethel.*] This had been a Religious Place; ever since the Days of *Jacob*: as if by God's Appearance to him there, it had been consecrated for Prayer and Sacrifice: And the Tabernacle being now without the Ark, and the Ark in no determined place, they sacrificed in High-places (as *Samuel*, we read, did in the foregoing Chapter) and particularly here at *Bethel*; where *Jeroboam* afterwards settled one of his Calves. But *Fortunatus Scacchus* thinks it no improbable Conjecture, that they had no Altar; but sacrificed upon the bare Ground. *Myrothec. Elæochrism. Sacr.* Lib. 2. cap. 5.

One carrying three Kids, and another three Loaves, and another carrying a Bottle of Wine.] Intending to offer Sacrifices of Peace-offerings.

Ver. 4. *And they will salute thee, and give thee two Loaves of Bread; which thou shalt receive at their Hands.*] This may be look'd upon as a Third Sign, or an Appendix to the Second. And it is the more remarkable; because this Present which they made him, was a Figure of that Honour which the People did him, when he was declared their King. And if these Loaves were two of the three, which they were going to offer in Sacrifice, (as some think they were) the Present was the more noble. But tho' this may be justified, by supposing them to be given to one that was faint with travelling, and which they might recruit at *Bethel*; yet we may as well think, as *Kimchi* doth, that they were two Loaves which they brought along with them for their own use in their Journey. Which they freely imparted unto *Saul*; and *Samuel* bid him not refuse; but learn thereby, when he had abundance, to be kind to those who were in want.

Ver. 5. *After that thou shalt come to the Hill of God.*] So called, because they were wont to sacrifice here; or because here was a School of the Prophets, who were called *Men of God*. Some take this to be *Gibeah*, others *Kirjath-jearim*.

Where is a Garrison of the Philistines.] This makes it probable the Hill before mentioned was *Geba*, or *Gibeah*: For there they had a Garrison, xiii. 3. which doth not contradict what was said, vii. 13. For tho' the *Philistines* were subdued, and made no Invasions upon the *Israelites* while *Samuel* lived; yet they might retain some Strong-holds, out of which they could not drive them.

And it shall come to pass when thou art come thither to the City, that thou shalt meet a Company of Prophets.] Here it seems was a College of Prophets, settled for the Instruction of Youth in the Knowledge of the Law and of Piety, (who were called *the Sons of the Prophets*) where tho' the *Philistines* also had a Garrison, yet in this they were better than many Christians (as *Grotius* observes) for they spared those Places (when they conquered them) where learned Men lived, and were dedicated to the Study of

of Religion. See *Lib.* 3. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 11. Sect. 10.

Coming down from the High-place.] Perhaps they came from a Sacrifice, which had been offered in the High-place: And now praiſed God for his Benefits, in the following manner.

With a Pſaltery, and a Tabret, and a Pipe, and an Harp before them.] With variety of Inſtrumental Muſick; among which the *Nevel* (which we tranſlate *Pſaltery*) was the chief: Having it's Name, as the *Jewiſh* Doctors fancy (in the *Midraſh*, upon *Pſalm* lxxxi.) from hence; that it put down all other Inſtruments of Muſick, as much as a wiſe Man doth a Fool. *Bartoloccius* in his *Kirjath-Sepher*, Pars 2. Fol. 185, *&c.* gives an Account of this, and the reſt of the Inſtruments here mentioned. With which I do not think fit to trouble the Reader; but only note, that this Muſick was uſed in Propheſying, becauſe the Minds of the Prophets were thereby compoſed, and made apt to receive ſoft and good Impreſſions; as *Grotius* here obſerves from many Examples.

And they ſhall propheſy.] Sing the Praiſes of God, as the word *Prophecy* ſometimes ſignifies, *Exod.* xv. 21. 1 *Chron.* xxv. 3. In what manner this was done, it is not ſo eaſy for us now to define, or ſpecify (as Mr. *Mede* ſpeaks.) But one of them ſeems to have been the *Præcentor*, to uſher in the Verſe or Ditty; and the reſt to have anſwered, Τὰ ἀκροτελεύτια, the Extreams, or laſt Words of the Verſe. See him, Book 1. Diſcourſe 16. p. 78.

Ver. 6. *And the Spirit of God ſhall come upon thee, and thou ſhalt propheſy with them.*] This was the higheſt Aſſurance of all the reſt, that *Samuel* anointed him by God's Authority. Who vouchſafed ſuddenly to inſpire him with ſuch Thoughts and Affections, that he became like one of them, *viz.* a *Pſalmiſt*: Able in an Inſtant to compoſe Hymns in the Praiſes of God; or to accompany them in their Melodies, which he had never learnt. For he was not bred in the School of the Prophets.

And ſhalt be turned into another Man.] Endued with extraordinary Prudence, and Courage, and ſuch like Qualities, as fitted him for the Government and Conduct of God's People.

Ver. 7. *And let it be, when theſe ſigns are come unto thee, that thou do as occaſion ſhall ſerve thee.*] As if he had ſaid, I cannot give thee particular Rules about every thing that is to be done by thee: But doubt not to undertake the Government of the People; for God's Spirit ſhall guide thee to do that which the preſent occaſion requires.

For God is with thee.] Be confident of good Succeſs in all thy Undertakings, for God will be with thee, when thou goeſt out againſt thine Enemies. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe underſtands the foregoing Words, as if he had ſaid, *make all things belonging to a King*, and then adds, *for the WORD of the LORD will be thy help.*

Ver. 18. *And thou ſhalt go down before me to Gilgal.*] A Place which had been famous for many great things done there, when they firſt came to *Canaan*: And lay conveniently for all the Tribes beyond *Jordan* to meet, now they dwelt there.

And behold, I will come down to thee, to offer Burnt-offerings, and to ſacrifice Sacrifices of Peace-offerings: ſeven days ſhalt thou tarry till I come unto thee, and ſhew thee what thou ſhalt do.] This looks like another Sign which he gave him, of God's Preſence with him, in future times, if he were obedient to his Commands. For it cannot be underſtood of his going immediately to *Gilgal*; and ſtaying there ſeven Days: For the People were firſt to be called together to *Mizpeh*, where he was made King, *ver.* 17. and after the Defeat of the *Ammonites*, he was confirmed in the Kingdom at *Gilgal*, xi. 14, 15. And then the next Year, a War breaking out with the *Philiſtines*, all the People met at *Gilgal*, and *Saul* with them; waiting for *Samuel* to come, as he had appointed, to offer Sacrifice: Which *Saul*, being impatient of ſtaying ſo long for him, offered himſelf, *&c.* (xii. 4, 8, 9.) and thereby forfeited God's Favour; whoſe Prophet had aſſured him he would not fail to come to meet him here. But then, theſe Words muſt not be pointed as they are now; but as the *Hebrew* Text will bear: Retaining the ſame Words, and only altering the Pauſe or Point in this manner; *Thou ſhalt go down before me to Gilgal, and behold I will come unto thee to offer Burnt-offerings, and to ſacrifice Sacrifices of Peace-offerings, ſeven days.* Here is to be a Pauſe: and then another Sentence begins thus, *Thou ſhalt tarry till I come unto thee*, &c. As if he had ſaid, See in any caſe that thou tarry till I come, *and ſhow thee what thou ſhalt do.* Which *Samuel* perhaps knew not himſelf, at preſent: But intended to aſk Counſel of God; and being fully inſtructed in this great Buſineſs, then come to conſecrate him (as Dr. *Jackſon* conjectures) and eſtabliſh him in his Kingdom: By a ſolemn Sacrifice for *ſeven* Days, ſuch as *Solomon* uſed at the Conſecration of the Temple. See his *Third Sermon* on *Jerem.* xxvi. 19. and the very ſame he repeats in his Book of the *Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt*, Chap. 17. Paragr. 4.

Ver. 9. *And it was ſo, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart; and all theſe ſigns came to paſs that day.*] So great was the Goodneſs of God, that he immediately fulfilled the Laſt and Chief of theſe Signs: For he was no ſooner gone to *Samuel*, but he felt another Spirit come into him of Wiſdom, and Fortitude, to qualify him for the Government of God's People. Which afterwards God took away from him, becauſe of his Sins, xvi. 14. See *Pſalm* li. 12.

Ver. 10. *And when he came thither to the hill, behold, a Company of Prophets met him; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he propheſied among them.*] He mentions not the other Signs particularly, becauſe they were not of ſuch general Concernment unto others; but for his own Satisfaction: Whereas this of the Prophet's meeting him, and his Converſion into a Prophet, was of great and univerſal Concernment; to make the People reverence him as their King, when they heard how God had honoured him with ſuch an extraordinary Gift from Heaven.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs, when all that knew him beforetime, ſaw, that behold he propheſied*

pheſied among the Prophets, then the People ſaid one to another; what is this that is come unto the Son of Kiſh? Is Saul alſo among the Prophets?] It begat Wonder in all thoſe who knew his Education, that he ſhould on a ſudden be inſpired as they were, who were bred up in the School of the Prophets: For tho' it was in the power of God alone to beſtow the Gift of Prophecy upon Men, yet commonly he endowed none with it, but ſuch as were trained up in thoſe Studies, which might diſpoſe them for it. For had it been uſual to inveſt thoſe with this Spirit, who had not been educated in ſuch a Courſe as might fit them to receive it, we cannot think it would have been ſo great a marvel now, as to give riſe to this Proverb. Which muſt not be underſtood, as *Procopius Gazæus* obſerves, as if *Saul* had perpetually the Gift of Prophecy: But that he received ſuch a Spiritual Gift, whereby he at preſent propheſied; and was endued with Prudence alſo to govern the People of God. Thus the LXX Elders, who were to aſſiſt *Moſes*, propheſied; but not always. It is obſerved by *Eraſmus*, That this became a Proverb, when they ſaw, *aliquam indecenter alieno gregi admixtum*, any Man indecently mingled with Company that were Strangers to him. Or, when they ſaw a ſudden Change wrought in any Perſon; as *Gregory Nazianzen* applied it when he was choſen a Biſhop, *Saul propheſied, ſo much beyond expectation, and when no body thought of it, that the Miracle became a Proverb.*

Ver. 12. *And one of the ſame place, anſwered and ſaid, But who is their Father?*] This Wonder was preſently ſatisfied, by a prudent Perſon among them, who bad them conſider, who it was that made Prophets: Not Men, nor merely good Education, but God alone; who was the Father of all the Children of the Prophets (*i. e.* of their Diſciples) to teach them by his Spirit. Which he could beſtow when he pleaſed, upon any Man, and make him a Prophet; without the help of any other Maſter: Which was the cauſe of *Amos*, vii. 14. And that is the meaning of the word *Father* in this place; which ſignifies the ſame with *Maſter*, or *Teacher*. See upon *Gen.* iv. 20, 21.

Ver. 13. *And when he made an end of propheſying, he came to the High-place.*] Herein he differed from the Prophets who met him; that he propheſied but for a ſhort time, this not being his Office: And when he had done, he went up to the High-place from whence they came down. Where was, I ſuppoſe, a place of Worſhip, unto which he went up, to give thanks to God for his Gifts; and to pray to him to proſper him in the Government he deſigned for him.

Ver. 14. *And Saul's Uncle.*] Who met him here in the High-place; or in his way home.

Said unto him and to his Servant, Whither went ye?] How came you to ſtay ſo long before your return?

And he ſaid, to ſeek the Aſſes, and when we ſaw that they were no where.] In no place where they ſought them.

We came to Samuel.] To be informed by him.

Ver. 15. *And Saul's Uncle ſaid, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel ſaid unto you?*] What Diſcourſe they had with him.

Ver. 16. *And Saul ſaid unto his Uncle, He told us plainly that the Aſſes were found. But of the matter of the Kingdom whereof Samuel ſpake, he told him not.*] Leſt he ſhould ſeem to have been ſeeking ſo high a Dignity: And becauſe hitherto *Samuel* thought fit it ſhould be kept a Secret between them two.

Ver. 17. *And Samuel called the People together.*] How long after he departed from *Samuel*, we are not told; but now reſolved to declare God's choice of *Saul* to be their King, more publickly.

Unto the LORD to Mizpeh.] Which was a very famous Place, where they uſed to meet upon great Occaſions, (ſee *Chap.* vii.) and God was pleaſed to be preſent (as hath been before obſerved) whereſoever there was a general Aſſembly of his People, for the common Good. See upon *Judges* xx. 1. Yet one cannot well imagine, that every Perſon of the whole Body of all *Iſrael* was called hither unto this Convention: But by the *People* we are to underſtand all the Elders and Heads of their Tribes, who governed and repreſented the reſt: And accordingly that which follows, is to be interpreted.

Ver. 18. *And ſaid unto the Children of Iſrael, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, I brought Iſrael out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hands of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all Kingdoms of them that oppreſſed you.*] He commemorates the Benefits they received from him, ever ſince they were in *Egypt*; from whence he brought them; and ſuffered none of the Kingdoms that lay in their way to *Canaan*, to obſtruct their Paſſage: And ſince they came there, delivered them from many heavy Oppreſſions.

Ver. 19. *And ye have this day rejected your God, who himſelf ſaved you out of all your Adverſities and Tribulations.*] By raiſing up *Judges* whenſoever they cried to him for help: Who never fail'd to conquer all their Enemies.

And ye have ſaid unto him, Nay.] When he deſired them to continue under his Government, they refuſed, and would not be denied what they aſked.

But ſet a King over us.] They would not any longer be governed by God, but have a King ſettled over them; to whom they might reſort for help.

Now therefore preſent your ſelves before the LORD by your Tribes, and by your Thouſands.] Into which their Tribes were divided. This was a wonderful Obſtinacy and Stupidity, that after God had given them time to conſider, what it was they deſired, and what difference there was between his Government, and that of the Kings round about them, they ſhould not relent; but perſiſt to the laſt in their Reſolution; and imagine that a King could ſave them, tho' God was not with them.

Ver. 20. *And when Samuel had cauſed all the Tribes of Iſrael to draw near.*] Unto the Place where the Lots were to be drawn, in the preſence of the Heads of their Tribes and Families, who repreſented all the reſt.

The Tribe of Benjamin was taken.] This is a Phraſe uſed in the vii. of *Joſhua*, about the Diſcovery of him, who had offended in the accurſed thing: which all agree was by Lots. And ſo *Raſi*, and *Ralbag* underſtand it here: Though *Kimchi* imagines God told them by *Urim* and *Thummim*, out of what Tribe and Family their King ſhould be taken. Which is not probable, becauſe the Ark was not now at *Mizpeh*; before which the High-prieſt was to ſtand, when he conſulted the Divine Majeſty by *Urim* and *Thummim*.

Ver. 21. *When he cauſed the Tribe of Benjamin to draw near by their Families, the Family of Matri was taken, and Saul the Son of Kiſh was taken.*] The Holy Writer ſhortens this Account of caſting Lots: But it is pretty evident, they were caſt *four* times: In the *firſt* the Tribe of *Benjamin* was taken: In the *ſecond* the Family of *Matri* in that Tribe was taken. But there being ſeveral Houſholds in that Family, it was caſt a *third* time, that they might know in what Houſe their King was, and that of *Kiſh* was taken: And in his Houſe by a new Lottery, *Saul* was taken: And he took this courſe, as to prevent all Diſpute; ſo to give him the greater Authority over them, as a Perſon divinely appointed; according to what God had ſaid, *Deut.* xix. 15. And it is very obſervable, that *Plato* himſelf acknowledges a Government appointed by *Lots* to be Θεοφιλὴ ἀρχὴν, a Government beloved of God, *lib.* 4. *de Legibus*.

Here Interpreters are wont to enquire why their firſt King ſhould be choſen out of the ſmalleſt Tribe, ſprung from the youngeſt Son of *Jacob*, and out of the ſmalleſt Family in this Tribe: Eſpecially ſince *Judah* all along had the Preheminence among his Brethren, and the great King was promiſed to ſpring from him. To which this ſeems to be a reaſonable Satisfaction; that this King being extorted by their undutiful Importunities, and given them in Anger (as I before obſerved) God was pleaſed to expreſs his diſlike of it, by this Choice: Whereby he alſo intended to take them off, from depending on their King (whoſe Power was ſmall) ſo much as on himſelf.

And when they ſought him, he could not be found.] Having withdrawn himſelf, either out of Feebleneſs of Spirit (as ſome think) or rather, out of Modeſty, he declined ſo high an Authority, unleſs impoſed upon him: Or, perhaps, being affrighted when he heard *Samuel* ſtill repreſenting God as offended with them, for aſking a King; which was to reject his Government.

Ver. 22. *Therefore they enquired of the LORD further, if the Man ſhould come thither: and the LORD anſwered.*] From hence *Abarbinel* argues, That God directed them, both by *Lot*, and by *Urim* and *Thummim*. Which if it be true, then, though the Ark was not there, yet they enquired of the LORD in the uſual way, and he was pleaſed to give Anſwers any where, in great and weighty Caſes. As *Abiathar* enquired of the LORD with the *Ephod* for *David*, at *Keliah* and at *Ziklag*. xxiii. 9. xxx. 7.

Behold he hath hid himſelf among the ſtuff.] Or, among the Carriages. Here the *Jews* obſerve, that *whoſoever flies dominion, him dominion follows*. For when they told *Saul* he was choſen King, he ſaid he was not fit for that Office, and bid them enquire again by *Urim* and *Thummim*: Which they make the meaning of the word *further*. And while they were going to make this Enquiry, he went and hid himſelf, till the Oracle diſcovered him. See *Buxtorf*, *Hiſt. Urim* and *Thummim*. Cap. 3. p. 307.

Ver. 23. *And they ran and fetcht him thence; and when he ſtood among the people, he was higher than any of the people, from his ſhoulders and upwards.*] A Princely Perſon, and of a Majeſtick Aſpect. As *Corn. Nepos* deſcribes *Iphicrates* in the Account he gives of his Life, Cap. 3. *Fuit & animo magno & corpore, imperatoriaque forma, ut ipſo aſpectu cuivis injiceret admirationem ſui.* He was great both in Mind and Body; having a Form ſo imperial, that his very Aſpect ſtruck every one with Admiration of him. And thus *P. Cunæus* obſerves, that not only barbarous People, but the moſt polite Nations did, *Majeſtatem corporis venerari*, look upon a Majeſtick Body with Veneration, *Lib.* 1. *de Repub. Hebr.* p. 85. Which appears by what *Homer* ſaith of *Agamemnon*, *Iliad.* 3. *ver.* 166. and *Virgil* of *Æneas* and *Turnus*: The latter of which he deſcribes juſt like *Saul*, *Lib.* 7. *ver.* 782.

Ipſe inter primos præſtanti corpore Turnus
Vertitur, arma tenens, & toto vertice ſupra eſt.

Ver. 24. *And Samuel ſaid unto all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath choſen.*] Tho' the People were reſolutely bent to have a King; yet they were ſenſible none could make one but God. And therefore they came, in the beginning of this Buſineſs, to aſk one of his Prophets. But *Samuel* could not conſtitute one without divine Direction and Appointment; as appears by the firſt Verſe of this Chapter, where he ſaith, *the LORD hath anointed thee*; and the Lot whereby he was publickly choſen, was caſt *before the LORD*, ver. 19, 23. And accordingly here he tells them, *the LORD hath choſen him*. Thus afterwards the LORD commanded *David* to be anointed, xvi. 1, 3. and among all his Sons *Solomon* was particularly appointed by God to ſucceed him, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 5.

That there is none like him among all the people.] Such was his Stature, and his Aſpect, that, as *Joſephus* expreſſes it, ἐξεῖχε τε ἁπάντων, καὶ τὸ ὕψος ἦν βασιλικώτατον, *he excelled, and was moſt kingly in his height*, Lib. 6. Antiq. Cap. 5.

And all the people ſhouted.] All that were then preſent; except ſome prophane Fellows, who were ſo far from owning him for their King, that they deſpiſed him.

And ſaid, God ſave the King.] In the Hebrew, *let the King live*, that is, be proſperous. The ſame form of Words was uſed in After-ages, when they made Kings, 1 *Kings* i. 34, 39. 2 *Kings* xi. 12. 2 *Chron.* xxiii. 11. All this being done at *Mizpeh*, when *Samuel* ſet up the great Stone called *Eben-Ezer*; it is not improbable that *Saul* was there declared their King.

Ver. 25.

Ver. 25. *Then Samuel told the People the manner of the Kingdom, and wrote it in a Book, and laid it up before the* LORD.] The Right of the King, which he had laid before the People, upon their first desire to have one (viii. 11.) he now wrote in a Book, and laid up before the LORD: That it might be a Witness against them, that all the Evils which hereafter befel them, were drawn upon them by their own Desires. For what *Petrus Cunæus* saith, that he wrote the Words mentioned *Deut.* xvii. 16, *&c.* is altogether unlikely: They being laid up before the LORD long ago, when the Law was put by the side of the Ark, *Deut.* xxxi. 26. *Josephus* said a great deal better, *Lib.* 6. *Antiq. cap.* 5. Τὰ μέλλοντα συμβήσεσθαι κακὰ γράψαι, &c. *The Prophet having written the Evils that should befal them, he read them in the ears of the King, and then laid up the Book in the Tabernacle of God, to be a Testimony unto future Ages of what he had foretold.* A Duplicate of this Writing, it is likely, he left with the Elders of the People.

And Samuel sent all the People away, every Man to his House.] The People were not dismissed by *Saul*, who would not presently take upon him to exercise his Authority. For *Samuel* was there, who had been for many Years their supreme Governour. That is, sixteen Years (as Sir *J. Marsham* computes) before the Inauguration of *Saul:* And he lived eighteen Years after, as *Josephus* saith, in the latter end of the sixth Book of his *Antiquities*; during which time, he exercised the Power of a Judge.

Ver. 26. *Saul also went home to Gibeah.*] In this he still shewed his Humility: Going to his own home, which was no princely Palace.

And there went with him a Band of Men, whose heart God had touched.] A Company of stout valiant Men, of great Resolution: Whom God inclined to follow him, as his Guard. Or, were moved perhaps, by the Authority of *Samuel* (who was a Man of God) to go and attend him.

Ver. 27. *And the Children of Belial said.*] Some very lewd Men (see upon *Deuteron.* xiii. 13.) who hated all Government: And being, it is probable, Men of some Rank and Quality, were proud, and despised a Person of such a small Family.

How shall this Man save us?] They would not vouchsafe so much as to call him by his Name; but insolently contemned him, as one of no note, who had no Power to deliver them.

And they despised him, and brought him no Presents.] As the manner was to do unto their Kings in the Eastern Countries, when they first tender'd their Service to them. Which was a Token of their Benevolence, Subjection, and Joy. Thus the Psalmist represents the People offering Gifts to the *Messiah*, *Psalm* xlv. and lxxii.

Jonathan thus expresses it in this Place, *They did not come to wish him a happy Reign.*

But he held his peace.] This was an Act of great Prudence: which declared he was endued with an extraordinary Spirit; which enabled him to dissemble his Knowledge of the Scorn they put upon him. For if he had taken notice of it, he must have punish'd it; and it had not been safe to begin his Reign, with any thing of Severity: Therefore he wisely ordered himself, as if he did not observe their Neglect. *Corn. Bertram* thinks, in his *Book de Repub. Jud. cap.* 10. that these Men refusing to be governed by *Saul*, he retired for a while, and led a private Life: leaving *Samuel* to administer all Affairs, as he had done for many Years. But whether that be true or no, it is evident *Saul*, in the beginning of his Reign, was endued with a Spirit of singular Wisdom and Moderation: And was none of those Princes whom *Dion Prusæus* describes (Orat. de Regno, *p.* 5.) μακαρίζοντας ἐξουσίαν μετ' ἀνοίας, *who bless and praise Power, joined with Folly and want of Understanding.*

CHAP. XI.

Verse 1. *Then Nahash the Ammonite.*] He was either the King of the Children of *Ammon*, or the Captain of his Host; who laid siege to *Jabesh-Gilead*, as *Josephus* saith, about a Month after *Saul* was chosen King: But had levied War against them before (xii. 12.) which was the occasion of their desiring a King.

Came up against Jabesh-Gilead.] He renewed, it is likely, their old Pretensions to this Country: which they had made in the time of *Jephthah*. For *Jabesh-Gilead* was in the Tribe of *Manasseh* on the other side *Jordan*; bordering upon the *Ammonites:* who laid a claim to this Country, which the *Israelites* took from *Sihon* and *Og*, as we read in *Judges* xi.

And all the Men of Jabesh said unto Nahash, make a Covenant with us, and we will serve thee.] Be his Subjects, but not Slaves, with whom no Covenant was made.

Ver. 2. *And Nahash the Ammonite answered them, On this condition I will make a Covenant with you, that I may thrust out all your right Eyes.*] He would not put out both their Eyes, because that would have made them unserviceable to him: But only the right, which (as many learned Men have observed) was most useful in War; the left Eye being covered with their Shields, which they held in their left hand: So *Procopius Gazæus*, *the left Eye is covered with the Shield; with the right we see our Enemies.*

And lay it for a Reproach upon all Israel.] This is the only Reason he gives for such insolent Treatment, that all *Israel* might know what they were to expect, if he could prevail over them.

Ver. 3. *And the Elders of Jabesh said unto him, Give us seven days, that we may send Messengers into all the Coasts of Israel, and then if there be no Man to save us, we will come out to thee.*] It may seem strange, that either they should submit so soon to such base Conditions; or that *Nahash* should grant them so much respite, when he saw them so abject and inclined to yield to him. But the Reason of both is visible: For *Saul* they thought was not able to help them; having not yet taken upon him the Government, but living privately (see *ver.* 5.) and *Nahash* it is like was loth to drive them to Desperation, by denying them this short space to

expect Relief; which he thought could not poſſibly come to them; tho' *Saul* ſhould appear and endeavour to levy an Army; for that he imagined could not be done, in ſo few days.

Ver. 4. *Then came Meſſengers to Gibeah of Saul.*] So called, becauſe *Saul* was there born, and bred, and dwelt.

And told the Tidings in the ears of the People, and all the People lift up their Voices and wept.] As Men deſpairing of Relief.

Ver. 5. *And behold, Saul came after the Herd out of the Field; and Saul ſaid, What aileth the People, that they weep? And they told him the Tidings of the Men of Jabeſh.*] By this it appears (as I noted in the Concluſion of the foregoing Chapter) that ſome Men, not only refuſing to ſubmit to him, but deſpiſing him; he went and lived retired, and led a ruſtick Life: exerciſing no Authority over the People; but leaving all to *Samuel*'s Management.

Ver. 6. *Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, when he heard theſe Tidings, and his Anger was kindled greatly.*] But now he reſolved, by an Impulſe he felt from Heaven, to ſhow that God had choſen him to be their King: Who, upon this occaſion gave him an extraordinary meaſure of Courage, Zeal, and Military Skill.

Ver. 7. *And he took a Yoke of Oxen.*] Which he had newly brought out of the Field, *ver.* 5.

And hewed them in pieces, and ſent them throughout all the Coaſts of Iſrael, by the hand of Meſſengers, ſaying, Whoſoever comes not forth after Saul, and after Samuel, ſo ſhall it be done unto his Oxen.] He herein begins to give a proof of his Reſolution, by this terrible Threatning; and by the Repreſentation he made of the Execution he intended, if he was diſobeyed. Whereby it appears that the Kings of *Iſrael* aſſumed ſuch an abſolute Power as *Samuel* deſcribed, *chap.* viii. One part of which conſiſted in making War, and raiſing Soldiers by their ſole Authority, and puniſhing thoſe that did not come to the Army at their Summons. For we never read that they conſulted the Oracle before they went to War; nor that they are reproved by the Prophets for that neglect. In like manner they made Laws, which is the Act of a Sovereign. For tho' they could not alter the Laws of *Moſes*, but were to govern themſelves by them; yet in things not determined there, or were not clear and plain, they made what Laws they thought good; as appears by *David* and *Solomon*, and other of their beſt Princes.

And the Fear of the LORD fell upon the People.] They were no leſs affected with the cutting theſe Oxen in pieces, than they had been with the uſing the *Levite*'s Concubine in like manner (*Judg.* xix. 19.) as *Bochartus* notes: who obſerves ſomething like this among heathen People, *Hierozoic.* P. i. lib. 2. cap. 33.

And they came out with one conſent.] God who put Courage into *Saul*, poſſeſſed the People alſo with a Fear of offending him; now that he aſſerted his Royal Authority over them. For he names himſelf before *Samuel* (the Kingly Dignity being ſuperior to the Prophetical) but wiſely mentions him alſo, that they who did not reverence himſelf as their King, might follow the Prophet, whom all reverenced.

Ver. 8. *And when they numbred them in Bezek.*] Of this place, ſee upon *Judges* i. 6.

The Children of Iſrael were three hundred thouſand, and the Men of Judah thirty thouſand.] It is thought by ſome, that the *Philiſtines* invaded them in the Weſt, as the *Ammonites* did in the Eaſt, (juſt as they had done formerly in the time of *Jephtha*, *Judg.* x. 7, 8.) which is the reaſon ſo few of *Judah* came in at this Summons; being engaged elſewhere againſt another dangerous Enemy. But they would not wholly neglect to come to his Aſſiſtance in this other War, but ſhowed their forwardneſs to obey him, as much as they were able. *Bertram* alſo, *Altingius* (in his *Shilo*, L. 3. Cap. 11.) and others, take it as an Honour done to this Tribe, which had the Preheminence, that they were numbered by themſelves. But Sir *J. Marſham* looks upon it as the beginning of a Schiſm, *Secul.* ix.

Ver. 9. *And they ſaid unto the Meſſengers that came, Thus ſhall ye ſay to the Men of Jabeſh-Gilead, to-morrow by that time the Sun ſhall be hot, ye ſhall have help*, &c.] The morrow after their return, before noon.

Ver. 10. *Therefore the Men of Jabeſh ſaid.*] Unto *Nahaſh* the *Ammonite*.

To-morrow we will come out unto you, and ye ſhall do with us that which ſeemeth good to you.] In caſe, that is, Relief did not come to them by that time: Of which they pretended to have no Hope. Moſt look upon this as ſpoken *ironically* and in mockery: But *Grotius* takes it for a Stratagem, to make them ſecure; according to the Opinion of thoſe times, that they might delude the Enemy by deceitful Words: As *Eliſha* did the *Syrians*, 2 *Kings* vi. 18, 19, *&c.* See *lib.* 3. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, cap. 1. ſect. 17.

Ver. 11. *And it was ſo on the morrow, that Saul put the People in three Companies, and they came into the midſt of the Hoſt in the Morning-watch; and ſlew the Ammonites 'till the Heat of the Day.*] He ſet upon them, I ſuppoſe, on three Sides, and the Men of *Jabeſh* iſſuing out on the other, they were ſo diſtracted that they could make little Reſiſtance: But the *Iſraelites* got into the midſt of them very early, and made a great Slaughter of them 'till Noon.

And it came to paſs that they which remained were ſcattered, ſo that two of them were not left together.] This is added to ſhow, with what a compleat Victory *Saul* began his Reign: Whereby God eſtabliſhed his Authority.

Ver. 12. *And the People ſaid unto Samuel.*] Who, it appears from hence, accompanied *Saul* in this Expedition, to encourage him with hopes of good Succeſs.

Who is he that ſaid, Saul ſhall not reign over us? bring the Men that we may put them to death.] Great Succeſſes make great Alterations in the Affections of the People; who quietly ſaw *Saul* contemned a little while ago: But now would have Enquiry made after thoſe Sons of *Belial*, who ſpake opprobriouſly of him, x. 27.

Ver. 13. *And Saul ſaid, There ſhall not a Man be put to death this day.*] He prudently diſſembled his Knowledge of their Deſpiſal of him, before the Kingdom was confirmed to him: But this Moderation, now that he was wonderfully

derfully victorious, argued greater Wisdom and Goodness. For nothing is more glorious than to be humble and meek in the height of Power.

For to-day the LORD hath wrought Salvation in Israel.] Besides the Policy he exercised in pardoning Offenders (whereby he laid the strongest Obligations upon them to be faithful to him) it was a piece of Piety, to imitate God, who had been so good to them all.

Ver. 14. *Then Samuel said unto the People, Come, and let us go to Gilgal, to renew the Kingdom there.*] New Kingdoms are not easily settled. And this Place was famous upon many accounts, as *Mispeh* was, where *Samuel* first declared him King. Particularly, *Samuel* was wont to judge the People here, vii. 16.

Ver. 15. *And all the People went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul King, before the LORD in Gilgal.*] He had been anointed in *Ramah*, and chosen by Lot in *Mizpeh*; but still some disdained to own him as their King: Which made him content himself for a time, (as I said before) with a private Life. But now, after this signal Token of God's Presence with him, in the late Victory, he was by common Consent acknowledged by all the People for their King. Which is the Meaning of these Words, *they made Saul King*; for it is certain, it was neither *they* nor *Samuel* that could make a King; but God alone: Who ordered *Samuel* to anoint him, and then made the Lot to fall uon him; and now inclined the Hearts of all the People to submit to his Authority.

The LXX here say, ἔχρισε Σαμυὴλ, &c. that *Samuel* here *anointed Saul King over Israel.* And *Josephus* (Lib. vi. C. 6.) that he again anointed *Saul*, Τῷ ἁγίῳ ἐλαίῳ, *with holy Oil.* But there is not a word of this anointing in the *Hebrew* Text, no, nor in the *Vulgar Latin:* And the *Targum* very well expresses it, *they made Saul to reign*; i. e. would not let him any longer lead a private Life; but prayed him to take the Government upon him according to God's Ordinance, and promised Subjection to him. *Gilgal* seems to have been chosen for this purpose, rather than any other place: Because there was a sanctified piece of Ground, as *Abarbinel* speaks, where, when they entered into *Canaan*, the Ark first stood: Which now perhaps they brought hither, and offered Sacrifice before it.

And there they sacrificed Sacrifices of Peace-offerings before the LORD.] Who was present, as I observed before (see *Judges* xx. 1.) in such great Assemblies of the Body of the People: With whom both they and their King made a Covenant of Obedience to him, by offering of the Sacrifices.

And there Saul and all the Men of Israel rejoiced together.] By feasting upon the Peace-offerings: Giving thanks to God for the late Victory, and for settling the Kingdom.

CHAP. XII.

Verse 1. *AND Samuel said unto all Israel.*] In the presence of *Saul*, as appears from *ver.* 3, 5.

Behold, I have hearkened unto you in all that you said unto me, and have made you a King.] This Speech was made before they parted from *Gilgal*; where they had renewed the Kingdom.

Ver. 2. *And now behold the King walketh before you.*] To rule and govern them, *Numb.* xxvii. 17.

And I am old and grey-headed.] And therefore very willing to be discharged from the Government of you.

And behold, my Sons are with you.] Reduced also to the State of private Persons; being the King's Subjects, no less than you.

And I have walked before you, from my Childhood to this day.] He appeals to them whether he had not always discharged his Duty faithfully, from the very beginning; when God had made him a Prophet to instruct and guide them. For now they might freely accuse him, if they had any thing to alledge against him: Both he and his Sons being now become Subjects to a more Sovereign Authority.

Ver. 3. *Behold, here I am, witness against me before the LORD, and before his Anointed.*] He offers himself to be tried, and to give a publick Account of his Administration: Being ready to answer any thing that could be objected against him.

Whose Ox have I taken, or whose Ass have I taken?] He desires them to testify, if he had ruled after the manner of the Eastern Kings: Under which Government they chose to put themselves.

Or whom have I defrauded, whom have I oppressed.] If they knew of no open Violence, he bids them mention any Fraud or Circumvention, of which he had been guilty.

Or of whose hands have I received any Bribes, to blind mine Eyes? and I will restore it you.] He challenges them to prove so much as the receiving any Gift, in any Cause that came before him; and he would make full Satisfaction.

Ver. 4. *And they said, Thou hast not defrauded, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any Man's hand.*] They acknowledge him to be perfectly an upright *Judge:* Who could not be charged to have done any thing amiss.

Ver. 5. *And he said unto them, the LORD is Witness against you, and his Anointed is Witness this day, that ye have not found ought in my hand. And they answered, He is Witness.*] Of his Innocence; and that they had no reason to complain of his Government.

Ver. 6. *And Samuel said unto the People, It is the LORD that advanced Moses and Aaron, and brought your Fathers up out of the Land of Egypt.*] *D. Kimchi* refers this to the foregoing Words; as if he had said, *the LORD that did such Wonders by Moses and Aaron is Witness*, &c.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore stand still.*] The *Jews* observe, that they were wont to *stand*, when they heard the Word of God. Tho' those Words *Exod.* xx. 18. are but a slender Proof of it.

That I may reason with you before the LORD, of all the righteous Acts of the LORD; which he did to you, and to your Fathers.] He would not dismiss them, till, having obtained this honour-

able

able Teſtimony from them, he had repreſented to them the great Benefits they had received from God, and their Ingratitude to him.

Ver. 8. *When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your Fathers cried unto the LORD, then the LORD ſent Moſes and Aaron; which brought your Fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place.*] Any one may eaſily diſcern, this is but a compendious Narrative of what God did for them, from their firſt coming out of *Egypt*, till they were ſettled in *Canaan:* Which, in likelihood, *Samuel* more largely recited, when he reaſoned with them. Therefore *Moſes* and *Aaron* cannot be underſtood to have made them dwell in *Canaan*; no more than that *their Fathers cried unto the LORD, when Jacob came into Egypt*, and the LORD ſent theſe two Perſons to deliver them. For many things intervened between both theſe: Till at laſt God ſettled them in their Reſt, in the good Land he promiſed to give them.

Ver. 9. *And when they forgat the LORD their God, he ſold them into the hand of Siſera, Captain of the Hoſt of Hazor, and into the hand of the Philiſtines, and into the hand of the King of Moab, and they fought againſt them.*] This is a ſhort Hiſtory of the Calamities which befel them, for their Idolatry, after they came there: Some few of which he only mentions; without obſerving exactly the Order in which they came upon them: But theſe were the People who longeſt oppreſſed them.

Ver. 10. *And they cried unto the LORD and ſaid, We have ſinned, becauſe we have forſaken the LORD, and have ſerved Baalim and Aſhtaroth: but now deliver us out of the hand of our Enemies, and we will ſerve thee.*] This they did very often, *Judges* iii. 9, 13. iv. 3. vi. 7. eſpecially x. 10, 15, *&c.*

Ver. 11. *And the Lord ſent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel, and delivered you out of the hand of your Enemies on every ſide, and ye dwelt ſafely.*] This is perfectly agreeable to the Hiſtory of the Book of *Judges*; which acquaints us, that as often as they repented, and beſought his pardon, *&c.* he raiſed up Deliverers unto them: The lateſt of which he only mentions. In which account there is no Difficulty, but only about *Bedan:* Of whom we no where read. But ſee my Notes upon *Judges* x. iv. unto which may be added, that the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe here hath it, *he ſent Gideon and Sampſon, &c.* whom moſt take to be the Perſon here meant, and called *Ben-Dan* (the Son of *Dan*) becauſe he was of that Tribe: And by Contraction called *Bedan*; juſt as inſtead of *Saul-meel* (aſk'd of God) they called him who writes this Book *Samuel*, for ſhortneſs ſake. Who mentions himſelf as one of their Deliverers; becauſe the ſignal Overthrow he gave the *Philiſtines*, which drove them out of their Country, was freſh in their Memory.

Ver. 12. *And when ye ſaw that Nahaſh the King of the Children of Ammon came againſt you, ye ſaid unto me, nay, but a King ſhall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your King.*] They would not ſtay till God raiſed them up a Deliverer, or commanded *Samuel*, who was their Judge, to fight with him: But would have a King like other Nations, always at hand to fight their Battles. See upon viii. 5. The words *Nay*, ſeems to ſignify that *Samuel* told them, that God would be with them to deliver them; or that he offered himſelf to be their Leader under God: But they refuſed his Offer, and continued to demand a King.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore, behold, the King whom you have choſen, and whom you have deſired.*] He could not upbraid them too often with this, that they would not be content with the Government of God, which was peculiar to them; but choſe to be like other People.

And behold, the LORD hath ſet a King over you.] Tho' they choſe to have a King like other Nations, and be governed by God no longer: Yet he ſtill puts them in mind they could not make one, but he was ſet over them by God; as I have before obſerved.

Ver. 14. *If ye will fear the LORD and ſerve him, and obey his Voice, and not rebel againſt the Commandment of the LORD.*] According to the Covenant they lately made with him, xi. 15. All Virtue ſprings from the Fear of God.

Then ſhall both ye and your King that reigneth over you, continue following the LORD your God.] That is, be defended by him; and *continue a happy People:* Notwithſtanding they had thus rejected him. This appears to be the meaning, by what is oppoſed to it in the following Verſe.

Ver. 15. *But if ye will not obey the Voice of the LORD, but rebel againſt the Commandment of the LORD; then ſhall the hand of the LORD be againſt you, as it was againſt your Fathers.*] He would ſuffer their Enemies to oppreſs them, as they did in the Days of the *Judges*; or ſend other Plagues upon them.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore ſtand and ſee the great thing, which the LORD will do before your eyes.*] For a viſible Demonſtration of the Truth of all that *Samuel* had ſaid.

Ver. 17. *Is it not Wheat-harveſt to-day?*] A very clear Day, and in no diſpoſition to rain. Which was not wont to fall in Harveſt-time; but in the Autumn, and in the Spring: Called the later and the former Rain.

I will call upon the LORD, and he ſhall ſend Thunder and Rain, that you may perceive and ſee, that your Wickedneſs is great, which you have done in the ſight of the LORD, in aſking you a King.] By this he ſhewed how he could in an Inſtant deprive them of all the Comforts of Life; as they deſerved, for their rejecting him and his Prophet: Who was ſo powerful, as by his Prayers to produce ſuch Wonders.

Ver. 18. *So Samuel called upon the LORD, and the LORD ſent Thunder and Rain that day.*] A very horrible Tempeſt, accompanied it is likely with Lightning; when all was ſerene, and no Sign appeared of it.

And all the People feared the LORD and Samuel.] This ſtruck ſuch a Terror into them, that they were afraid God would deſtroy them, as he did *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram:* And that *Samuel* would not intercede for them.

Ver. 19. *And all the People ſaid unto Samuel, Pray for thy Servants unto the LORD, that we die not: for we have added unto all our Sins this Evil, to aſk us a King.*] Till now they ſeem not

to

to have been ſenſible of their Sin, in deſiring an Alteration in the Form of their Government: Therefore it was a miraculous Storm, full of Horror, which extorted this Confeſſion from them; not only of this, but all their former Sins.

Ver. 20. *And Samuel ſaid unto the people, Fear not; ye have done all this wickedneſs; yet turn not aſide from following the* LORD, *but ſerve him with all your heart.*] He would not have them deſpair of recoveting God's Favour; and directs them the beſt way to it: By continuing ſo ſenſible of their Wickedneſs, as to be moved to true Repentance, and ſtedfaſt Obedience.

Ver. 21. *And turn ye not aſide, for then ſhall ye go after vain things which cannot profit.*] He warns them above all things againſt worſhipping other Gods, whom he calls *vain things which cannot profit*; by a Scheme of Speech in the Hebrew Language, ſignifying, *they do a great deal of miſchief.* Thus in *Prov.* xx. 23. the Wiſe Man ſaith, *a falſe balance is not good*; that is, is very bad and hateful to God; as it goes before, of *divers weights.* And thus Heathen Writers ſpeak, particularly *Homer*, Odyſſ. ξ. *ver.* 85

Ὀυ γὰρ σχέτλια ἔργα θεοὶ μάκαρες φιλέεσι.

The Bleſſed Gods do not love wicked Actions, *i.e.* they hate and deteſt them.

Nor deliver, for they are vain.] He preſſes them to perſiſt in the Worſhip of God alone: whom if they forſook, and went after other Gods, in vain did they expect Help and Deliverance from them, for they were void of all Power.

Ver. 22. *For the* LORD *will not forſake his People, for his great name ſake; becauſe it hath pleaſed the* LORD *to make you his People.*] The Stedfaſtneſs of God in his Affection to them, notwithſtanding their Provocations, was a mighty Motive to faithful Obedience.

Ver. 23. *Moreover, as for me; God forbid that I ſhould ſin againſt the* LORD *in ceaſing to pray for you: but I will inſtruct you in the good and right way.*] Not only pray for them, but teach and inſtruct them: Which were the two great Offices of a Prophet. They had highly diſobliged him; but he imitated God, who pardoned them, and ſo did he.

Ver. 24. *Only fear the* LORD, *and ſerve him in truth with all your heart; for conſider how great things he hath done for you.*] All his Prayers and Inſtructions would not do the Buſineſs; without their ſerious Conſiderations. And what more worthy their conſtant Thoughts than the great Benefits they had received from God: Particularly his tender Mercy, in not caſting them off, when they ſhaked off his Government.

Ver. 25. *But if you will ſtill do wickedly, ye ſhall be conſumed, both you and your King.*] As it proved, not only in this, but in ſeveral future Reigns.

CHAP. XIII.

Verſe 1. *AND Saul reigned one year.*] In the Hebrew the Words are, *the Son of one year in his Reign or Kingdom.* A very learned Prelate of our own (in his *Demonſtration of the Meſſiah*, Part 2. p. 240.) takes the meaning to be, that *after the Philiſtines were ſubdued by Samuel, a year paſſed, when Saul began to reign: and after this, he reigned two years free from their yoak.* As for his being called *the Son of one year* in the Hebrew, it is well tranſlated by us *reigned one year*; becauſe he was *born*, when he was made King, and changed into another Man: For thus (as *Bochartus* hath obſerved) the Day of an Emperor's Inauguration, among the Gentiles, was called his *Birth-day*, viz. *Natalis Regni*, the Day when he began his Reign.

And when he had reigned two years over Iſrael.] So *Ralbag* interprets the Hebrew Words; and thereby confutes the ſtrange fancy in *Seder Olam Rabba*, that *Saul* reigned but two Years in all. Whereas the meaning is, after this he reigned two years free from the Oppreſſion of the *Philiſtines:* But when they were ended, the *Philiſtines* got the upper hand again, and inſlaved the *Iſraelites*, as appears by this Chapter.

Ver. 2. *Saul choſe him three thouſand men.*] In the firſt year of his Reign he performed thoſe things mentioned in the foregoing Chapter: And when he had reigned two Years, theſe things fell out which we read in this Chapter. Which is much better than Dr. *Lightfoot*'s Expoſition, that he had been King one Year from his firſt anointing at *Ramah*, to his ſecond at *Gibeah:* and after that he reigned two Years more before the LORD caſt him off, and anointed *David.* *Symmachus* and *Procopius Gazæus*, not much otherwiſe. Who by *Son of one year* think the Simplicity of his Mind is denoted: which he preſerved for ſome time, *i.e.* till he had reigned two Years over *Iſrael*, and then he began to be depraved and forſaken of God.

Whereof two thouſand were with Saul in Michmaſh, and in Mount Benjamin, and one thouſand men with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin.] There was another *Gibeah* in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 57.

And the reſt of the People he ſent every man to his Tent.] The forementioned number being ſufficient for his Guard, and to preſerve the Country in Peace, and to oppoſe any ſudden inroad of their Enemies: He would not be burdenſome to his People, by keeping great Forces.

Ver. 3. *And Jonathan ſmote the garriſon of the Philiſtines.*] Who tho' ſubdued by *Samuel* at *Aben-Ezer*, and driven out of the Country; yet kept ſome ſtrong-holds, as I obſerved, x. 5.

That was in Geba.] This was a diſtinct place from *Gibeah*, tho' both in the Tribe of *Benjamin:* As is evident from *Joſh.* xviii. 24, 28.

And the Philiſtines heard it.] And thereupon (as the following Words import) denounced War againſt *Iſrael.*

And Saul blew the Trumpet throughout all the Land of Iſrael, ſaying, Let the Hebrews hear.] He gave them notice, by a Proclamation, what *Jonathan* had done, and what was the effect of it: And thereupon ſummoned them to come to *Gilgal.*

Ver. 4. *And all Iſrael heard ſay, that Saul had ſmitten the garriſon of the Philiſtines.*] This ſhows

ſhews that *Jonathan* acted by *Saul*'s order: who was deſirous to free his own Tribe from ſuch Intruders.

And that Iſrael alſo was an Abomination with the Philiſtines.] Who were highly incenſed to take Revenge.

And the People were called together after Saul to Gilgal.] Where *Samuel* had appointed to meet him, x. 8.

Ver. 5. *The Philiſtines gathered themſelves together to fight with Iſrael, thirty thouſand Chariots, and ſix thouſand Horſemen, and People as the Sand of the Sea-ſhore for multitude: And they came up and pitched in Michmaſh, eaſtward from Beth-aven.*] A prodigious Army, and very formidable, by reaſon of their Chariots and Horſemen, which were alſo very numerous (ſee *Joſh.* xi. 4.) But it is not likely the *Philiſtines* alone could bring ſo many into the Field; No, nor after other Nations thereabout were aſſociated with them, it is credible that they ſhould make up Thirty thouſand Chariots of War. For none ever had ſo many; *Pharaoh* himſelf purſuing the *Iſraelites* only with Six hundred, *Exodus* xiv. 7. Therefore moſt of them were no more than Carriages, which were neceſſary for the Baggage of ſuch vaſt Multitudes of People: Which is a better Account, in my Judgment, than to ſay there is a Miſtake made by Tranſcribers in later Times: As *Bochartus* himſelf thinks, (*Hierozoicon*, P. 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 9.) becauſe in the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Copies there are only found three thouſand. Which is too great a number, without the help of the foregoing Expoſition; for in the vaſt Army of *Mithridates* there were but an *hundred* Chariots, and in *Darius*'s *two hundred*, and in *Antiochus Epiphanes*'s (of which we read 2*Macc.* xiii. 2.) but *three hundred.*

Ver. 6. *When the Men of Iſrael ſaw that they were in a ſtrait (for the People were diſtreſſed)* Tho' their wonderful Succeſs againſt the *Ammonites* had encouraged them to obey the Summons of ſuch a proſperous Leader, as *Saul* had been; yet when they ſaw the vaſt Army of the *Philiſtines*, how well they were appointed, and themſelves unprovided, their hearts failed them, and they ſlunk from him as faſt as they had flocked to him.

Then the People did hide themſelves, in Caves, and in Thickets, and in Rocks, and in High-places, and in Pits.] One part of the People endeavoured to ſecure themſelves in Lurking-places: Where it was not eaſy to find them.

Ver. 7. *And ſome of the Hebrews went over Jordan to the Land of Gad and Gilead.*] Another part of them fled as far as they could from preſent Danger; into the Country of the two Tribes and a half.

As for Saul he was yet in Gilgal, and all the People followed him trembling.] All that were left with him, were in great fear, ſeeing ſo many of their Brethren deſert him.

Ver. 8. *And he tarried ſeven days, according to the ſet time that Samuel appointed.*] He miſtook *Samuel*'s meaning (as I ſhowed upon x. 8.) who told him he would come and offer Sacrifice, ſeven Days: And then adds, *thou ſhalt tarry 'till I come.* So two Interpreters, who are ancient in reſpect of our times (*Rupertus*, and *Angelomus*) have obſerved an *Amphibologia* in *Samuel*'s Words in that Place, which may be conſtrued two ways; and it was *Saul*'s Folly to make choice of the wrong Senſe. For the laſt words there are as much as if he had ſaid, *be ſure to tarry 'till I come, and ſhow thee what thou ſhalt do.* And indeed common Reaſon might have taught him, that if the War was to be undertaken, it was to be managed likewiſe by the Counſel of the LORD: And therefore he ought not to have ſacrificed, or done any other ſolemn Act, before the Prophet, who was God's Embaſſador in this Buſineſs, came to inſtruct him.

But Samuel came not to Gilgal.] So ſoon as *Saul* expected him.

And the People were ſcattered from him.] That third part of the People who were left, began to go away; when they ſaw *Samuel* did not come to adviſe and aſſiſt him, in this dangerous Condition.

Ver. 9. *And Saul ſaid, bring hither the Burnt-offering unto me, and Peace-offerings: and he offered the Burnt-offering.*] And would have proceeded to offer the Peace-offerings, if *Samuel*'s coming had not prevented him.

Ver. 10. *And it came to paſs, that as ſoon as he had made an end of offering the Burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came: and Saul went out to meet him, that he might ſalute him.*] Welcome him thither: Which he did in honour of the Prophet.

Ver. 11. *And Samuel ſaid, What haſt thou done? and Saul ſaid, Becauſe I ſaw the People were ſcattered from me, and that thou cameſt not within the days appointed, and that the Philiſtines gathered themſelves together to Michmaſh.*] Theſe look'd like weighty Reaſons; but could not excuſe his Preſumption in not waiting for *Samuel*, who aſſured him he would come thither.

Ver. 12. *Therefore ſaid I, the Philiſtines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made ſupplication unto the LORD; I forced my ſelf therefore, and offered a Burnt-offering.*] He pretends it was much againſt his Inclination: But pleads neceſſity for what he did; leſt his Enemies ſhould have ſet upon him, before he had commended himſelf to God, and begg'd his Bleſſing. By which it appears, that Burnt-offerings were of the nature of a Prayer to God: Whom they acknowledged thereby to be the LORD of all. Whence it is that we read ſo often of *Abraham* and *Iſaac*, that they *built Altars* (which were for Sacrifice) *and called upon the Name of the LORD.* The *Gentiles* alſo, as well as the *Jews*, invoked God by their Sacrifices, as Mr. *Mede* hath ſhown from *Homer*, and other Authors, *Book* 2. *p.* 464.

Ver. 13. *And Samuel ſaid to Saul, Thou haſt done fooliſhly; thou haſt not kept the Commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee.*] When God advanced *Saul* to be King, he was little in his own Eyes, and then a great Man in the ſight of God. But now he began to take upon him, and thought it was fit the Prophet ſhould wait for the King, rather than the King for the Prophet: And diſtruſted *Samuel*'s Word, who bad him tarry 'till he came. And ſo intruded upon the Prieſt's Office; or at leaſt cauſed the Prieſt to do that unſeaſonably; which was reſerved for *Samuel* to do,

do, when God thought fit to ſend him: Who had all along tranſacted all Matters between God and *Saul*. In ſhort, his Folly and Diſobedience conſiſted in this, that he intrenched upon the Prieſt's Office, or upon the Prophet's, or upon both: And would not wait *Samuel's* coming, nor confeſs his Fault to him when he came; but made Excuſes, and laid the fault upon all but himſelf, *ver.* 11.

Abarbinel hath expounded this a little more diſtinctly, by obſerving the Command which *Samuel* gave him when he firſt anointed him, x. 8. where he tells him *firſt*, he would come and offer Sacrifice; 2*dly*, he bids him wait for him ſeven Days: And *laſtly*, ſaith he would direct him what to do. Now *Saul* tranſgreſſed every part of this Command: For he offered Sacrifice himſelf, which God intended ſhould be offered only by the Prophet; and he did not ſtay till the end of the ſeventh Day, but offered on the ſeventh Day in the Morning; and he intended to begin the War, without any Direction from *Samuel*, what he ſhould do. He thinks alſo, that thoſe Words *ſeven Days* (in that place) may refer to the Words going before, *viz. Peace-offerings* ſo many Days. For *Saul* was bound, as it follows, to tarry till *Samuel* came, tho' he ſtayed more than ſeven Days before he came.

For now would the LORD *have eſtabliſhed thy kingdom upon Iſrael for ever.*] This ſuggeſts that the Intention of *Samuel*'s coming to offer Sacrifice at *Gilgal* for ſeven Days, was to confirm *Saul* in the Kingdom (as I obſerved upon x. 8.) if he had not fooliſhly deprived himſelf of that Bleſſing: But here the *Hebrew* Doctors take notice of a Difficulty, which is, how God could intend to eſtabliſh the Kingdom upon him *for ever*, without contradicting the Prophecy of *Jacob*, who had promiſed the Scepter to the Tribe of *Judah*. Which *Ralbag* thinks is ſufficiently anſwered, by ſaying that *for ever* ſignifies no more than a long time; as it doth in the Words of *Hannah* in the beginning of this Book, Chap. i. 22. and in *Exod.* xxi. 9. and many more Places. And ſo others interpret theſe Words, *as long as his Poſterity laſted.*

Ver. 14. *But now the Kingdom ſhall not continue.*] He predicts that God would not let his Family enjoy the Kingdom: Becauſe of other Sins which he foreſaw he would commit.

The LORD *hath ſought him a Man after his own heart, and the* LORD *hath commanded him to be Captain over his People: becauſe thou haſt not kept that which the* LORD *commanded thee.*] God had not yet commanded *David* to lead his People: But he fully intended to do it, if *Saul* did not repent and obtain a Pardon of him for his Offence. Whereby he had not provoked him ſo far, as to have an irreverſible Sentence paſſed upon him (as many great Men have thought) but it might have been revoked, if he had not perſiſted in his Folly, and committed a much greater Offence againſt the Divine Majeſty, in the War againſt *Amalek*. Then *Samuel* tells him, the LORD *would not repent:* Which not being added here, makes it probable he was capable of a Pardon, notwithſtanding this Denunciation; if he had begged it with Repentance, and better Obedience for the time to come.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel aroſe, and gat him up from Gilgal unto Gibeath of Benjamin.*] The Place of *Saul*'s Birth, and where he lived. Which I look upon as a Sign that *Samuel* did not intend to deſert him, as he did afterward, nor looked upon him yet as forſaken by God.

And Saul numbred the People that were preſent with him, about ſix hundred Men.] A ſtrange Alteration ſince the laſt Year, when againſt the *Ammonites* he had three hundred thouſand Men with him beſides thoſe of *Judah*, xi. 6.

Ver. 16. *And Saul and Jonathan his Son, and the People who were preſent with him, abode in Gibeath of Benjamin.*] They followed *Samuel*; and it was a ſtrong Place, where they could defend themſelves better than in the open Field: And here, it is likely, he hoped to increaſe his Forces, being in his own Tribe.

But the Philiſtines incamped in Michmaſh.] A Place not very remote from *Gibeath*; but in the Tribe of *Ephraim*.

Ver. 17. *And the Spoilers came out of the Camp of the Philiſtines, in three Companies.*] They ſent out Parties *three* ſeveral ways, to ravage the Country, there being none to oppoſe them.

One Company turned the way that leadeth to Ophrah.] There was a City of this Name in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, *Joſh.* xviii. 23. but many take this rather to be that in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, where *Gideon* was born, *Judges* vi. 11.

Unto the Land of Shuall.] So called, becauſe it abounded with *Foxes*; as *Bochart* obſerves.

Ver. 18. *And another Company turned the way of Beth-horon.*] Both the upper, and the nether Cities of this Name, were in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, 1 *Chron.* vii. 24.

And another Company turned to the way of the Border, that looks to the Valley of Zeboim, towards the Wilderneſs.] The *Chaldee* Paraphraſt tranſlates theſe Words, *the Valley of Vipers:* For *Tzeboa* ſignifies a ſort of ſpeckled Serpent, wherewith this Valley abounded; and lay towards the *Wilderneſs* of *Jericho* in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. Thus alſo a great Number of the Hebrew Writers tranſlate *Zeboim:* Which *Junius* takes for a City in this Tribe. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *p.* 2. *lib.* 3. *cap.* 7.

Ver. 19. *Now there was no Smith found thro'-out all the Land of Iſrael: for the Philiſtines ſaid, leſt the Hebrews make them Swords and Spears.*] To this miſerable Condition the *Philiſtines* had reduced them during the Forty Years Tyranny over them, of which we read *Judges* xiii. 1. But after *Samuel* had put an end to it, by the great Overthrow he gave the *Philiſtines* at *Eben-Ezer*, it ſeems ſomething ſtrange they had not reſtored their Artificers. But the Sloth of the *Iſraelites* appears in their whole Story: And it was not eaſy, in ſo ſhort a time, for Men to learn this Trade. Which the *Philiſtines* wiſely deſtroyed, as the *Chaldæans*, when they deſtroyed *Jeruſalem*, carried away all the Smiths to *Babylon*; that they who remained in the Land, might not arm themſelves again, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 14.

Ver. 20. *But all the Men of Iſrael went down to the Philiſtines, to ſharpen every Man his Share, and his Coulter, and his Ax, and his Mattock.*] Not to the Country of the *Philiſtines*, for that was too far off from ſome parts of the Land of

Iſrael; but to their Garriſons, which they held among them, even after *Samuel* had driven the main Body of them out of the Country, as I obſerved upon x. 5.

Ver. 21. *Yet they had a File for the Mattocks, and for the Coulters, and for the Forks, and for the Axes, and to ſharpen the Goads.*] Thus *Pliny* tells us in his *Natural Hiſtory*, *Lib.* 31. *Cap.* 14. that in the League which *Porſenna* made with the *Roman* People, after the Expulſion of their Kings, it was expreſly covenanted, *Ne ferro, niſi in agricultura, uterentur*; that they ſhould not make uſe of Iron, but only in the tilling of their Fields.

Ver. 22. *So it came to paſs that in the Day of Battle, there was neither Sword nor Spear found in the Hand of any of the People that were with Saul and Jonathan: but with Saul and Jonathan his Son was there found.*] The *Jews* being very much addicted to feeding Cattle, very much neglected mechanical Arts: As appeared when *Solomon* built the Temple. For there were ſo few skilled in Architecture, among the *Iſraelites*, that he was conſtrained to ſend to another Nation for them. And ſo *Raſi* thinks it was in the Trade of Smiths; there being no Iron Mines in the Land. But that was not the true Reaſon, as *Kimchi* obſerves; for the *Philiſtines*, as was ſaid before, had tranſplanted the Smiths, when the *Iſraelites* were under their Dominion. In other Oppreſſions alſo, which they lay under, their Enemies were wont to diſarm them; as appears by the Song of *Deborah*, *Judges* v. 8. But tho' they had no Sword nor Spear, yet they had Bows and Arrows, and Slings: Which the Men of *Gibeah* could anciently manage to a wonderful advantage, as we read *Judges* xx. 16. And beſides theſe, they antiently uſed Clubs to beat down their Enemies; and before the Invention of Spears with Iron Points, they had ſharp Stakes hardened in the Fire, as many Authors inform us.

Ver. 23. *And the Garriſon of the Philiſtines went out to the paſſage of Michmaſh.*] Some refer this to the Garriſon mentioned *ver.* 3. which *Jonathan* having ſmitten, they that eſcaped joined with the Army at *Michmaſh*. But it refers rather to the Garriſon mentioned in the beginning of the next Chapter, *ver.* 1. and the laſt Word relates not to *the Paſſage*, but to the *Garriſon*. As if he had ſaid, *The Garriſon of the Philiſtines in Michmaſh went out to the Paſſage.* For *Michmaſh*, as *Raſi* obſerves, was upon a high Hill, as *Gibeah* was: between which was a Valley, called here *a Paſſage*. Into which the Garriſon deſcended, to invite the *Iſraelites* to Battle: Or as the *Targum* tranſlates the firſt Word, the *Captain General* of the *Philiſtines* went out into the Valley; to view the Ground, we may ſuppoſe, and form a Camp there.

CHAP. XIV.

Verſe 1. *NOW it came to paſs upon a day, that Jonathan the Son of Saul ſaid unto the young Man that bare his Armour; Come, and let us go over to the Garriſon of the Philiſtines that is on the other ſide.*] Of the Valley, mentioned in the foregoing Verſe. This had been a very raſh Attempt, and very criminal (he having no order from his Father, who commanded in chief) if he had not had a Divine Incitation to it. Which he felt upon the ſight of the *Philiſtines* appearing, as if they intended to aſſault *Gibeah*: And upon the Information he received of the great Spoil, which the three Parties made of the poor People in the Country, xiii. 17.

But he told not his Father.] Leſt he ſhould have hindred him from this Enterprize, into which he felt himſelf moved by God.

Ver. 2. *And Saul tarried in the uttermoſt part of Gibeah.*] In ſome Intrenchments he had made without the City.

Under a Pomegranate Tree, which is in Migron.] Where he pitched his Tent.

And the People that were with him, were about ſix hundred Men.] His Forces were not augmented ſince he came to *Gibeah*, as might have been expected (xiii. 15, 16.) But as *Vegetius* obſerves, (*Lib.* 1. *de Re militari, Cap.* 8.) *in omni conflictu non tam prodeſt multitudo, quam virtus. In all conflicts Valour doth more ſervice than Multitude.*

Ver. 3. *And Ahijah the Son of Ahitub, Icabod's Brother, the Son of Phineas.*] It ſeems *Phineas* (who was ſlain with *Hophni*) left two Sons; *Icabod*, who was born after his Death; and *Ahitub*, who was born before: And left a Son, who is here called *Ahijah*, and in the xxii. 9. *Ahimelech*; who left a Son called *Abiathar*, xxiii. 6.

The Son of Eli, the LORD's Prieſt in Shilo.] Theſe laſt Words, *the LORD's Prieſt in Shilo*, manifeſtly belong to *Eli*, who was the High Prieſt while the Tabernacle was in *Shilo*.

Wearing an Ephod.] Or rather, the *Ephod*: Which comprehends the Breaſt-plate, with *Urim* and *Thummim*, for they were inſeparable from it. Theſe *Abijah*, being High Prieſt, now wore: For theſe Words, as *Ralbag* obſerves, belong to him. See *Selden*, Lib. 1. *de Succeſſ. ad Pontif.* Cap. 3. *Saul* being now in great diſtreſs, ſent for *Ahijah*, to conſult God for him, as there ſhould be occaſion: And as appears by the 18th Verſe of this Chapter, had commanded him to bring the Ark with him from *Kirjath-jearim*.

And the People knew not that Jonathan was gone.] This makes *Joſephus*'s Opinion probable, that he went away in the Night: Which was prudent upon another account; that he might not be ſpied preſently by the *Philiſtines*.

Ver. 4. *And between the paſſage by which Jonathan ſought to go over unto the Philiſtines Garriſon, there was a ſharp Rock on one ſide, and a ſharp Rock on the other.*] So that there was no way to come at the *Philiſtines*, but by climbing up one of theſe Rocks (*ver.* 12.) which were thought inacceſſible: And therefore not fortified, as the other Paſſages to *Michmaſh* were, with ſuch ſtrong Guards, as *Jonathan* could not encounter.

The Name of the one was Bozoz, the Name of the other Saneh.] Which were ſuch famous Precipices, that they had Names beſtowed on them: The Original of which will not be worth our Enquiry; but the latter ſeems to have taken its Name, from the Thorns that grew upon it.

Ver. 5. *The Fore-front of the one was ſituate northward over againſt Michmaſh: and the other ſouth-*

ſouthward over-againſt Gibeah.] By this we underſtand how theſe two Places lay: Towards which theſe Rocks pointed.

Ver. 6. *And Jonathan ſaid to the young Man, that bare his Armour, Come let us go over to the Garriſon of the uncircumciſed.*] He ſpeaks of them with Contempt, as Strangers to the Covenant of God.

It may be the LORD will work for us; for there is no reſtraint to the LORD to ſave by many or by few.] He ſpeaks with ſome Diffidence to his Servant: but was inwardly perſwaded of a certain Victory, by the Divine Aſſiſtance.

Ver. 7. *And his Armour-bearer ſaid unto him, Do all that is in thine Heart; turn thee.*] Which way thou wilt.

Behold, I am with thee according to thy Heart.] He reſolved not to forſake his Maſter in any Undertaking, tho' ever ſo dangerous: Being ſuch a Servant as *Gideon* had, *Judges* vii. 10.

Ver. 8. *Then ſaid Jonathan, Behold, I will paſs over to theſe Men.*] He reſolves to lead the way.

And we will diſcover our ſelves unto them.] At Break of Day.

Ver. 9. *If they ſay thus unto us, Tarry until we come unto you, then we will ſtand ſtill in our place, and will not go up unto them.*

Ver. 10. *But if they ſay thus, Come up to us, then we will go up; for the LORD hath delivered them into our hand: and this ſhall be a Sign unto us.*] Which we could not have known without an Inſtinct from God, who often ſuggeſted ſuch Thoughts unto good Men: As we ſee in the Example of *Abraham*'s Servant, *Gen.* xxiv. 14, *&c.* And there is ſomething like this, in the beginning of *Herodotus* his *fifth* Book concerning the *Pæones*, and the *Perinthians*. Where he ſaith the *Pæonians* went to War by a Divine Direction with the *Perinthians*; and were ordered, if the *Perinthians* being oppoſed to them, provoked them by name to fight, then they ſhould invade them; but if they did not, they ſhould abſtain from fighting. Now when they faced one another there happened a three-fold ſingle Combat: and the *Perinthians* being Victors in two of them, began to ſing a Song of Triumph, and inſult over the *Pæonians*; who thereupon ſaid one to another, νῦν ἂν εἴη ὁ χρησμὸς ἐπιτελεσμένος ἡμῖν, νῦν ἡμέτερον τὸ ἔργον. *Now is the Oracle fulfilled to us, now is our Buſineſs*; and ſo ſhouting and falling upon the *Perinthians*, they vanquiſhed them, and left few of them remaining.

Ver. 11. *And both of them diſcovered themſelves unto the Garriſon of the Philiſtines.*] At the bottom of the Rocks.

And the Philiſtines ſaid, Behold the Hebrews come forth out of their Holes, where they had hid themſelves.] xiii. 6. They imagined it was not Courage, but Neceſſity, which forced them to come within their View, as they ſought for Food.

Ver. 12. *And the Men of the Garriſon anſwered Jonathan and his Armour-bearer, and ſaid, come up to us and we will ſhow you a thing.*] They mock'd at them, thinking they durſt not attempt to climb up to them.

And Jonathan ſaid to his Armour-bearer, Come up after me, for the LORD hath delivered them into the hand of Iſrael.] Now he gives him the ſame Aſſurance, which he had before in his own Mind.

Ver. 13. *And Jonathan climbed up upon his Hands and his Feet, and his Armour-bearer after him.*] Not in the view of the *Philiſtines*, but by ſome difficult way, which none was ever known to go: And ſo perhaps they came behind them and ſurprized them.

And they fell before Jonathan, and his Armour-bearer ſlew after him.] The firſt onſet was made by *Jonathan* (as he led the way up the Precipice) who ruſhed upon them with ſuch a Fury, that he threw them down to the ground, and then his Armour-bearer killed them. So ſome underſtand this: Which was a more wonderful Action than that of *Horatius Cochlites* (as *Victorinus Strigelius* obſerves) who alone maintained a Paſſage at a Bridge, againſt all the Forces of the Enemy; and cauſed the Bridge to be broken down behind him. But that ſhows, that ſince natural Courage made a Man ſo daring, it is not incredible that *Jonathan* made ſuch an Attempt by Divine Incitation.

Ver. 14. *The firſt Slaughter which Jonathan and his Armour-bearer made, was about twenty Men, within, as it were, an Half-Acre of Land, which a Yoke of Oxen might plow.*] *Viz.* in one Day. That is, ſaith *Kimchi*, in a very ſmall ſpace of Ground: Which *De Dieu* will have to be half a Furrow in length. See him.

Ver. 15. *And there was a trembling in the Hoſt, in the Field, and among the People: the Garriſon, and the Spoilers, they alſo trembled.*] News being brought of this Slaughter to the Hoſt of the *Philiſtines* which lay in the Field, it put them into a great Conſternation: For they were aſleep, (it's likely) this being done very early in the Morning, as *Joſephus* thinks, *lib. 6. cap. 7.* And all the People that attended the Hoſt; as well as the Garriſon, and Spoilers who had been ravaging the Country (xiii. 17.) were very much affrighted: imagining, a great Army had been at hand to fall upon them; of which theſe two were but the Scouts. Whoſe Exploits, perhaps, were alſo magnified beyond the Truth.

And the Earth quaked.] Some think there was a real Earthquake, which increaſed their Fear: But it may be no more than a *Metaphorical* Expreſſion, for the great Tumult they were in.

So it was a great trembling.] In the *Hebrew*, *a trembling of God*, that is, which God ſent upon them: Called by the Heathen a *panick Fear*, which they thought came from their Gods, and made the ſtouteſt Men quake. So *Pindar* excellently expreſſes it in his *Nemea* ix. *ver.* 63.

——Ἐν γὰρ
Δαιμονίοισι φόβοις
Φεύγουσι καὶ Παῖδες Θεῶν.

When Men are ſtruck with divine Terrors, even the Children of the Gods (*i. e.* the moſt Heroick Spirits) *betake themſelves to flight.* And the Army of the *Philiſtines* conſiſting (as I obſerved on xiii. 5.) of different Nations, it made the Confuſion

fuſion and Trembling the greater: becauſe they either did not underſtand, or ſuſpected one another.

Ver. 16. *And the Watchmen of Saul in Gibeah of Benjamin looked.*] For it was ſeated on an high Hill, which overlooked the Country about it.

And behold the Multitude melted away.] Were ſcattered; ſo that fewer and fewer were ſeen in a Company together.

And they went on beating down one another.] Not being able, in this Confuſion, to diſtinguiſh their Friends from their Enemies.

Ver. 17. *Then ſaid Saul unto the People that were with him, Number now, and ſee who are gone from us: and when they were numbred, behold Jonathan and his Armour-bearer were not there.*] He eaſily miſſed *Jonathan*, I ſuppoſe, but could not imagine he would fall upon the *Philiſtines*, without a good Number of Men to aſſiſt him: which he knew he had not. This made him call the High-prieſt, to enquire of God, that he might be informed what was the matter, and what he ſhould do.

Ver. 18. *And Saul ſaid to Ahijah, Bring hither the Ark of God; for the Ark of God was at that time with the Children of Iſrael.*] How could he bid him bring the Ark, when it was at *Kirjath-jearim* in the Houſe of *Abinadab?* To this *Abarbinel* anſwers, that he doth not ſpeak of the Ark in which the Tables of the Law were kept (for he doth not ſay, *bring the Ark of the Covenant hither*) but a little Coffer, wherein the *Ephod* was kept; that is, a Breaſt-plate with *Urim* and *Thummim*. Theſe the Prieſt brought along with him, that *Saul* might conſult God upon occaſion, as *David* did, 1 *Sam.* xxx. 8. Therefore the LXX tranſlate it, προσάγαγε τὸ Ἐφὸδ, bring hither the *Ephod*. And ſo *Raſi* and *Kimchi*. See *Buxtorf.* Hiſt. Arcæ, *Cap.* 3. and our learned Dr. *Spencer*, *de Leg. & Rit. Heb.* fol. 859. But this doth not ſeem a ſolid Interpretation, there being but one Ark mentioned in Scripture, which is not always called the *Ark of the Covenant*, but the *Ark of the* LORD, or the *Ark of God*, as it is called when it came into the Camp of *Iſrael*, and was taken by the *Philiſtines*, Chap. iv. Ver. 6, 11, 17, 18, *&c.* Therefore here, I ſuppoſe, *Saul* commanded the Ark it ſelf to attend him; when he wanted the Advice and Aſſiſtance of *Samuel*.

Ver. 19. *And it came to paſs, that while Saul talked with the Prieſt.*] Deſiring him to enquire of God, what was become of *Jonathan*, and his Armour-bearer; and what was the meaning of that Tumult in the Hoſt of the *Philiſtines*.

That the Noiſe that was in the Hoſt of the Philiſtines went on and increaſed, and Saul ſaid to the Prieſt, withdraw thine Hand.] He was going to take the *Urim* and *Thummim*, as the fore-named Authors underſtand it, when *Saul* hearing the Tumult grow greater and greater among the *Philiſtines*, bid him forbear: There being no need, for he concluded they were routed; and therefore reſolved without any further Deliberation to go and purſue them. Or, as others underſtand it, the Prieſt having ſtretched forth his Hand to God in Prayer for his Advice, *Saul* called upon him to deſiſt: For it is plain what they had to do, without any Enquiry.

Ver. 20. *And Saul and all the People that were with him, aſſembled, and came to the Battle, and behold, every Man's Sword was againſt his Fellow, and there was a very great Diſcomfiture.*] This *Joſephus* thinks fell out (as I noted above) becauſe their Army conſiſted of divers Nations, who did not know one another, and ſo fell into Confuſion.

Ver. 21. *Moreover the Hebrews that were with the Philiſtines before that time, which went up with them into the Camp, from the Country round about.*] As ſome, it ſeems, did; either out of Fear, Compulſion, or Deſign.

Even they alſo turned to be with the Iſraelites that were with Saul and Jonathan.] And helped to deſtroy the *Philiſtines*.

Ver. 22. *Likewiſe all the Men of Iſrael that had hid themſelves in Mount Ephraim.*] And other Places, mentioned xiii. 6.

When they heard that the Philiſtines fled, even they alſo followed hard after them in the Battle.] Purſued them cloſely.

Ver. 23. *So the* LORD *ſaved Iſrael that day, and the Battle paſſed over unto Beth-aven.*] Theſe Words ſeem to imply, that the Fight continued till they came to this Place; which lay weſtward from *Michmaſh* (xiii. 5.) and there the *Philiſtines* threw down their Arms; and fled as faſt as they could towards their own Country.

Ver. 24. *And the Men of Iſrael were diſtreſſed that day.*] When they ſhould have been full of Joy and Triumph.

For Saul had adjured the People, ſaying, Curſed be the Man that eateth any Food until the Evening, that I may be avenged of my Enemies; ſo none of the People taſted any Food.] That they might not loſe time, or make the leaſt Stay in the Purſuit of their Enemies, who fled before them. The King had the ſame Power that the great *Sanhedrim* had, who, the *Jews* ſay, might devote thoſe to Deſtruction, who did not obey the Charge that was given them in War. See *Selden*, Lib. 4. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* cap. 6. But this was a very indiſcreet Act in *Saul*, unbecoming an excellent Captain, for inſtead of purſuing the *Philiſtines* with Vigour, they fainted for want of Refreſhment. Therefore great Commanders always took care their Soldiers ſhould be moderately fed, that they might not be tired in a long Conflict. So *Vegetius* informs us, *lib.* 3. *de Re militari*, *cap.* 9. *Veteribus ſeculis mos fuit, parco cibo curatos milites ad certamen educere, ut citatiores ſumpta eſca redderet, & longiore conflictu, non fatigerentur inedia:* And there was the ſame need of taking a little Refreſhment if they could get it, when they were engaged in a long Purſuit of their Enemy.

Ver. 25. *And all they of the Land came to a Wood, and there was Honey upon the Ground.*] Which dropped from the hollow Trees, or the Clefts of Rocks, where Bees made their Combs in that Country; and ſometimes upon the very Ground; as *Bochart* hath ſhown in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 4. Cap. 12. where he obſerves this was not peculiar to *Judæa*, but uſual in other Countries.

Ver.

Ver. 26. *And when the People were come into the Wood, behold, the Honey dropped, but no Man put his Hand to his Mouth; for the People feared the Oath.*] Wild Honey was so copious in those Countries, and flowed so plentifully, that it gave occasion to that *hyperbolical* Speech in the Book of *Job*, xx. 17. where we read of *Brooks*, or *Torrents, of Honey and Butter.*

Ver. 27. *And Jonathan heard not when his Father charged the People with the Oath.*] He and his Armour-bearer being engaged in Fight (with whom some others joined, *ver.* 21.) long before *Saul* and his small Army came to join him.

Wherefore he put forth the end of his Rod, and dipt it in an Honey-comb, and put his Hand to his Mouth, and his Eyes were enlightned.] That is, his Spirits and Strength, which were quite spent by long Abstinence from Meat, so that he could scarce see, were restored to him, and he was made fresh and lively to proceed in pursuit of the Enemy. For as *Gerh. Vossius* observes (*lib.* 4. *de Orig. & Progr. Idol.* Cap. lxxix.) the Eyes are wont to grow dim with long hunger: And as all Meat and Drink refreshes and enlivens; so Wine and Honey do it above all other more speedily. For their Spirits are both very subtile, and soon diffuse their Strength through the Body. It is also observed by Learned Men, that Honey is an excellent Medicine for sore and weak Eyes: But that is nothing to this purpose; such Cures being not performed by eating of it, but by anointing the Eyes with it.

Ver. 28. *Then answered one of the People.*] That came with *Saul* to the Pursuit.

And said, Thy Father charged the People with an Oath, saying, Cursed be the Man that eateth any Food to-day: and the People were faint.] And yet forbore to take any Refreshment, for fear of the Curse.

Ver. 29. *Then said Jonathan, My Father hath troubled the Land; see I pray you how mine Eyes have been enlightned, because I tasted a little of this Honey.*] Which did not cause so long a stay, as to hinder the Pursuit of the Enemy.

Ver. 30. *How much more, if haply the People had eaten freely this day of the Spoil of their Enemies, which they found: for had there not been now a much greater Slaughter among the Philistines?*] They would have been able to pursue them more swiftly, and to have done greater Execution upon them; than they could when they were faint. Thus Men, by their Rashness, hinder what they would have.

Ver. 31. *And they smote the Philistines that day, from Michmash to Ajalo.*] A City in the Tribe of *Dan* (*Josh.* xiv. 42.) which bordered upon the Country of the *Philistines.*

And the People were very faint.] Otherwise they might have pursued further.

Ver. 32. *And the People flew upon the Spoil.*] Like a ravenous Bird, which wanted Food.

And took Sheep and Oxen and Calves, and slew them on the ground, and the People did eat them with the Blood.] Raw, or but half roasted or boiled, their Hunger being so sharp, that it made them forget their Duty.

Ver. 33. *Then they told Saul, saying, Behold, the People sin against the LORD, in that they eat with the Blood.*] All the People were not so prophane, but only some part of them.

And he said, Ye have transgressed: roll a great Stone unto me.] Our learned Dr. *Spencer* thinks they did not *eat with the Blood*, as we translate it; but *upon* or *by the Blood.* Which was an idolatrous Custom in the East, to invite the Familiarity of *Dæmons*, as hath been noted on *Levit.* xix. 26. And therefore *Saul*, to keep the People from thus defiling themselves, commanded a great Stone to be brought to him, that there they might kill their Beasts at that one place, and then feed upon them. See *de Leg. & Rit. Hebr.* p. 334. But this doth not seem probable, that they should now practise those idolatrous Rites, when God had wrought such a wonderful Deliverance for them; and they were so impatient to eat, that they had not time to think of such Ceremonies.

Ver. 34. *And Saul said, Disperse your selves among the people.*] He speaks unto his Officers.

And say unto them, Bring me hither every Man his Ox, and every Man his Sheep.] This is a sign they had not all offended; having not yet killed their Beasts.

And slay them here, and eat, and sin not against the LORD in eating with the Blood: And all the Men brought every Man his Oxen with him that night, and slew them there.] As many as they had occasion to use.

Ver. 25. *And Saul built an Altar unto the LORD.*] To offer Sacrifices of Peace-offerings, and give Thanks to God for this great Victory. Tho' others think it was not for Sacrifice, but only a Monument of God's Mercy, in his late Deliverance.

The same was the first Altar that he built unto the LORD.] In the Hebrew the Words are, (as is observed in the Margin of our Bibles) *that Altar he began to build unto the LORD*, i. e. he laid the first Stone himself. We read of his Offering before in *Gilgal*; but that perhaps was not upon an Altar erected by himself, but was built before by others.

Ver. 36. *And Saul said, Let us go down after the Philistines by Night, and spoil them until the Morning, and let us not leave a Man of them.*] Having thus refreshed themselves, in the Evening, *Saul* propounded to them to renew the pursuit: Hoping to cut off their whole Army, when they were asleep in the Night.

And they said, Do whatsoever seemeth good unto thee.] Their good Success made them as forward, as before they were backward to follow him.

Then said the Priest, Let us draw near hither unto God.] It is likely he stood before the Altar (if it were for Sacrifice) and put them in mind, that it was dangerous to undertake any thing without God's Advice: Which he was there ready to ask for them. In the *Targum* it is, *Let us enquire by the WORD of the LORD.*

Ver. 37. *And Saul asked Council of God.*] By *Urim* and *Thummim.*

Shall I go down after the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel?] Hitherto *Saul* had some Goodness left in him: For he hearkened to the Priest, when he admonished him of his Duty, which he neglected. The

Targum

Targum here again hath it, *Saul asked by the WORD of the LORD.*

But he answered him not that day.] Tho' perhaps the Priest had often begg'd an Answer, yet he received none.

Ver. 38. *And Saul said, Draw near hither, all the chief of the People; and see wherein this Sin hath been this day.*] He concluded some Sin had provoked God, not to regard his Supplication: Which he desired might be found out and punished.

Ver. 39. *For as the LORD liveth that saveth Israel, tho' it be in Jonathan my Son, he shall surely die: But there was not a Man among the People that answered him.*] Tho' many knew that *Jonathan* had transgressed his Father's Charge (*ver.* 28.) yet none would discover it.

Ver. 40. *Then said he unto all Israel, Be you on one side; and I and Jonathan my Son will be on the other side: and the People said, Do what seemeth good unto thee.*] He had gained great Authority among the People (it appears by this, and by *ver.* 36.) since his wonderful Success.

Ver. 41. *Therefore Saul said unto the LORD God of Israel, Give a perfect Lot: and Saul and Jonathan were taken, and the People escaped.*] The Word *Lot* is not in the Original, but only *give perfect*, that is, declare who is innocent. So the Word *give* sometimes signifies to *pronounce*, *Deut.* xiii. 1, 2.

Ver. 42. *And Saul said, Cast Lots between me and Jonathan my Son, and Jonathan was taken.*] This looks like Virtue in him, that for good Example sake, he would not exempt himself, tho' a King, from the same Trial, to which he exposed all the People.

Ver. 43. *Then said Saul to Jonathan, Tell me what thou hast done. And Jonathan told him, and said, I did but taste a little Honey, that was in my Hand; and lo, I must die.*] This shows a very great Mind, that he neither denied what he had done, nor excused it by his Ignorance, nor refused to die: Tho' he looked upon it as very hard. So *Josephus* represents it, ἐυγενῶς καὶ μεγαλοφρόνως, &c. with a generous and great Mind, he told his Father the Truth; and desired not to be spared, *Lib.* vi. *Antiq. Cap.* 7.

Ver. 44. *And Saul answered, God do so and more also: for thou shalt surely die, Jonathan.*] This demonstrates *Saul* to have been of a rash, and of a rigorous Temper. With whom learned Men are wont to compare *Titus Manlius*; who caused his Son's Head to be cut off, for fighting the Enemy, when he had a fair Advantage, contrary to Order, as *A. Gellius* tells us, *lib.* 9. *cap.* 13. But in this regard *Saul* was to be commended, as *Josephus* also observes, that he had a greater regard to his Oath, than to his Kindred and natural Affection.

Ver. 45. *And the People said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great Salvation in Israel? God forbid; as the LORD liveth there shall not one Hair of his Head fall to the ground; for he hath wrought with God this day. So the People rescued Jonathan, that he died not.*] They did not rescue him by force and violence, but by their Petition to *Saul*, and the reason they gave for it. *Josephus* saith, that *by their Prayers and Vows to God, they delivered him:* Who, perhaps, signified by the Priest, that he approved the People's desire. They were too forward indeed to swear directly against *Saul*'s Oath: But of the two, his being the most rash, God was pleased to annul it, and absolve him from it. Thus *Josephus* understands it, *They rescued him from the Anger of his Father,* καὶ ἐυχὰς ὑπὲρ τῦ νεανίσκυ ποιῆσθαι τῷ Θεῷ, ὡς τὸν αυτὸν ἀπολύσαι τῦ ἁμαρτήματος, *and made their Prayer to God for the young Man, that he would loose him from his Sin.*

How that Phrase, *not a Hair of his Head*, &c. was used, appears from 2 *Sam.* xiv. 11. 1 *Kings* i. 51.

Ver. 46. *Then Saul went up from following the Philistines, and the Philistines went to their own Country.*] He pursued them no further, but let them go quietly to their own homes.

Ver. 47. *And Saul took the Kingdom over Israel.*] Ruled with greater Authority over his People, after this Victory: For the *Philistines* had enslaved them, (as I observed xiii. 2.) But by this Deliverance they were freed from their Yoke, and *Saul* recovered his Kingdom.

And fought against all his Enemies on every side.] He did not invade them (as may be gather'd from the next Verse) but repelled them, and kept them within their own Limits.

Against Moab, and against the Children of Ammon, and against Edom, and against the Kings of Zobah, and against the Philistines.] These were the principal Enemies wherewith they were incompassed. And by the *Kings of Zobah* are meant those that ruled in that part of *Syria*, which is called *Aram Zobah*; which lay towards *Euphrates:* Having that River for its Eastern Bounds, and *Damascus* and the Land of *Canaan* for its Western. For it appears to be near to the *Israelites*, by the frequent Wars which *David* and *Solomon* had with the Kings of this Country, 2 *Sam.* viii. 3. x. 6. 2 *Chron.* vii. 3. and the Aid which the *Syrians* of *Damascus* sent them, 2 *Sam.* viii. 5. and their flying thither when they were routed, 1 *Kings* xi. 24. And the Cities which *Solomon* built in the Wilderness, 1 *Kings* ix. 17, 18. are said to be in *Hamath-Zobah*, 2 *Chron.* viii. 34. which demonstrates it was upon the Confines of *Judæa.*

And whithersoever he turned himself, he vexed them.] He got the better of them. And in his Days the *Reubenites* also made war with the *Hagerens*, and possessed their Land, 'till the time of the Captivity, 1 *Chron.* v. 10, 18, 19, 20.

Ver. 48. *And he gathered an Host, and smote Amalek.*] Which War is at large described in the next Chapter.

And delivered Israel out of the hand of them that spoiled them.] The six forementioned Nations.

Ver. 49. *And the Sons of Saul, were Jonathan, Ishui, and Melchishua*, &c.] These were only fit to accompany him in his Wars, and upon that account are only mentioned here, and xxxi. 2. tho' he had another Son, (*Ishbosheth*) who is mentioned in 1 *Chron.* viii. 33. under the Name of *Eth-baal.*

Ver. 50. *And the Name of Saul's Wife was Ahinoam, the Daughter of Ahimaez; and the Name of the Captain of his Host was Abner, the Son of Ner, Saul's Uncle.*] For *Ner* was Brother to *Saul*'s Father, as the next Verse tells us. It seems to me observable, that we never read of more than

than one Wife that *Saul* had, tho' *David* had many. It is possible he did not think it prudent, in a new-erected Kingdom, to follow the Example of the Eastern Kings in every thing.

Ver. 51. *And Kish was the Father of Saul: and Ner the Father of Abner was the Son of Abiel.*] As *Kish* also was, ix. 1.

Ver. 52. *And there was sore War against the Philistines all the Days of Saul.*] Who could not perfectly subdue them; as appears from their renewing the War, Chap. xvii, &c.

And when Saul saw any strong Man, or any valiant Man.] Who behaved himself with Vigour and Courage in the Wars.

He took him unto him.] To be one of his Guard, or to be preferred in the Army.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *SAmuel also said to Saul, the LORD sent me to anoint thee to be King over his People, over Israel; now therefore hearken unto the Voice of the Words of the LORD.*] Being so highly obliged to God, above all other Men in the Nation, it highly concerned him to be very careful to observe his Commands; especially having lately been disobedient, xiii. 13.

Ver. 2. *Thus saith the LORD of Hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel; how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt.*] See my Notes upon *Deut.* xxv. 17, 18.

Ver. 3. *Now go, and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not: but slay both Man and Woman, Infant and Suckling, Ox and Sheep, Camel and Ass.*] This heavy Sentence was pronounced against them long ago, *Exod.* xvii. 14. and renewed at their Entrance into *Canaan*, with a charge not to forget it, *Deut.* xxv. 19. and now ordered to be put in execution.

Ver. 4. *And Saul gathered the People together, and numbred them in Telaim, two hundred thousand Foot-men, and ten thousand Men of Judah.*] The Word *Telaim* signifying Lambs (which it is likely were very plentiful in this Place) the *Targum* translates it, *he numbred them by Paschal Lambs:* As if the Passover was kept at this time. And so *Rasi* fancies that it being unlawful to number the People, he commanded every Man to take a Lamb out of the Flock, and numbred them. But *David Kimchi*, and others, take this as we do, for the Name of a Place called *Telem*, in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh.* xv. 15. For there is no place mentioned in Scripture called *Telaim*; nor any so near it in Sound as this. See *Selden* Lib. 3. *de Synedr.* Cap. 11. N. v. and *Bochart*'s *Hierozoicon.* P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 43. I have often observed that their Armies consisted of Footmen, they having no Horses in *Judæa*. And in two regards they were more useful than Horsemen, as *Vegetius* observes *Lib.* 2. *de Re militari*, Cap. 1. *first*, because *possunt ubique prodesse*, they may be serviceable every where, which Horsemen cannot. And *secondly*, a great Number of them, *sumptu & expensa minore nutritur*, is maintained at less Expence and Charge.

Ver. 5. *And Saul came to a City of Amalek.*] To the Metropolis of the Kingdom, whose Name perhaps was *Amalek*. For so the Words may be understood, *he came to the City Amalek.*

And laid in wait in the Valley.] Or fought them in the Valley, as we translate it in the *Margin:* For they came out to give Battle.

Ver. 6. *And Saul said to the Kenites.*] Who were of the Posterity of *Jethro:* Some of which were in the Tribe of *Judah*, others in *Naphthali*; and some it seems dwelt among the *Amalekites* in the rocky part of that Country, *Numb.* xxiv. 21.

Go, depart, get ye down.] For they dwelt on high.

From among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them.] For some of the *Amalekites* it is likely would flee to them for shelter.

For you shewed Kindness to the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt. Some of their Ancestors did, which the *Israelites* did not forget. *Exod.* xviii. 12. *Numb.* x. 31.

And the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites.] And went, it is likely, into the Land of *Judah.*

Ver. 7. *And Saul smote the Amalekites from Halah, until thou come to Shur, that is over against Egpyt.*] That is, their whole Country, of which this was the Extent; from *Havilah* in the North-East, to *Shur* in the South-West. These two, *Havilah* and *Shur*, are constantly opposed, as the most opposite Terms of *Arabia*, as *Bochartus* hath observed in his *Phaleg.* Lib. 4. Cap. 6.

Ver. 8. *And Saul took Agag the King of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the People with the edge of the Sword.*] That is, all that could be met with: But some fled no doubt as soon as they saw him victorious; and saved themselves in other Countries. Accordingly we read of good Numbers of this People afterwards.

Ver. 9. *But Saul and the People spared Agag.*] Whosoever proposed it, they all agreed in it, not to kill *Agag:* And *Saul*, it is most likely, was the chief Author of this Counsel. Who, θαυμάσας τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὸ μεγέθος τοῦ σώματος (as *Josephus* speaks) being struck with Admiration of him as a very goodly and proper Person, thought fit to save him. Not following herein the Command of God, but his own private Fancy and Affection, *Lib.* vi. *Antiq.* Cap. viii. Others think he intended to lead him in Triumph. See *ver.* 12.

And the best of the Sheep, and of the Oxen, and of the Fatlings and of the Lambs.] Interpreters wonderfully vary about the Sense of the Word *Hamisnim*, which we translate *Fatlings:* As may be seen in *Bochartus* his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 43. fol. 430. where he shows it signifies Cattle in their full Strength.

All that was good.] Of their Houshold Goods (I suppose) Apparel, and such like things.

And would not utterly destroy them.] As they had been commanded by God; but took them as a Prey unto themselves.

But every thing that was vile and refuse, that destroyed they utterly.] All that was not worth the keeping. Which is a wonderful instance of

of the Baſeneſs of human Nature; when governed by Covetouſneſs, or any ſuch like Affection.

Ver. 10. *Then came the Word of the* LORD *unto Samuel, ſaying.*] Immediately before *Saul* returned from his Expedition.

Ver. 11. *It repenteth me that I have ſet up Saul to be King.*] Whom he reſolved now to throw down from his Throne. See *ver.* 29. For Repentance in God, imports only the Will of a Change, and not of every Change, but of the Divine Sentence pronounced, which the Scripture calls Repentance. So *Procopius Gazæus*, *Pœnitentia Dei eſt Diſpenſationis ipſius mutatio*, God's Repentance is the Change of his own Diſpenſation.

For he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my Commandment. And it grieved Samuel, and he cried unto the LORD *all Night.*] Beſeeching him to pardon *Saul.*

Ver. 12. *And when Samuel roſe up early to meet Saul, in the Morning, it was told Samuel, ſaying, Saul came to Carmel.*] A City in the Mountains of the Tribe of *Judah*, where *Nabal* dwelt, who is called the *Carmelite*, xxvii. 3. See *Joſh.* xv. 55.

And behold he ſet him up a place.] Either for the dividing of the Spoil, as the *Targum* underſtands it; or marking out a Camp, as *Kimchi*; or he erected a triumphal Arch, as St. *Hierom:* Having brought *Agag* with him, to make his Triumph the greater. Which Arch, it may be thought, was in the Form of an Hand: For in the *Hebrew* the Word we tranſlate *Place* is *Jad*, which ſignifies an *Hand.* Or, as *Raſi* will have it, he here built an Altar: which *Elijah* in future Times repaired, 1 *Kings* xviii. 30. But this is a very groſs Miſtake: For this *Carmel* was very remote from that Mount which *Elijah* frequented, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved, P. 1. *Hieroz.* Lib. 2. Cap. 48. It may be rather thought, to be ſome Building, erected in the Form before-mentioned, to ſignify that they overcame the *Amalekites with a ſtrong Hand.*

And is gone down, and paſſed on, and gone down to Gilgal.] In a long Pomp, I ſuppoſe, as a mighty Conqueror.

Ver. 13. *And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul ſaid to him, Bleſſed be thou of the* LORD.] A Form of Salutation wiſhing him all Happineſs from God: Who had ordered him to undertake ſuch a piece of Service, as he had done him.

I have performed the Commandment of the LORD.] He was ſo inſenſible of any Fault he had committed, that he boaſts of his Performance.

Ver. 14. *And Samuel ſaid, What means then this bleating of the Sheep,* &c.] Which he had commanded him utterly to deſtroy, *ver.* 3.

Ver. 15. *And Saul ſaid, They have brought them from the Amalekites.*] He lays the blame upon the People, when it is evident he himſelf was principally in fault, *ver.* 9.

And the People ſpared the beſt of the Sheep, and of the Oxen, to ſacrifice unto the LORD *thy God, and the reſt they have utterly deſtroyed.*] This was a plauſible pretence, it being the Cuſtom all the World over, to give part of their Spoils in War unto their Gods. If there had not been an expreſs Command for deſtroying every thing in this War: So that nothing ſhould be ſpared either for himſelf, or for them.

Ver. 16. *And Samuel ſaid unto Saul, Stay.*] This ſounds, as if *Saul* was going away: Being abundantly ſatisfied in his noble Atchievements.

And I will tell thee what the LORD *hath ſaid unto me this Night.*] When he cried to him without ceaſing, *ver.* 11. Tho' *Samuel* was a Prophet, ſaith *Procopius Gazæus*, yet ſpeaking to a King, he begs leave he may do it freely.

And he ſaid, Say on.] He hoped, it is likely, to hear himſelf commended for his Piety.

Ver. 17. *Then Samuel ſaid unto Saul, When thou waſt little in thy own ſight, waſt thou not made the Head of the Tribes of Iſrael, and the* LORD *anointed thee King over Iſrael?*] It is of great uſe for Men to remember what they were: As *Placilla* the Wife of *Theodoſius* (*Strigellius* here obſerves) ſaid to her Husband, Ἀεί σε προσκήκε λογίζεσθαι, τὶ μὲν ἦθα πάλαι, τι δὲ γέγονας νῦν, &c. *It behoves thee always to think what thou waſt heretofore, and what thou art now. For calling theſe things to mind, thou wilt not be ungrateful to thy Benefactor: but govern the Kingdom thou haſt received, according to the Laws; and by that means honour him that beſtowed it upon thee.*

Ver. 18. *And the* LORD *ſent thee on a Journey, and ſaid, Go, and utterly deſtroy the ſinners the Amalekites.*] He was employed in a very honourable Expedition, to deſtroy the declared Enemies of the LORD.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore then didſt thou not obey the Voice of the* LORD, *but didſt fly upon the ſpoil.*] With great greedineſs, as a hungry Bird or Beaſt upon his Prey.

And didſt evil in the ſight of the LORD?] The Command was as plain as Words could make it: So that there was no reaſon but his own baſe Covetouſneſs, why it was not obeyed.

Ver. 20. *And Saul ſaid unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the Voice of the* LORD, *and have gone the way which the* LORD *ſent me, and have brought Agag King of the Amalekites, and have utterly deſtroyed the Amalekites.*] A ſtrange Stupidity! to imagine ſuch a partial Obedience could be pleaſing unto God.

Ver. 21. *But the people took of the ſpoil, Sheep and Oxen, the chief things that ſhould have been utterly deſtroyed, to ſacrifice unto the* LORD *thy God in Gilgal.*] This was a mean thing, to throw all the blame on the People, whom he ſhould have governed better: And it was worſt of all, to let them pretend Religion for their Diſobedience.

Ver. 22. *And Samuel ſaid, Hath the* LORD *as great delight in Burnt-offerings and Sacrifices, as in obeying the Voice of the* LORD? *Behold, to obey is better than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the Fat of Rams.*] This moſt divine Admonition is inculcated by all following inſpired Writers, *David*, *Solomon*, and the Prophets. See *Pſal.* l. 13, 14. *Pſal.* li. 16, 17. *Eccleſ.* v. 1. *Iſaiah* i. 11, 12, &c. *Iſaiah* lxvi. 3. *Jerem.* vii. 21, 22, &c. *Hoſea* vi. 6. *Micah* vi. 6, 7, 8. *Zach.* viii. 16. And ſome of the Heathen have ſaid excellent things to this purpoſe.

Ver. 23. *For Rebellion is as the Sin of Witchcraft.*] Or, *following after Divination:* Which is oppoſed to Prophecy, as Idols are to God.

And Stubbornneſs is as Iniquity and Idolatry.] The Words *aven* and *teraphim* ſignify all manner of Idolatry. From which tho' *Saul* was free, yet his obſtinate Diſobedience made him liable to ſuch Puniſhment, as Idolaters deſerved. For as they were to be cut off, ſo he was to be dethroned, as it here follows.

Becauſe thou haſt rejected the word of the LORD, he alſo hath rejected thee from being King.] As Idolaters were to loſe their Lives; ſo he and his Poſterity loſt the Kingdom. And it is obſervable, that he was at laſt ſlain by the hand of an *Amalekite*, 2 *Sam.* i. 8.

Ver. 24. *And Saul ſaid unto Samuel, I have ſinned, for I have tranſgreſſed the Commandment of the LORD, and thy Word: becauſe I feared the People, and obeyed their Voice.*] It is not certain whether he led the People into this Sin, or they led him. I look upon this only as an Excuſe (he having no reaſon to fear the People, who were all at his Command) and that he was not yet thoroughly ſenſible of his Guilt.

Ver. 25. *Now therefore I pray thee, pardon my Sin.*] By deprecating God's Diſpleaſure.

And turn again with me.] To *Gilgal*; from whence he came forth to meet *Samuel*.

That I may worſhip the LORD.] And by *Samuel*'s Prayers obtain a Pardon.

Ver. 26. *And Samuel ſaid unto Saul, I will not return with thee; for thou haſt rejected the Word of the LORD, and the LORD hath rejected thee from being King over Iſrael.*] The Prophet look'd upon God's Sentence as peremptory; and therefore peremptorily denied his Requeſt.

Ver. 27. *And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the Skirt of his Mantle.*] It was a four-ſquare Garment, covering the Breaſt and the Back; knit at the Shoulder, but open on the Sides, as *Jo. Braunius* hath ſhown, Lib. 2. *de Veſtitu Sacerd. Hebr.* Cap. 5. N. 8. On this *Saul* laid hold, that he might ſtop *Samuel* from going away.

And it rent.] A ſign the motion of *Samuel* was violent; he being full of Indignation againſt *Saul*.

Ver. 28. *And Samuel ſaid, The LORD hath rent the Kingdom of Iſrael from thee this day; and hath given it to a Neighbour of thine, that is better than thou.*] That caſual Rent, he took to be an apt Repreſentation of his Deſtiny.

Ver. 29. *And alſo the Strength of Iſrael.*] The Word we tranſlate *Strength* imports *Victory* (as is obſerved in the Margin) and therefore theſe Words ſhould be tranſlated; *He that gives Victory*, and diſpoſes Kingdoms, or *the triumphant King of Iſrael*.

Will not lye, nor repent: for he is not a Man, that he ſhould repent.] Sometimes, God is ſaid *to repent of the Evil*, i. e. to alter his intentions of inflicting Puniſhment. But in this caſe there was no room for it, becauſe of the Oath of God, that *Amalek* ſhould be cut off. This made *Saul*'s Sin unpardonable; it being of the like nature (to uſe the Words of Dr. *Jackſon*) as if a Judge or inferior Magiſtrate, being intruſted to do Juſtice in a matter, unto which his Sovereign Lord had peremptorily and determinately ſworn, ſhould upon a Bribe, or other ſiniſter reſpect, neglect his Duty, and (as much as in him lay) make his Maſter forſworn. For an inferior Judge to do this, deſerves more bodily Deaths than one. And therefore tho' God did repent that he had made *Saul* King, (for he had the Kingdom only by meer Promiſe, not by a Promiſe confirmed by an Oath) yet he would not repent his Depoſition, nor reverſe the Sentence againſt him; becauſe by his prepoſterous Indulgence unto *Amalek* (God's ſworn Enemy) he did by this Fact incur the Sentence of Depoſition by Oath.

Ver. 30. *And he ſaid, I have ſinned.*] Now he makes a downright acknowledgment of his Guilt; without any Alleviations of it, from the Fear he was in of the People, or any other thing, *ver.* 24.

Yet honour me, I pray thee, before my People, and before Iſrael.] He ſubmitted to the Sentence; and only deſired while he was King he might not loſe his Honour with thoſe that waited on him, and with the reſt of his Subjects.

And turn again with me, that I may worſhip the LORD thy God.] He ſpeaks as if he thought, that unleſs it were for *Samuel*'s ſake he was afraid God would not regard him.

Ver. 31. *And Samuel turned again with Saul.*] He ſaid before he would not, *ver.* 26. But upon his Importunity (and ordered perhaps by God) he altered his Mind. For he ſpake before only his preſent Thoughts, which upon further Reaſon he might change.

And Saul worſhipped the LORD.] In the company of *Samuel*; that the People might not deſpiſe his Authority, while he held it.

Ver. 32. *Then ſaid Samuel, Bring ye hither unto me, Agag the King of the Amalekites.*] This he ſpake to the People, in the preſence of *Saul*; that he might ſee what he ought to have done himſelf.

And Agag came unto him delicately.] Or, walking in State; for tho' he was at the point of Death, ſaith *Kimchi*, he could not forbear to come to *Samuel* in an haughty manner: But this Word ſeems to relate to *Softneſs*, rather than *Pride*; and ſignify that he came to him with a ſoft pace, treading gingerly (as we ſpeak) after a nice and delicate manner.

And Agag ſaid, Surely the Bitterneſs of Death is paſt.] Being ſpared by *Saul* and his Soldiers, he feared no hurt from a Prophet.

Ver. 33. *And Samuel ſaid, As thy Sword hath made Women childleſs, ſo ſhall thy Mother be childleſs among Women.*] This ſhows he had been a bloody Tyrant; and was now cut off, not merely for the Sins of his Anceſtors four hundred years ago; but for his own mercileſs Cruelty.

And Samuel hewed Agag to pieces.] He commanded it to be done by the publick Executioner of Juſtice: Or perhaps did it himſelf. See *Judg.* viii. 20. This doth not prove that *Samuel* continued a Judge after *Saul* was anointed: But he was authorized to do this by a ſpecial Command from God.

Before the LORD in Gilgal.] For here they had been praying, and offering Sacrifice: And God was preſent in all the great Aſſemblies of his People. See *Judges* xx. 1.

Ver. 34. *Then Samuel went to Ramah.*] Where he commonly lived, vii. *ult.*

And Saul went up to his Houſe in Gibeah of Saul.] Which was the place of his Birth, and conſtant Abode, x. 26. xiv. 2.

Ver. 35. *And Samuel came no more to ſee Saul until the day of his Death.*] He was wont, it is likely, to make him frequent Viſits: But now he forſook him, as a Man abandoned by God.

Nevertheleſs Samuel mourned for Saul.] Yet he had ſtill ſo much Love to him, or to his Country, as to lament the ſad Condition into which he was fallen.

And the LORD repented that he had made Saul King over Iſrael.] In Teſtimony whereof he utterly caſt him off; and all *Samuel*'s Tears could not procure a Reverſal of the Sentence pronounced againſt him.

CHAP. XVI.

Verſe 1. *AND the LORD ſaid unto Samuel, how long wilt thou mourn for Saul; ſeeing I have rejected him from being King over Iſrael?*] Since God had told him ſo plainly, and poſitively that the Sentence againſt him was irreverſible, it was in vain to mourn and to pray (as ſome think he did) for his reſtitution to God's Favour.

Fill thy horn with Oil, and go to Jeſſe the Bethlemite: for I have provided me a King among his Sons.] It might increaſe his Sorrow, perhaps, to think that *Saul* ſhould die ſuddenly, there was none yet appointed by God to ſucceed him. Which might be one Reaſon why now God declared his Pleaſure about that matter.

Ver. 2. *And Samuel ſaid, How can I go?*] That is, with ſafety.

If Saul hear it, he will kill me.] For he was inraged at the Sentence paſſed upon him; tho' at that preſent he ſeemed to ſubmit unto it.

And the LORD ſaid, Take an Heifer with thee, and ſay I am come to ſacrifice unto the LORD.] Which he, being a Prophet, might do any where: All the Ritual Laws being ſubject to the Prophets.

Ver. 3. *And call Jeſſe to the Sacrifice.*] To an Euchariſtical Feaſt upon the Sacrifice: Unto which they might invite their Neighbours and Friends.

And I will ſhew thee what thou ſhalt do, and thou ſhalt anoint him whom I will name unto thee.] God promiſes to direct him ſo to manage the Buſineſs, that he ſhould come into no danger. From whence it may be gathered, that it was not the holy Oil wherewith he anointed him, for that was kept in the Sanctuary: Unto which place he could not have gone to fetch it, but it would have been known, and raiſed Suſpicions of what he was going to do. See *Fort. Scacchus* in his *Myrothecium*, *Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 46.

Ver. 4. *And Samuel did that which the LORD ſpake.*] Took an Horn of Oil, and an Heifer.

And came to Bethlehem, and the Elders of the Town trembled at his coming.] They went out, I ſuppoſe, to meet him, but trembled when they ſaw him.

And ſaid, Comeſt thou peaceably? They were afraid that he came to reprove them for ſome Sin that was in their City; or that he fled to them for Security againſt *Saul*'s Anger, which might bring them into Danger.

Ver. 5. *And he ſaid, Peaceably: I am come to ſacrifice unto the LORD.*] That was one Intention of his coming; and tho' there was another (to anoint *David*) he was not bound to declare it: For where there are two Ends of any Action, one may without any injury to Truth declare the one, and conceal the other. As *Moſes* did, when he told *Pharaoh* they muſt go and ſacrifice to God in the Wilderneſs; but ſuppreſſed their Intention to march to the Land of *Canaan*.

Sanctify your ſelves, and come with me to the Sacrifice.] See upon *Exod.* xix. 10.

And he ſanctified Jeſſe and his Sons, and called them to the Sacrifice.] It is likely *Jeſſe* might be an Elder; but if he were, his Sons were not: But he gave them a particular Invitation, and took care they ſhould come prepared. *Samuel* was not a Prieſt, but being a Prophet he had Authority from God, in extraordinary caſes, to perform the Office of a Prieſt, in offering Sacrifice.

Ver. 6. *And it came to paſs, when they were come.*] After the Sacrifice was over, while they were making ready the Feaſt, that was to follow upon it; *Samuel* took *Jeſſe* privately into a Room, and there it is likely acquainted him with his Commiſſion: Whereupon he called for his eldeſt Son to come to him.

That he looked on Eliab, and ſaid, Surely the Anointed of the LORD is before me.] Beholding a goodly Perſon, handſome and tall (as appears by the following Verſe) he concluded within himſelf, that this was the Perſon God deſigned for his Anointed.

Ver. 7. *And the LORD ſaid unto Samuel.*] By a ſecret, inward, Suggeſtion.

Look not on his Countenance, nor on the height of his Stature; becauſe I have refuſed him. For the LORD ſeeth not as Man ſeeth; for Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but the LORD looketh on the Heart.] All have not a noble Spirit, who have a noble Aſpect; as appeared by *Saul*. Which ſhould have made *Samuel* not conclude ſo haſtily, from a goodly Appearance.

Ver. 8. *Then Jeſſe called Abinadab, and made him paſs before Samuel.*] That he might have a full View of him.

And he ſaid, Neither hath the LORD choſen this.] God had ſuggeſted to him, as he did concerning the former, that he did not approve him.

Ver. 9. *Then Jeſſe made Shammah to paſs by; and he ſaid, Neither hath the LORD choſen this.*] He is called *Shimeah*, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 3. and *Shimmah*, 1 *Chron.* xi. 13.

Ver. 10. *Again Jeſſe made ſeven of his Sons to paſs before Samuel.*] Not all at once; but ſeven in all, one after another in order; *David* being the *eighth*.

And Samuel ſaid unto Jeſſe, the LORD hath not choſen theſe.] Theſe Words ſhow that he had acquainted *Jeſſe* with his Buſineſs: But theſe

theſe four of his Sons, among whom he was to anoint one to be King, were no more qualified for it, than the three firſt: For he had eight Sons in all, xvii. 12.

Ver. 11. *And Samuel ſaid unto Jeſſe, Are here all thy Children? and he ſaid, There remaineth yet the youngeſt; and behold he keeps the Sheep.*] And ſo was not at home. The moſt excellent Commanders were anciently taken from the Plough, or from feeding Sheep, as *Pliny* obſerves, *Lib.* 18. *Natural. Hiſtor. Cap.* 5. *Fortiſſimi viri, & milites ſtrenuiſſimi ex agricolis gignuntur.* And ſo *Vegetius*, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 3. *De Re Militari*, diſcuſſes this Point, whether the beſt Soldiers came out of the City or Country: And reſolves, *aptiorem armis ruſticam plebem*, &c. that the Country People are moſt fit for Arms; who live in the open Air, and are bred up to Labour, and indure Heat, and neglect the Shade: Being unacquainted with Baths, ignorant of Delights, of a ſimple Mind, contented with a little; having their Bodies hardened to the enduring all Labour; who are uſed by their Country Life to carry Burdens, dig Trenches, and ſuch like Labour. And therefore he concludes, that the ſtrength of an Army is to be ſupplied out of the Field: For ſo it is, that *the leſs Men are acquainted with the Delights of Life, the leſs they fear Death. Moſes* was thus bred a long time in the Service of *Jethro:* And *Saul* look'd after his Father's Cattle.

And Samuel ſaid unto Jeſſe, ſend and fetch him: for we will not ſit down till he come hither.] By this it appears, all this was tranſacted between the Sacrifice, and the dreſſing of the Meat for a Feaſt upon it.

Ver. 12. *And he ſent and brought him in: now he was ruddy.*] His Hair was red, which in ancient times was accounted beautiful, as *Bochartus* obſerves from this Place. With which agree the Words of *Feſtus*, who having ſaid that *Rutilius* ſignifies *red*, adds, *cujus coloris ſtudioſæ etiam antiquæ mulieres erant.* Of which colour Women alſo were ſtudious in ancient times. See *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 34. But it muſt be confeſſed, that the *Hebrew* Word *Admoni* doth not ſignify only *red*, but alſo *bright* and *ſhining*; as *Bochartus* himſelf acknowledges thoſe Words, *Lament.* iv. 7. are to be underſtood, where he ſaith of the *Nazarites*, *Ademu azem Mippinim*, they were more ſhining in Body than Pearls. And I think theſe Words are ſo to be interpreted concerning *David*, that he had a clear Complexion; or, was very fair (as we ſpeak) and lovely.

And withal of a beautiful Countenance.] Or, had *beautiful Eyes*, as the Words are in the *Hebrew*, *Oculis ſpeculis & liberalibus*, as *Conradus Pellicanus* here gloſſes.

And goodly to look to.] Of a pleaſant Aſpect; full of Sweetneſs and Clemency, as the ſame Author underſtands it. All this is ſaid to ſignify, that he was a goodly Perſon, and had greatneſs in his Countenance.

And the LORD ſaid, Ariſe, anoint him, for this is he.] The *Jews* obſerve upon theſe Words, that it was neceſſary to anoint the firſt of a Family, that was advanced to the Kingdom; but it was not neceſſary to anoint his Children that ſucceeded him: Unleſs upon occaſion of a Diſpute, by a contrary Faction. See *Selden. de Succeſſ. in Pontificat.* Lib. 2. Cap. 9.

Ver. 13. *Then Samuel took the Horn of Oil, and anointed him.*] He did not hereby inveſt him actually with the Kingly Power: But this anointing was only a Deſignation of him to ſucceed *Saul* after his Death. So *David* always underſtood it; looking upon *Saul* as the *LORD*'s Anointed, as long as he lived; that is, as the King of *Iſrael*. See *Judges* ix. 8.

In the midſt of his Brethren.] It had better have been tranſlated, *from the midſt of his Brethren*; that is, he ſingled him out from the reſt, and privately anointed him. For it is manifeſt, by what is ſaid before, that *Samuel* was afraid to have it known, and therefore did not anoint him publickly in the midſt of his Brethren. And by *Eliab*'s Treatment of *David* after this (xvii. 28.) it plainly enough appears, he did not know him to be the King elect of God's People.

The *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba* (Cap. 13.) ſay *David* was Twenty Nine Years old, when he was anointed: Which certainly is falſe, if it be underſtood of this firſt Unction by *Samuel* (whereby God elected him, as in the two following *Judah* and *Iſrael* received him for their King) for after *Saul*'s Death he reigned forty Years, and lived 'till he was *ſeventy*. So that he was *thirty* Years old when he began to reign: part of which time he ſpent in the Service of *Saul*; and after that was ſorely perſecuted by him. How long that Perſecution laſted, is uncertain: but it continued ſo long, that it makes the Opinion of *Abarbinel* probable, that *David* could not be above *twenty* Years old, if ſo much, when *Samuel* anointed him.

And the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward.] A Spirit of Prudence to behave himſelf wiſely upon all Occaſions; with a Spirit of Courage, ſo that he durſt grapple with a Lion and a Bear: And the Spirit of Prophecy, in which he was very eminent afterwards. In ſhort, a Spirit fit for a Prince.

And Samuel went up, and went to Ramah.] Having no further Commiſſion from God at *Bethlehem*.

Ver. 14. *But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul.*] Which came upon him, when he was firſt made King, and continued with him 'till this time, x. 11. xi. 6. yet he did not loſe his Courage, but his Prudence and Skill in Government.

And an evil Spirit from the LORD troubled him.] He grew melancholy, timorous, and ſuſpicious: So that he ſtarted where there was no Danger, as the *Hebrew* Word ſeems to import; and thereby became very unfit for Buſineſs, being ſometimes furious and diſtracted; always full of Anxiety and Solicitude of Mind: Sighing and trembling like a Man in the dark, as *Abarbinel* explains it. For his Blood and Spirits were thick and heavy; having loſt their uſual Purity and Splendor.

Ver. 15. *And Saul's Servants ſaid unto him, Behold an evil Spirit from God troubleth thee.*] His Courtiers could not but obſerve a ſtrange Diſturbance in him: Which they look'd upon as ſo unuſual, that they aſcribe it to the Hand of God.

Ver. 16. *Let our Lord now command thy Servants that are before thee, to ſeek out a Man, who is a cunning Player upon the Harp.*] An Inſtrument always highly eſteemed; as thoſe were who could play well upon it. It is called *Cinnor* in the *Hebrew*, from whence no doubt the *Greek* Κιννύρα is derived.

And it ſhall come to paſs, that when the evil Spirit from God is upon thee.] When a melancholy Fit ſeized him.

That he ſhall play with his hand, and thou ſhalt be well.] It being a bodily Diſeaſe, they hoped by this means he might receive ſome Relief: And perhaps they had ſeen ſome Experiment made of it, upon Men in the like Condition; for Muſick wonderfully alters the Spirits, and conſequently the Blood: And hath a peculiar Virtue in it to cheer and delight thoſe that are ſad, and compoſe thoſe that are furious, as *Saul* ſometimes was.

Ver. 17. *And Saul ſaid unto his Servants, Provide me now one that can play well, and bring him to me.*] For none durſt deny his Attendance on him, as *Samuel* had deſcribed the manner of the Kingdom, viii. 11, 12, &c.

Ver. 18. *Then anſwered one of the Servants and ſaid, Behold, I have ſeen the Son of Jeſſe the Bethlemite, that is cunning in playing, and a mighty valiant Man, and a Man of War, and prudent in matters, and a comely Perſon.*] It is likely this was ſome Friend or Acquaintance of *David*'s, who had a mind to bring him to Court: And therefore reckons up all his good Qualities, as well as his Skill in Muſick; together with his Succeſs in all Affairs. Which tho' he manag'd with great Prudence, yet he could not have been ſo conſtantly proſperous, if God had not bleſſed him.

Ver. 19. *Wherefore Saul ſent Meſſengers unto Jeſſe, ſaying, ſend me David thy Son, which is with the Sheep.*] This Meſſage, it is likely, might poſſeſs *Jeſſe* with ſome Fear that the Secret was diſcovered.

Ver. 20. *And Jeſſe took an Aſs laden with Bread and a Bottle of Wine, and a Kid, and ſent them by David his Son, unto Saul.*] But by this Preſent he hoped to ingratiate his Son in his Princely Favour. The word *laden* is not in the Hebrew, but only *an Aſs of Bread.* Which is a Phraſe uſed in other Authors, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved out of *Athenæus*; who mentions this Phraſe in *Soſibius*, ἄρτων τρεῖς ὄνους καυθηλίους, *three great Aſſes of Loaves*, Hierozoicon, P. 1. Lib. 2. cap. 34.

Ver. 21. *And David came to Saul, and ſtood before him.*] Miniſtred unto him among the reſt of his Servants.

And he loved him greatly, and he made him his Armour-bearer.] Which was an honourable Preferment.

Ver. 22. *And Saul ſent to Jeſſe, ſaying, Let David I pray thee ſtand before me: for he hath found favour in my ſight.*] This was an extraordinary Token of his Kindneſs; that he would not keep his Son to wait upon him, without his Conſent.

Ver. 23. *And it came to paſs, when the evil Spirit from the LORD was upon Saul, that David took an Harp and played with his hand.*] *Joſephus* ſeems to have thought, that he alſo ſung Hymns and Pſalms to the Harp; for his Words are, *Lib.* 6. *Antiq. Cap.* 9. λέγουσι τὸν ὕμνον καὶ ψάλλων ἐν τῇ κιννύρᾳ, &c. But the illuſtrious *Spanheim* ſhows that the Word ψαλμὸς is often uſed for the ſound of the Harp. So the Scholiaſt upon *Ariſtophanes* his *Aves*, ψαλμὸς κυρίως ὁ τῆς κιθάρας ἦχος. See his Obſervation on *Callimachus* his Hymn *in Apollinem, ver.* 12. And ſo *Nero* truly ſaid (which *Tacitus* mentions in his *Annals*, *L.* 14. *Cap.* 14.) *Antiqui Duces cythara cecinerunt.* The ancient great Commanders ſung to the Harp. So *Cornelius Nepos* reports of *Epaminondas*, that he was an excellent Muſician.

And Saul was refreſhed, and was well.] All Authors are full of the Power of Muſick; both to ſtir up Paſſions, and to allay them; according to the ſeveral kinds of it. *Athenæus* (*Lib.* 14.) praiſes it for the Virtue that is in it, καὶ τὰ ἤθη παιδεύειν, καὶ τὸ θυμοειδὲς καὶ τὰς γνώμας διαφόρως καταπραύνειν, to regulate Men's Manners, and to allay and ſoften thoſe that are furious, and diſturbed in their Minds. Such Songs *Ariſtotle* calls μέλη καθαρτικὰ, *purgative Songs*; apt to cleanſe the Mind from turbid Motions, *L.* 8. *Polit.* See *Gerh. Voſſius* concerning this in his Book *de Artibus Popularibus*, *cap.* 3. § 13. where he ſhows how Diſeaſes of the Body have been cured by Muſick, as well as of the Mind: And *ſect.* 45, 46. he ſhows the Power of it over brute Creatures. *Bochartus* alſo enumerates many famous Artiſts among the Ancients, beſides *Orpheus* and *Amphion* (whoſe Hiſtory is dreſſed up fabulouſly) that are celebrated, not by Poets, but by good Hiſtorians, for their wonderful Skill in moving Men's Paſſions by Muſick. *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 44. p. 461, &c. And long before theſe, the great *Eraſmus* hath obſerved the Force of Muſick in curing Diſeaſes, and quite altering the Paſſions of Men's Minds, in his Preface to *Arnobius* upon the *Pſalms.* Which may be found among his Epiſtles, *Lib.* 28. p. 1655.

And the evil Spirit departed from him.] For a time: There being lucid Intervals in ſuch Diſtempers as his was; which frequently returned again.

CHAP. XVII.

Verſe 1. *AND the Philiſtines gathered their Armies together unto Battel.*] In what Year of *Saul*'s Reign this was, we are not told: But *Joſephus* thinks it was not long after the things related in the foregoing Chapter. For ſo his Words are, χρόνοις δὲ ὑστερον ὀλίγοις, *not many years after*, &c. For the *Philiſtines* having received a great Defeat (*Chap.* 14.) reſolved to be revenged, and thought they had a fair Opportunity, when they heard that *Saul* was diſtracted.

And were gathered together at Shochoh which belongeth to Judah, and pitched between Shochoh and Azekah, in Ephes-dammim.] See *Joſh.* xv. 35. By this it appears, that the *Philiſtines* invaded the Country of the *Iſraelites*, and poſſeſſed themſelves of ſome Parts of it. That place here called *Ephes-dammim*, by taking away

away the *Aleph* is called *Pas-dammim*, 1 *Chron.* xi. 13.

Ver. 2. *And Samuel and the Men of Israel were gathered together, and pitched by the Valley of Elah.*] A place I suppose in the same Tribe, for their Armies were not far one from another.

And set the Battle in array against the Philistines.] As ready, and desirous to fight them.

Ver. 3. *And the Philistines stood on a Mountain on the one side, and the Israelites on a Mountain on the other side: and there was a Valley between them.*] After they had faced one another some time, and neither side thought fit to engage, and begin to fight; they drew up their Armies upon two opposite Mountains, which were parted by a Valley.

Ver. 4. *And there went out a Champion out of the Camp of the Philistines, named Goliath of Gath.*] For to this City the *Anakims* fled when *Joshua* rooted them out of the Land of *Canaan*, *Josh.* xi. 22, 23. And here they propagated a Race of *Giants*; that is, People of great Stature and Strength.

Whose Height was six Cubits and a Span.] A great number of Authors write of such Men of vast Stature in ancient times. See *Magius de Gigantibus*, and *Casp. Schottus*; but especially *Hermannus Conringius*, in his Book *de antiquo statu Holmstadii*, and in another Book, *de Habitu Corporum Germanorum*; where he shows the ancient *Germans* were of a vast Size, as *Cæsar* relates in his Book *de Bello Gal.* where he calls them *immani corporum magnitudine homines*, Men of an huge Greatness of Body. And *Pomponius Mela* and others say the same. In short, they were generally seven Foot high. And now at this day, there is a whole Nation on the North side of the Strait of *Magellan*, *immani corporum vastitate*, as he there observes, *p.* 37.

Ver. 5. *And he had an Helmet of Brass upon his Head, and he was armed with a Coat of Mail.*] With Plates of Brass, laid one upon another, like Fishes Scales. So *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg.* Lib. 3. Cap. 13.

And the weight of the Coat was five thousand Shekels of Brass.] This shows he was a Man of vast Strength; who was able to walk and to fight with such prodigious Armour: which was impenetrable. Yet this is not to be understood, as *Fortunatus Schaccus* thinks, as if the Coat weighed so much, for it would have been insupportable; but that it cost so much, or was valued at five thousand Shekels of Brass. *Myrothec.* Vol. 2. p. 33.

Ver. 6. *And he had Greaves of Brass upon his Legs, and a Target of Brass between his Shoulders.*] That he might be no where vulnerable. For the Target defended his Neck as well as his Shoulders.

Ver. 7. *And the Staff of his Spear was like a Weaver's Beam; and his Spear's Head weighed six hundred Shekels of Iron.*] This was one of his offensive Weapons: By which the largeness of his Sword may be measured.

And one bearing a Shield went before him.] Which was proportionable, no doubt, to his Bulk: And was carried before him when he made his Challenge, for the greater State sake; but, when he fought, I suppose, was used by himself.

Ver. 8. *And he stood and cried unto the Armies of Israel.*] They were divided, it seems, into several Bodies, called here *Armies*: And they could hear one another from the Mountains on which they were incamped; and *Goliath* came down into the Valley, and there challenged any body to come and fight with him in the sight of both Armies.

Why are ye come out to set your Battel in array?] He charges them with Presumption, in offering to make War with the *Philistines*, who were so much superiour to them.

Am not I a Philistine, and you Servants of Saul?] Who doubted of this, that he was a *Philistine*, and they *Saul*'s Subjects? The meaning thereof is, as *Abarbinel* explains it, that he was one of the Lords of the *Philistines*, a chief Ruler in *Gath*, subject to none; and yet would condescend to fight with any of *Saul*'s Servants: Who, in comparison with him, he look'd upon as no better than Slaves. The *Targum* will have it, that he brags of his great Deeds: Particularly that he had killed *Hophni* and *Phineas* with his own hand, and taken the Ark of God captive; and therefore wonders at their Presumption, that they should come to fight with those, who had gained such Victories over them. Which is not likely, for they had, since that, been beaten twice by the *Israelites*.

Chuse you a Man for you, and let him come down to me.] He propounds the deciding of their Quarrel by a single Combat: Which seems to have been done out of a Bravado, rather than from any Examples of those ancient times, of ending Quarrels in this manner: For tho' it looks like a charitable design to prevent much Blood-shed; yet no Nation sure was willing to venture its whole Well-being upon one single Man's good Success. We read indeed, as I observed upon xiv. 10. of two or three single Combats, before the Armies of the two Nations ingaged, but they were not intended to be decisive of the Quarrel between them. This therefore was, as I said before, an high rant of *Goliath*, proceeding from the high Opinion he had of his matchless Strength: Which made him brag, as if he was the Support of the whole Nation; which must stand or fall together with him.

Ver. 9. *If he be able to fight with me and kill me, then will we be your Servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our Servants, and serve us.*] These Conditions were never acccepted, tho' *Saul* sought for a Man to fight: But quite contrary, they were so far from being agreed on by either side, that the *Philistines* did not yield themselves Slaves to the *Israelites* upon the Death of *Goliath*; but fled to their own Country, and there defended themselves against them, and fought many Battels with them.

Ver 10. *And the Philistine said, I defy the Armies of Israel this day; give me a Man that we may fight together.*] He expresses the utmost Contempt of their whole Army: In which he signifies there was not a Man that durst look him in the face.

Ver. 11. *When Saul and all Israel heard these Words of the Philistine, they were dismayed and greatly afraid.*] For tho' *Saul* had not quite lost his

his Courage, but gathered an Army to fight the *Philiſtines*; yet it was not ſo undaunted as it had been before the Spirit of God forſook him: And the People's Spirits ſink, when their Leaders flag and are diſmayed.

Ver. 12. *Now David was the Son of that Ephrathite of Bethlehem of Judah, whoſe name was Jeſſe.*] He being choſen by God to combat with *Goliath*, the Divine Writer gives an account who he was, and what Relations he had.

He had eight Sons.] In the Book of the *Chronicles* (1 ii. 13, 14, 15.) there are but *ſeven* mentioned: One being dead without Children, as *R. Solomon* thinks: Or being only an adopted Son.

And the Man was accounted an old Man in the days of Saul.] And therefore excuſed from going to the War.

Ver. 13. *And the three eldeſt Sons went and followed Saul to Battel; and the Names of his three Sons that went to the War, were Eliab the firſt-born*, &c.] Theſe, I ſuppoſe, were Men of the greateſt Experience, and Strength: And therefore fitteſt for the Service.

Ver. 14. *And David was the youngeſt, and the three eldeſt followed Saul.*] *David* being young, was not put to the Hardſhips of War: But the eldeſt only undertook to ſerve their Prince and their Country in this time of common Danger.

Ver. 15. *But David went and returned from Saul to feed his Father's Sheep at Bethlehem.*] In the beginning of this War, as *Joſephus* thinks, *Saul* ſent *David* home to his Father; ἀρκέμενος αὐτὸς τοῖς τρίσι Υἱοῖς, &c. contenting himſelf with three of his Sons, who came to his Aſſiſtance, with the hazard of their Lives.

Ver. 16. *And the Philiſtine drew near Morning and Evening, and preſented himſelf forty days.*] This is an Argument the *Philiſtines* could not force the Camp of the *Iſraelites:* Otherwiſe they would not have ſpent ſo much time in this Bravado. Unleſs we ſuppoſe, as *Abarbinel* doth, that all this time more Forces were marching to this Place, as their general Rendezvous, both from the Country of the *Philiſtines*, and from the Land of *Iſrael:* For ſuch great Armies could not ſuddenly be got together. Or ſome wiſe Men on both ſides were treating all this time, to ſee if they could bring matters to an Accommodation. It is a mere fancy of *R. Jonathan*, in the *Gemara* of the *Miſna*, *Title Sota*, that *Goliath drew near Morning and Evening*, that he might diſturb the *Iſraelites* at their Morning and Evening Prayers, and hinder them from reciting them.

Ver. 17. *And Jeſſe ſaid unto David his Son, Take now for thy Brethren, an Ephah of this parched Corn, and theſe ten Loaves, and run to thy Brethren.*] For he did not know but Proviſion might be ſcarce with them; or, as ſome will have it, he was informed they were under ſome Hardſhip, and deſired to know how they did. But having other Sons at home with him, it was by a Divine Direction that he ſent *David* from the Sheep, upon this Errand.

Ver. 18. *And carry theſe ten Cheeſes unto the Captain of their Thouſand.*] Whoſe Favour might be very ſerviceable to them.

And look how thy Brethren fare, and take their Pledge.] Some think that they went to War, in thoſe days, at their own Charge, and were not paid by the King. Proviſion therefore beginning to fail, *Jeſſe*'s Sons had ſent to him for a Supply, and by a certain token. Which their Father bids *David* take with him, to know if it were theirs. So ſome expound the word *Pledge*. But others think that if they had borrowed Money, or pawned any thing for it, he ordered *David* to redeem it. Or that he ſhould bring ſomething from them, that might certify him of their Health. Others tranſlate the Word not *Pledge* but *Buſineſs:* And take the Senſe to be; Bring me word what they do, how they behave themſelves; what Company they keep, and whom they aſſociate themſelves withal.

Ver. 19. *And Saul, and they, and all the Men of Iſrael were in the Valley of Elah, fighting with the Philiſtines.*] They were now drawn up in *Battalia* (as we ſpeak) ready to engage: Not in the Valley, but hard by it, on the ſide of the Mountain, where they faced the *Philiſtines*, and ſhowed themſelves reſolved to fight, if they came down from the other Mountain.

Ver. 20. *And David roſe up early in the Morning, and left the Sheep with a Keeper, and took and went as Jeſſe had commanded him: and he came to the Trench, as the Hoſt was going forth to the Fight, and ſhouted for the Battel.*] By the *Trench*, may be meant the *Carriages* (as we tranſlate the Word in the Margin) wherewith the Hoſt was ſurrounded, inſtead of a Trench made about it.

Ver. 21. *For Iſrael and the Philiſtines had put the Battel in array, Army againſt Army.*] This is the Reaſon of what follows.

Ver. 22. *And David left his Carriage in the hand of the Keeper of the Carriage.*] He left the Proviſion which his Father had ſent his Brethren, with his Servant, it being no time to preſent it to them, when they were juſt going to engage.

And ran unto the Army, and came and ſaluted his Brethren.] Acquainting them, no doubt, with their Father's Care of them.

Ver. 23. *And as he talked with them, behold there came up the Champion (the Philiſtine of Gath, Goliath by Name) out of the Army of the Philiſtines, and ſpake according to the ſame Words, and David heard them.*] Tho' the Armies ſtood ready to engage, yet the Vanity of *Goliath* made him once more deſire the matter might be determined by a ſingle Combat.

Ver. 24. *And all the Men of Iſrael, when they ſaw the Man, fled from him, and were ſore afraid.*] They that could look the whole Army of the *Philiſtines* in the face (among whom they knew *Goliath* was) one would think ſhould not flee at the ſight of one Man. But the meaning is (as the next words ſhow) they could not indure to hear his opprobrious Words againſt them, and his blaſphemous Words againſt God.

Ver. 25. *And the Men of Iſrael ſaid, Have you ſeen this Man that is come up? ſurely to defy Iſrael is he come up.*] They bewailed among themſelves their ſad Condition; that all the People of *Iſrael* ſhould be ſet at naught, and vilified

vilified by one Man; who despised both them and their God, *ver.* 45.

And it shall be, that the Man who killeth him, the King will enrich him with great Riches, and give him his Daughter, and make his Father's House free in Israel.] To make his *Family free in Israel*, was to make them noble. And the *Targum* translates it, make them *free Princes in Israel:* Particularly free from paying any Tribute or Taxes, which was a Royal Privilege; of which see *Selden*, Lib. 6. *de Jure Nat. & Gentium*, Cap. 14. fol. 740. Here some observe that *Saul* had lost his wonted *Piety*; for he sent not to *Samuel*, nor consulted the High-Priest, nor offered Sacrifice: But only proclaimed a great Reward to him that should fight with *Goliah* and kill him. Which showed he had not lost all *Prudence:* For thus *Caleb* won *Kirjath-sepher*, by offering his Daughter in Marriage to him that should take it. And *David* himself afterwards incouraged his Soldiers to assault the strong Fort of *Zion*, by promising to make him Commander in chief of all his Forces, who should first enter it. Thus *Mathias Hostius* observes the *Athenians* offered an hundred Talents to him that should bring *Xerxes* to them alive or dead: Many more Instances of this way of exciting Men to valiant Exploits he gives in his History of this *Monomachia*.

Ver. 26. *And David spake to the Men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the Man that kills this Philistine, and takes away the reproach from Isaael?*] He desired them to repeat the King's Promise; signifying that he would undertake to encounter *Goliath*.

For who is this Uncircumcised, that he should defy the Armies of the living God?] He would not have them think he was mov'd by the Hope of the Reward (which was not to be despised) so much as by Zeal for God, and for his Country; which suffered by the Reproaches of one, who was not in Covenant with God: And therefore he did not fear him, nor would suffer him any longer to make such proud Boasting.

Ver. 27. *And the People answered him after this manner, saying, so shall it be done unto the Man that killeth him.*] They all confirmed what was before said.

Ver. 28. *And Eliab his elder Brother heard when he spake unto the Men, and his Anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why cameſt thou down hither?*] His Passion made him forget that he came by his Father's Order, to see how they did, *&c.*

And with whom hast thou left those few Sheep in the Wilderness?] This intimates, that he was fitter to look after Sheep, than to fight a Giant.

I know thy Pride, and the Haughtiness of thine Heart, for thou art come down to see the Battel.] Vain-glory he thought brought him to the Battel: And now made him offer to run such a desperate Adventure.

Ver. 29. *And David said, What have I done, Is there not a Cause?*] He justifies his Discourse; since no Man, no not *Eliab* himself, had the Courage to wipe off the Reproach which *Goliath* cast upon them all.

Ver. 30. *And he turned from him to another, and spake after the same manner, and the People answered him again after the same manner.*] He told them he would undertake to fight *Goliath*; and they told him what would be his Reward if he killed him.

Ver. 31. *And when the Words were heard that David spake, they rehearsed them before Saul; and he sent for him.*] They had been spoken to so many, that at last they came to *Saul*'s ear: Who desired to hear himself what he said.

Ver. 32. *And David said unto Saul.*] Who had told him what he heard reported of his Resolution.

Let no Man's Heart faint because of him: for thy Servant will go and fight with this Philistine.] In assured hope of Victory.

Ver. 33. *And Saul said unto David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a Youth, and he a Man of War from his youth.*] This *Saul* spake out of Kindness to *David*; whom he would not have to hazard himself against an old Soldier, when he was unexperienced in War.

Ver. 34. *And David said unto Saul, thy Servant kept his Father's Sheep, and there came a Lion and a Bear, and took a Lamb out of the Flock.*] Not both together (as *Castalio* supposes in his Translation) but at several times; and it is likely more than once.

Ver. 35. *And I went out after him and smote him, and delivered him out of his mouth: and when he rose up against me, I caught him by the Beard, and smote him, and slew him.*] Sometimes he pursued the Lion and killed him in his Flight: Or if he turned again to devour him, he boldly caught him by the Beard and killed him. And in like manner we are to understand, he encounter'd the Bear.

Ver. 36. *Thy Servant slew both the Lion and the Bear.*] The Author of *Halicoth Olam*, by a strange fetch, concludes from hence, that he killed a Lion with two of her Whelps; and a Bear with one of her Cubs. *Pars* 4. *Cap.* 3.

And this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them; seeing he hath defied the Armies of the living God.] He encourages himself by three Arguments. His Mastery over such terrible Creatures as a Lion and a Bear: Which made him not fear this great Beast, *Goliath*. Who was not one of God's People: Whom he had insolently set at naught as Varlets and Slaves (*ver.* 8.) tho' they were the Servants of the living God.

Ver. 37. *David said moreover, The* LORD *that delivered me out of the Paw of the Lion, and out of the Paw of the Bear.*] In the Hebrew it is, *out of the Hand of the Lion, and out of the Hand of the Bear:* And *Aristotle* observes, that Bears have Paws, Χερσὶν ὁμοίως, resembling Hands.

He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine.] To silence all Objections, he declares that he was possessed with a full Persuasion, that God would deliver this *Philistine* into his hands, as he had done the Lion and the Bear: For he felt himself full of that Spirit which then assisted him. *Abarbinel* thinks, that he repeats this so often, because *Saul* did not seem to believe it, or did not attend to it: And therefore he saith over again, *ver.* 37. what he had said, *ver.* 36. And tells him it was not by his

his own Strength, but by the mighty Power of God, that he overcame thoſe furious Beaſts: As he doubted not he ſhould do this *Philiſtine* by the ſame Power. Whereupon *Saul* prayed God to proſper him.

And Saul ſaid, Go, and the LORD be with thee.] As he believed he would.

Ver. 38. *And Saul armed David with his Armour*, &c.] Not that which he was wont to wear himſelf (for he was ſo tall it would not have fitted *David)* but he ordered them to bring out of his Armoury an Helmet and a Coat of Mail, as it here follows.

Ver. 39. *And David girded his Sword upon his Armour, and he aſſayed to go; for he had not proved it: and David ſaid unto Saul, I cannot go with theſe, for I have not proved them: and David put them off him.*] He was not accuſtomed to wear ſuch things, not being uſed to go armed: And therefore begged leave to lay them aſide; as likely rather to incumber him, than facilitate his Enterprize. Which *Machiavel* in his *Princeps*, *Cap.* 13. applies to the danger of employing mercenary Soldiers: For *aliena arma aut ex humeris decidunt, aut ſunt tibi oneri, aut te conſtrictum tenent.*

Ver. 40. *And he took his Staff in his hand.*] His Shepherd's Staff.

And choſe him five ſmooth Stones out of the Brook.] Or rather five *cleft Stones:* Not whole and intire, but broken. For the Word ſignifies *Partitions*; and therefore denotes the Stones to have been ragged; and ſharp-pointed were moſt fit for his purpoſe. See *De Dieu.*

And put them in a Shepherd's Bag which he had, even in a Scrip.] Which hung by his ſide.

And his Sling was in his hand.] A ſort of Weapon, in the Management of which ſome were wonderful ſkilful in antient Days. See *Judges* xx. 16. And *Livy* with other Authors mention Slingers that could hit a Mark, at a very great diſtance: Particularly the *Phœnicians*, who, as *Bochartus* obſerves, were famous Slingers; from whom this Art was derived to the *Baleares*. See *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 44.

And he drew near to the Philiſtine.] It ſeems *David* made the firſt motion towards him, to ſhew he was in no fear of him.

Ver. 41. *And the Philiſtine came and drew near to David, and the Man that bare the Shield went before him.*] As he was wont to do, *ver.* 7.

Ver. 42. *And when the Philiſtine looked about, and ſaw David.*] He expected ſome tall, robuſt Perſon to encounter him; and therefore at the firſt did not mind *David*, who was but a Stripling.

He diſdained him, for he was but a Youth, and ruddy, and of a fair Countenance.] He contemned him upon three accounts: As being a Youth, unaccuſtomed to War: And being beautiful, ſeemed more fit to dance with Women, than to fight with Men: And he came alſo unarmed. See xvi. 12.

Ver. 43. *And the Philiſtine ſaid, Am I a Dog, that thou comeſt to me with Staves? and he curſed David by his gods.*] So the *Romans* were wont to do, ſaying, *Dii Deæque te perdent:* As *Goliath* it's likely now wiſh'd, that *Dagon* and *Aſhtaroth* and the reſt of his Gods would confound *David.*

Ver. 44. *And the Philiſtine ſaid unto David, Come unto me, and I will give thy Fleſh unto the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beaſts of the Field.*] For in his hand *David* was no more than a little Lamb in the hand of a Butcher.

Ver. 45. *Then ſaid David to the Philiſtine, Thou comeſt to me with a Sword, and with a Spear, and with a Shield: but I come to thee in the Name of the LORD of Hoſts.*] By a Commiſſion from him, who commands all Creatures in Heaven and Earth: And in a full Aſſurance that he will deliver thee into my hand. Concerning the Word *Chidon*, which we tranſlate a *Spear*, ſee *Bochart* in his *Hieroz. P.* 1. *p.* 138.

The God of the Armies of Iſrael, whom thou haſt defied.] The Leader and Protector of thoſe Armies, whom *Goliath* had ſet at naught.

Ver. 46. *This day will the LORD deliver thee into my hand, and I will ſmite thee, and take thy Head off from thee.*] Which *Goliath* thought impoſſible, he having no Sword by his ſide.

And will give the Carcaſes of the Hoſt of the Philiſtines this day, unto the Fowls of the Air, and to the Beaſts of the Earth.] *David* did not raſhly and vainly boaſt before-hand of the Victory, as *Goliath* had done: But being full of Faith (as *Pellicanus* here notes) praiſed the divine Omnipotence, and propheſied of an aſſured Victory.

That all the Earth may know there is a God in Iſrael.] Superior to all other.

Ver. 47. *And all this Aſſembly ſhall know that the LORD ſaveth not by Sword and by Spear.*] They might learn, if they pleaſed, that the LORD needed not human Force to effect his Deſigns. *David* did not want Courage: But he aſcribes all to God; in whoſe Power and Might he went forth, and not his own.

For the Battel is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand.] The Battel was properly the LORD's againſt the ſeven Nations of *Canaan:* Becauſe he had commanded them to be extirpated. But in all other Battels he diſpoſed of the Victory as he pleaſed. *Strigelius* here notes out of *Sophocles* the Prophane Spirit of *Ajax*; who was therefore puniſhed with Madneſs: Becauſe his Father *Telamon* piouſly admoniſhing him, as he went to War, to fight bravely, but to expect Victory from God; he impiouſly anſwered, that *Cowards might overcome by the help of God, but he doubted not to overcome without him.*

Ver. 48. *And it came to paſs when the Philiſtine aroſe, and came and drew near to meet David.*] Having nothing but Victory in his Thoughts, as *Pellicanus* here obſerves, he aroſe and marched gravely, and pompouſly covered over with Armour, and fearing nothing.

That David haſted and ran toward the Army to meet the Philiſtine.] But *David* being loaded with no Armour, nimbly ran towards him, and knock'd him down; before he had ſo much as drawn his Sword out of his Sheath.

Ver. 49. *And David put his hand in his Bag, and took thence a Stone, and ſmote the Philiſtine in his Forehead.*] Which either was bare, (he perhaps contemning *David* ſo much, as not to pull down his Helmet over his Face) or elſe was thrown with ſuch a force, that it pierced his Helmet firſt, and then his Forehead: Or

went

went in at the Place which was left open for his Eyes. However it was, the Divine Hand directed it: For though there were Men so wonderful skilful as to hit a Mark that was fixed and immoveable, though small and at a distance; yet none had such admirable Skill as to be sure to hit a Mark that was in motion, as *Goliath*'s Body was at this time.

And the Stone sunk into his Forehead.] Pierced into his Brain, so that he immediately, as here follows, *fell upon his Face to the Earth.*

Kimchi thinks that when he said to *David*, *Come, and I will give thy Flesh to the Fowls of the Air*, he looked up, and his Helmet then fell from off his Head.

Ver. 50. *So David prevailed over the Philistine, with a Sling and with a Stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him.*] So true is that of *Vegetius*, Lib. 1. Cap. 6. *Utilius est fortes esse milites, quam grandes.* But it was not mere Fortitude and Valour that prevailed, but the Spirit of God.

But there was no Sword in the hand of David.] This was so wonderful a thing, that so great a Victory should be obtained without the usual warlike Weapons, that it was thought fit a special Mark should be set upon it.

Ver. 51 *Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine.*] That he might compleat his Victory, and make it notorious to all the Army.

And took his Sword, and drew it out of its Sheath.] He was strong not merely by Nature, but by the Power of God: Otherwise he could not have well managed the Sword of a Giant.

And slew him, and cut off his Head therewith.] It is likely the Stone had only stunned him; but his Life was still in him, after this Blow in his Forehead: And therefore now he quite dispatched him.

And when the Philistines saw their Champion was dead, they fled.] Having lost all their Courage with his Life.

Ver. 52. *And the Men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted.*] As they used to do when they had got the Victory.

And pursued the Philistines, 'till they came to the Valley and to the Gates of Ekron, &c.] They pursued them to their own Country (which was in a Valley) even to the Gates of their principal Cities; as *Gath* and *Ekron* were.

Ver. 53. *And the Children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and spoiled their Tents.*] They acted like good Soldiers; who did not first fall upon the Spoil, and thereby let the Enemy escape.

Ver. 54. *And David took the Head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem.*] After he had shown it to *Saul*, *ver.* 57. and exposed it to all the People, xviii. 6. *Jerusalem* was now become a noted City, which was the Reason, I suppose, why he brought his Head hither: Tho' it is only said, he brought it to that place; where it having been shown as a Spectacle, perhaps was reposited somewhere else.

But he put his Armour in his Tent.] Which, I suppose, was set up for *David*, upon this occasion; when he prepared himself to encounter the *Philistine*. And when his Tent was taken down after the Battel, the Armour was deposited in the Tabernacle, as his Sword was, to remain there for a Trophy.

Ver. 55. *And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said unto Abner the Captain of the Host, Whose Son is this Youth?*] Such Cavillers as *Spinoza* from hence argue, that this Chapter was not written by him, that wrote the former: For how is it possible, say they, that *Saul* should not know *David*, who had lately attended on him in his Court? But this is very frivolous; for in such a Multitude of Business as Kings have, and among so many new Faces, which they see every day, it was easy to forget a Man he had seen and conversed withal now and then; especially when he was crazed, and had a Disease in his Head, as *Saul* had. Besides, *David* came now in another kind of Apparel, than he did when he was sent to wait upon *Saul* at Court: For he appeared now as a Shepherd, in a rustick Habit *(ver.* 40.) and his Countenance, it is likely, was much altered, by the Heroic Motion he now found in himself, to fight with *Goliath*. And after all, *Abarbinel* observes, he doth not ask who *David* was, but who was his Father: Which he might easily forget when he had been disturbed with Melancholly, and with the public Affairs.

And Abner said, As thy Soul liveth, O King, I cannot tell.] He being a military Man, and therefore much abroad, had not seen *David* when he was at Court, or taken no notice of him.

Ver. 56. *And the King said, Enquire then whose Son this Stripling is.*] It was natural to desire to know whence such a young Man came, who so much excelled all other Men.

Ver. 57. *And as David returned from the Slaughter of the Philistine, Abner took him, and brought him unto Saul, with the Head of the Philistine in his hand.*] He thought it was best the King should learn from his own Mouth, who he was; especially after such a glorious Exploit.

Ver. 58. *And Saul said, Whose Son art thou, thou young Man? and David answered, I am the Son of thy Servant Jesse, the Bethlemite.*] More Discourse, no doubt, passed between them, as appears by the next words; but this was all that was proper to be recorded, in answer to *Saul*'s Question.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the Soul of Jonathan was knit unto the Soul of David, and he loved him as his own Soul.*] Such was the Prudence and Modesty of his Discourse and Behaviour after such an Heroic Action, that he entirely gained *Jonathan*'s Affection.

Ver. 2. *And Saul took him that day, and would let him go no more to his Father's House.*] *Saul* also resolved to show greater Respect and Kindness unto him than before. For it appears by this that he had not lived always at Court, after he came first thither; but often went to his Father, when *Saul* was well and had no use of him.

Ver. 3. *Then Jonathan and David made a Covenant.*] Solemnly entred into a mutual Friendſhip.

Becauſe he loved him as his own Soul.] Such excellent Men there were among the Heathen, between whom there was ζεῦγος φιλίας, as *Plutarch* calls it, *a Yoke of Friendſhip*, wherein they were ſo joined together in Love and Amity, as to have one common Intereſt. He mentions (in his Book περὶ πολυφιλίας) *Theſeus* and *Perithous*; *Achilles* and *Patroclus*; *Oreſtes* and *Pylades*; *Pythias* and *Damon*; *Epaminondas* and *Pelopidas*: But none of them comparable to theſe two, *Jonathan* and *David*; who entred into the moſt ſacred Bonds of mutual Aſſiſtance and Defence to the very Death; and Kindneſs to their Poſterity after either of them was dead. Which was a ſingular Providence of God, who by this means preſerved *David*, in that ſharp Perſecution, which ſhortly after aroſe againſt him at Court.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan ſtript himſelf of the Robe that was upon him, and gave it unto David.*] That he might appear like a Courtier.

And his Garments, even to his Sword, and to his Bow, and to his Girdle.] That he might look like another *Jonathan*; and all might take notice, they were no longer two, but one. For he put him into the Garb, both of a Courtier, and of a Soldier; or rather, great Commander.

Ver. 5. *And David went out whitherſoever Saul ſent him.*] Upon military Expeditions: None of which he refuſed, tho' ever ſo hazardous.

And he behaved himſelf wiſely.] Showed as much Prudence in his Conduct, as he did Courage.

And Saul ſet him over the Men of War.] Not over all; for *Abner* was General, as we ſpeak, of all his Forces: But he made him Captain of his Guard; or gave him ſome other great Command in his Army.

And he was accepted in the ſight of all the People, and alſo in the ſight of Saul's Servants.] Except a few; who envied his Preferment.

Ver. 6. *And it came to paſs, as they came.*] Marched along, in a great Cavalcade (as they now ſpeak) from the place of Battel.

When David returned from the Slaughter of the Philiſtine.] I ſuppoſe, *Saul* and the whole Court thought fit to honour *David*, by accompanying him to *Jeruſalem*, when he carried *Goliath*'s Head thither.

The Women came out of all the Cities of Iſrael.] All the neighbouring Cities.

Singing and dancing to meet King Saul, with Tabrets, with Joy, and with Inſtruments of Muſick.] As the cuſtom was in times of great rejoicing.

Ver. 7. *And the Women anſwered one to another, as they played.*] They ſang as well as played on muſical Inſtruments: And they ſang alternately, as they did *Exod.* xv. 21. And the burden of the Song ſeems to have been that which follows.

And ſaid, Saul hath ſlain his thouſands, and David his ten thouſands.] For his ſlaying *Goliath*, was the cauſe of the Flight of the Army of the *Philiſtines*, and the great Slaughter of them.

Ver. 8. *And Saul was very wroth, and the Saying diſpleaſed him; and he ſaid, they have aſcribed unto David ten thouſands, and to me they have aſcribed but thouſands; and what can he have more, but the Kingdom?*] He began to be jealous they would advance him to the Throne, in a little time; having ſo highly magnified him above their King.

Ver. 9. *And Saul eyed David from that day forward.*] Narrowly obſerved him, whether he had any ſuch deſign to make himſelf King: Or, as it is commonly interpreted, he looked aſkew upon him, as one he envied and hated, and was afraid of; as the LXX tranſlate it.

Ver. 10. *And it came to paſs on the morrow, that the evil Spirit from God came upon Saul.*] Which had formerly haunted him, xvi. 14. and now by his Diſcontent, Anger and Melancholy was brought again upon him.

And he propheſied in the midſt of the Houſe.] Before the whole Court. This propheſying is generally underſtood, only of his imitating the Motions, Actions and Geſtures of the Prophets; which ſometimes were very different from thoſe of other Men (ſee 2 *Kings* ix. 11.) But I do not ſee why this Word ſhould not retain the Signification here, which it hath in other places: That he ſung divine Songs. Which perhaps he the rather did; that *David* might ſuſpect no danger from him. *Abarbinel* thinks, that his Mind being diſturbed with various roving Thoughts about his own Condition, and about *David*, he foretold that *David* ſhould be Heir of his Kingdom.

And David played with his hand as at other times.] To compoſe and quiet his diſturbed Spirits.

And there was a Javelin in Saul's hand.] Which he had provided on purpoſe, as the following words ſhow, to diſpatch *David*.

Ver. 11. *And Saul caſt the Javelin, for he ſaid, I will ſmite David even to the Wall with it.*] This argued he was ſo full of Fury, that he deſign'd to kill him in his own Houſe, before all his Courtiers, when *David* was waiting upon him, and doing him Service.

And David avoided out of his preſence twice.] Had his Eye upon him, and ſhunned the Blow both now, and at another time mentioned xix. 10.

Ver. 12. *And Saul was afraid of David, becauſe the* LORD *was with him, and was departed from Saul.*] Who was as unſucceſsful in all his Deſigns, as *David* was proſperous.

Ver. 13. *Therefore Saul removed him from him.*] From his Court.

And made him a Captain over a thouſand.] Inſtead of Captain of his Guard (which required his Attendance at Court) he gave him a Command abroad: Where he hoped he might be killed in ſome Expedition; or he might have an opportunity privately to take away his Life.

And he went out and came in before the People.] As the Leader of that thouſand Men.

Ver. 14. *And David behaved himſelf wiſely in all his ways.*] None could find any fault in his Conduct, whitherſoever he went.

And the LORD *was with him.*] Made all his Undertakings proſperous.

Ver.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved himself very wisely, he was afraid of him.*] His Fears increased, as he saw *David* still grow so prudent, that no Exception could be taken to his Behaviour.

Ver. 16. *But all Israel and Judah loved David.*] This is to be understood (as *Corn. Bertram* thinks, *de Repub. Jud.* c. x.) as if he had said, the *Israelites* in general loved *David*, but especially they of the Tribe of *Judah*.

Because he went out and came in before them.] This Phrase signifies in other places, to administer all things belonging to one's Charge with full Authority. So *Moses* speaks of himself, *Deut.* xxxi. 2. and of *Joshua* his Successor, *Numb.* xxvii. 21. And so I suppose it signifies here, that *David* had an absolute Power under *Saul*, over those whom he commanded: And managed it so well, that he gained every body's Affection.

Ver. 17. *And Saul said to David, Behold my elder Daughter Merab, her will I give thee to Wife.*] He at last bethinks himself of the Promise he had publickly made unto him that should kill *Goliath*. The performance of which *David* did not demand, but in Modesty left it to *Saul*'s own Conscience: Who now intended nothing less, it appears by the sequel, than to be as good as his word.

Only be thou valiant for me, and fight the LORD's Battels.] He would not have him think upon this Marriage, of coming again to live at Court: But to continue a military Life, and fight for his Country; whereby he hoped to be rid of him.

For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him.] Now he seems to have some Sense of Honour, and to lay aside those base Thoughts of murdering him himself.

But let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.] By whose hand, God's just Judgment so ordered things, that *Saul* himself fell.

Ver. 18. *And David said unto Saul, Who am I, and what is my Life?*] The hazarding his Life, he tells him, could not deserve so high an advancement.

And what is my Family in Israel, that I should be Son-in-law to the King?] This was not a Refusal of the Honour, but an acknowledgment how unworthy he was of it.

Ver. 19. *And it came to pass at the time when Merab, Saul's Daughter, should have been given to David.*] When all things were ready for the Marriage.

That she was given to Adriel, the Meholathite, to Wife.] A most high Affront to *David*, and the greatest Injury that could have been done him: which he wisely dissembled. How *Jonathan* resented this Usage we are not told. It is likely, his Duty to his Father made him intreat *David* to take it patiently; and to look upon *Saul*, as one that was sometimes beside himself, and did not know what he did.

Ver. 20. *And Michal, Saul's Daughter, loved David, and they told Saul; and the thing pleased him.*] Not out of any love to *David*, or desire to perform his Promise: But because he hoped by her means to bring his ends about, of destroying *David*.

Ver. 21. *And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a Snare to him: and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him.*] He hoped his Daughter, in obedience to him, might be persuaded to bring him into some Snare that he would lay for him: Or, that being exposed to great dangers (which he was to undergo, as a Condition of having her to Wife) he might perish in some of them.

Wherefore Saul said unto David, Thou shalt be this day my Son-in-law.] That is shortly, within a time, it is likely, prefixed by *Saul*.

In the one of the twain.] By marrying one of his Daughters. He had two; and tho' he was disappointed in one of them, yet his Promise was fulfilled, if he married the other.

Ver. 22. *And Saul commanded his Servants, saying, Commune with David secretly.*] It seems *David* was not forward to embrace *Saul*'s Offer; having been so grosly abused: Therefore *Saul* ordered his Courtiers in private discourse to take occasion to perswade him to it.

And say, Behold, the King hath delight in thee, and his Servants love thee; now therefore be the King's Son-in-law.] The Affection of the King and of the whole Court, was a mighty Argument to induce him to it.

Ver. 23. *And Saul's Servants spake these words in the Ears of David; and David said, Seemeth it a light thing unto you, to be a King's Son-in-law: seeing I am a poor Man and little esteemed?*] Having no Estate, and of small Credit: And therefore unable to endow her according to her Quality.

Ver. 24. *And the Servants of Saul told him, saying, in this manner spake David.*] In the Hebrew, *according unto these words*; that is, they reported his words faithfully; that he was as sensible of his own Meanness, as of the Honour that was offered him.

Ver. 25. *And Saul said, Thus shall ye say to David, the King desireth not any Dowry; but an hundred Foreskins of the Philistines, to be avenged of his Enemies.*] This Custom hath prevailed in latter times in some Countries, to give their Daughters in Marriage to the most valiant Men; or those who should bring them so many Heads of their Enemies. *Alex. ab Alexandro* reports of a People in *Carmania*, that if any were desirous to marry, it was necessary he should first bring the King the Head of an Enemy, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 24. *Vincent le Blanc* reports the like of others, *P.* 1. *Chap.* 30. But why did *Saul* desire the Foreskins of the *Philistines*, and not their Heads? To this *Procopius Gazæus* answers, that *Saul* did not know but *David* might cut off the Heads of his own Subjects, and bring them instead of the *Philistines*, and therefore he ask'd so many Foreskins, which the *Israelites* had not, that he might be sure he had killed so many Enemies. As for Portions, the *Hebrew* Custom was not like that of the *Romans*, who required the Wife to bring a Portion to her Husband, *ut onera matrimonii tanto æquius sustineat*, that he might be able to bear the Charges of Matrimony more equally. But among the *Hebrews* the Husband endowed the Wife, and received nothing at all with her. And so the Custom was among the People of that Land before they came into *Canaan*. For *Sichem*

bad *Dinah*'s Relations require what Dowry they pleaſed, and it ſhould be ſettled upon her, he deſiring nothing of them but her, *Gen.* xxxix. 17. And ſo it was in the caſe of *David*. See *Wagenſeil* upon *Sota*, cap. iv.

But Saul thought to make David fall by the hand of the Philiſtines.] Who he knew would be extreamly enraged againſt *David*, by putting this great Indignity upon them, as they all counted it, of cutting off their Foreſkins.

Ver. 26. *And when his Servants told David theſe words, it pleaſed David well to be the King's Son-in-Law.*] In the *Hebrew* the words are, *the thing was right in David's eyes* ; that is, he thought fit to accept the Offer upon theſe Conditions.

And the days were not expired.] Which were appointed to be *fulfilled* (as it is in the *Hebrew*) before the Marriage took effect: ſo that he had time to perform what was agreed, inſtead of a Dowry.

Ver. 27. *Wherefore David aroſe, and went, and his Men, and ſlew of the Philiſtines two hundred Men, and brought their Foreſkins, and they gave them in full tale to the King, that he might be the King's Son-in-Law.*] He gave *Saul* double of what he demanded: partly to ſhow his ſenſe of the Honour he had done him, and partly to expreſs his Love to his Daughter, and to declare his Intention to venture his Life freely to do him ſervice.

And Saul gave him Michal his Daughter to Wife.] There being no way to avoid it, after the Marriage had been ſo ſolemnly treated and ratified.

Ver. 28. *And Saul ſaw and knew that the LORD was with David.*] He was convinced of it, by the ſucceſs which he conſtantly gave him.

And that Michal Saul's Daughter loved him.] Which was a great Diſappointment to him.

Ver. 29. *And Saul was yet the more afraid of David.*] Having thus advanced him ; and ſeeing no hope of bringing his Deſigns to paſs againſt him.

And Saul became David's Enemy continually.] He was every day more reſolved to deſtroy him. Such ſtrange Blindneſs, did his Anger and Hatred, and ſuch like Paſſions, bring upon him ; that he ſet himſelf againſt him, who he *ſaw* and *knew* had God for his Friend.

Ver. 30. *And the Princes of the Philiſtines went forth.*] To fight with the *Iſraelites*: Who had highly incenſed them by *David*'s late Action, as well as by former Loſſes. And they thought perhaps, that *David* would make uſe of the Benefit the Law allowed, *Deut.* xxiv. 25. of not going to War in a Year after he was married.

And it came to paſs after they went forth, that David behaved himſelf more wiſely than all the Servants of Saul.] By diſcovering, I ſuppoſe, the Deſigns of the *Philiſtines*, and preventing them: For we do not read, that they came to a Battel.

So that his Name was much ſet by.] He was very highly eſteemed.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Saul ſpake to Jonathan his Son, and to all his Servants, that they ſhould kill David.*] When he could not deſtroy him by Craft, he declares open Enmity to him ; and commands his Son and his whole Court to make him away : ſome of which he thought would obey him. It is ſtrange that he ſhould ſpeak to *Jonathan* to murder *David*, if he knew the Friendſhip he had for him ; and he could not well be ignorant of it, ſince he had ſo publickly declared it, as we read, xviii. 3, 4. But he imagined his Love to a Father, would overcome his Love to a Friend. And there was a great Providence of God in his diſcloſing his Mind ſo freely to *Jonathan*, whereby *David* came to be certainly informed of his danger.

Ver. 2. *And Jonathan Saul's Son delighted much in David.*] He continued to take much delight in his Company : And therefore would not loſe the pleaſure of his Friendſhip, by ſuffering him to be killed.

And Jonathan told David, ſaying, My Father ſeeketh to kill thee, now therefore I pray thee take heed to thy ſelf until the Morning ; and abide in a ſecret place, and hide thy ſelf.] He hoped, I ſuppoſe, to find his Father better diſpoſed in the Morning: And in the mean time would have *David* ſecure himſelf in ſome cloſe place, where no body could find him.

Ver. 3. *And I will go out.*] The next Morning.

And ſtand beſide my Father in the Field.] In which, it is likely, *Saul* uſed to walk in the Morning, and take the freſh Air. Thereabouts he adviſed *David* to lurk, in ſome ſecret place ; that he might ſpeedily acquaint him with the Iſſue of his Diſcourſe with his Father.

And I will commune with my Father concerning thee, and what I ſee, that I will tell thee.] Let him know how he left his Father inclined.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan ſpake good of David unto Saul his Father.*] A noble Act of Friendſhip to adventure to commend him to one, who was his declared Enemy.

And ſaid unto him, Let not the King ſin againſt his Servant, againſt David : becauſe he hath not ſinned againſt thee, and becauſe his Work hath been to thee ward very good.] He repreſented to him, what a Sin and Diſhonour it would be to kill ſuch a faithful Servant as *David* had been : who never offended him ; but ſtudied by all good Offices to pleaſe him.

Ver. 5. *And he did put his Life in his hand, and ſlew the Philiſtine.*] Eſpecially he puts him in mind of that hazardous Enterprize, wherein he ſlew *Goliath*.

And the LORD wrought a great Salvation for all Iſrael.] By which means the whole Realm was delivered out of their Enemies hand.

Thou ſaweſt it, and didſt rejoice.] He deſires him to remember that he himſelf was a Witneſs of it ; and could not then but applaud *David*, and rejoice in what God had done by him.

Wherefore then wilt thou ſin againſt innocent Blood, and ſlay David without a Cauſe?] Having mollified *Saul* by ſo many Arguments, he beſeeches him to revoke the Order he had given (*ver.* 1.) and in downright Terms tells him, if he did not, he would bring innocent Blood upon his own head.

Ver.

Ver. 6. *And Saul hearkened to the Voice of Jonathan, and Saul ſware, As the* LORD *liveth, he ſhall not be ſlain.*] Some think he ſware deceitfully; that *Jonathan* believing he had no ill Intentions towards *David*, might not perſwade him to fly, but bring him to Court again, where he might have an Opportunity to kill him. But I rather think he ſpake what he really meant at this preſent: Tho' this Alteration proceeding not from any Affection he bare to *David*, but from a Senſe (which *Jonathan*'s Diſcourſe had wrought in him) how baſe a thing it would be, to ſlay a Man of ſuch Worth, and who had done him ſuch Service, he ſoon forgot it, and returned to his old bent.

Ver. 7. *And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan ſhewed him all theſe things: and Jonathan brought David unto Saul; and he was in his preſence as in times paſt.*] When he was in his Favour.

Ver. 8. *And there was War again, and David went out and fought with the Philiſtines, and ſlew them with a great Slaughter, and they fled from him.*] All theſe Battels were only between Parties, for *David* commanded no more than a thouſand Men, xviii. 13. And if the whole Army of the *Philiſtines* had been gathered together, *Abner* would have commanded the Army of *Iſrael* againſt them; for he was Captain of the Hoſt.

Ver. 9. *And the evil Spirit from the* LORD *was upon Saul, and he ſat in his Houſe with his Javelin in his hand.*] The more Services *David* did his Country, the more did *Saul*'s Hatred and Malice increaſe againſt him. For this new Victory, in all likelihood, made him melancholy and mad to ſee him ſo proſperous.

And David played with his hand.] He did not omit his Duty to *Saul*, tho' he knew his Danger.

Ver. 10. *And Saul ſought to ſmite David to the Wall with his Javelin, but he ſlipt away out of Saul's preſence, and he ſmote the Javelin into the Wall.*] His Wrath and Fury made him forget his Oath: So dangerous it is to be poſſeſſed with ſuch Paſſions.

And David fled, and eſcaped that Night.] He got out of the Palace, before *Saul*'s Order (which it is likely he gave) could be executed, to apprehend him.

Ver. 11. *Saul alſo ſent Meſſengers unto David's Houſe to watch him, and to ſlay him in the Morning.*] As he went out of the Door of his Houſe. By this it is apparent when *Saul* miſſed his Blow, he was the more enraged, and implacably purſued his Deſtruction.

And Michal David's Wife told him, ſaying, If thou ſave not thy Life to-night, to-morrow thou ſhalt be ſlain.] She had Intelligence either from her Brother *Jonathan*, or ſome other Friend at Court: Or perhaps ſhe ſaw ſuſpicious Perſons hovering about the Houſe.

Ver. 12. *So Michal let down David thro' a Window.*] Which did not look towards any of the Doors which were narrowly watched.

And he went, and fled, and eſcaped.] Having moſt of the Night, it is likely, to travel in.

Ver. 13. *And Michal took an Image.*] In the *Hebrew*, a *Teraphim*. But it doth not ſignify ſuch as were made for a ſuperſtitious uſe (which *David* would not have ſuffered in his Houſe) but a ſimple Image of a Man's Head; ſuch as we now uſe for Blocks, whereon to comb our Perukes. *Abarbinel* thinks (whom *Abendana* follows) that Women were wont, in thoſe days, to make ſuch Figures in the likeneſs of their Huſbands; that when they were abſent from them, they might have them in their Image, to look upon them, as ſtill preſent with them. Of which ſort of *Teraphim* (which were Images in the likeneſs of Men) was this of *Michal*'s; who dearly loving her Huſband, had got one made in his likeneſs. But whatſoever becomes of this, the Conceit that *Teraphim* were little Puppets (as I may call them) which the High-Prieſt had in his Breaſt-plate (called *Urim* and *Thummim*) is plainly deſtroyed. For this Place ſhows that *Teraphim* were a large Image repreſenting a Man: And therefore fitter for a Bed, than for a Breaſt-plate.

And laid it in the Bed.] Where *David* was wont to lie.

And put a Pillow of Goats-hair for his Bolſter.] It is hard to determine what the word *Cebir* ſignifies, which we tranſlate *Pillow*. For there is great Variety of Opinions among Interpreters about it. But *Bochartus* hath with much Probability reſolved that it ſignifies *great*: And the meaning is, ſhe put a great deal of Goats-hair upon his Bolſter. For tho' the word *Goats* is only mentioned in the *Hebrew*, yet the word *Hair* muſt be ſupplied, as a great many other places of Scripture teſtify. See his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 51. pag. 623. For in thoſe Countries Goats had long Hair, which was ſhorn as the Wool of Sheep is, and ſerved for many uſes: And it is not unlike Man's Hair, as he there obſerves. It was alſo of divers Colours, ſo that ſhe might chuſe ſome fine Goats-hair (which was ready at hand, being uſed to be ſpun) of the ſame Colour with *David*'s.

And covered it with a Cloth.] As if *David* had been ſick.

Ver. 14. *And when Saul ſent Meſſengers to take David.*] He not coming out of doors, where they watched for him, *Saul* ſent other Meſſengers to take him in his Houſe.

She ſaid he was ſick.] Her Affection to *David* made her tell an Untruth; whereby he gained more time to get to a place of Safety.

Ver. 15. *And Saul ſent Meſſengers again, to ſee David.*] As if they came to viſit him, and ſee how he did.

Saying, Bring him to me in the Bed that I may ſlay him.] Such was his inſatiable Rage, that he could not ſtay to ſee whether he would die of his Sickneſs; but when he was able to make no Reſiſtance, reſolved to diſpatch him.

Ver. 16. *And when the Meſſengers were come in, behold, there was an Image in the Bed, with a Pillow of Goats-hair for his Bolſter.*] An Image dreſſed up with Goats-hair, reſembling a Man.

Ver. 17. *And Saul ſaid unto Michal, Wherefore haſt thou deceived me ſo, and ſent away mine Enemy, and he is eſcaped?*] He did not expect to be ſerved ſo by a Daughter, whom he had married to *David*, that ſhe might betray him.

And

And Michal answered Saul, He said unto me, Let me go: why should I kill thee?] This was another Fiction of her own: For it is not likely that she endeavoured to detain him, or that he threatned to kill her if she did.

Ver. 18. *So David fled, and came to Samuel to Ramah, and told him of all that Saul had done unto him. And he and Samuel went and dwelt in Naioth*] A Place near to *Ramah*, as the next Verse shows.

Ver. 19. *And it was told Saul, Behold David is at Naioth in Ramah.*] *Ramah* seems to have been the Place from whence *Samuel* was descended, called (in the first Chapter, *ver.* 1.) *Ramathaim Zophim*, for the reason I gave there. And *Naioth* was a neighbouring Place belonging to it, and perhaps the Suburbs of it. Where the Sons of the Prophets either had their ordinary Residence, or were wont sometimes to retire thither for greater Privacy.

Ver. 20. *And Saul sent Messengers to take David.*] His implacable Hatred had abolished all Respect and Reverence to *Samuel* (under whose Protection *David* now was) and to the College of the Prophets, which was a kind of Sanctuary, unto those who fled to it.

And when they saw the Company of the Prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them.] To govern them.

The Spirit of the LORD came also upon the Messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied.] That is, praised God in Hymns; which the Prophets composed and sang to him, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 1, 2, 4.

Ver. 22. *And when it was told Saul, he sent other Messengers, and they prophesied likewise; and Saul sent again the third time, and they prophesied also.*] A strange Obstinacy, to contend so long with the Spirit of God: Who quite diverted the Minds of his Messengers from *David*, by inspiring them with Divine Thoughts.

Ver. 22. *Then went he also unto Ramah.*] Not out of Devotion, but to destroy *David*.

And came to a great Well that is in Sechu.] Where Company commonly was, to fetch Water.

And he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? and they answered and said, Behold they be at Naioth in Ramah.] It is a probable Opinion of *Corn. Pellicanus*, that *Naioth* signifies the *Habitation* or *College*, where the Prophets dwelt in *Ramah*.

Ver. 23. *And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah.*] He directed his Way toward that Place.

And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him also, and he went on prophesying until he came to Naioth in Ramah.] His Messengers did not prophesy till they came thither; but God inspired *Saul* as he was on the way unto that Place: So that from *Sechu*, I suppose, till he came there, his evil Spirit was gone, and he praised God as the Prophets did. This was to convince him, that he laboured in a vain pursuit after *David*, whom the Spirit of God powerfully defended.

Ver. 24. *And he stript off his Clothes also.*] His Royal Robes (as *R. Solomon* and other *Jewish* Doctors expound it) appearing like an ordinary Man; or perhaps in the Prophetical Habit. Or it may be meant only of his upper Garment, whatsoever it was. For when the *Germans* are said by some to have appeared naked, *Tacitus* interprets it *rejecta veste superiore*, throwing off their upper Garment. But the first I take to be the truest Account; and as *Procopius Gazæus* here notes, *Habitus ille regni ablationem significabat*, that throwing off his Royal Habit signifies the taking away his Kingdom from him.

And prophesied before Samuel in like manner.] This seems to denote, that his Messengers had also stripp'd themselves when they prophesied. And *Abarbinel* will have it, that they all still foretold the Crown should be set upon the Head of *David*.

And lay down naked all that day, and all that night.] As a Man in an Ecstasy, that had not the use of his Senses. But by *naked* is meant only, as before, stripp'd of his Royal Robe.

Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the Prophets?] This gave occasion to renew the Proverbial Saying, which had been in use long before. See x. 12.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND David fled from Naioth in Ramah, and came and said before Jonathan.*] By *Saul*'s being thrown into a Trance (mentioned in the Verse beforegoing) God's Providence gave *David* time to escape; and he went from thence to *Gibeah*, where *Jonathan* was.

What have I done? And what is mine Iniquity? And what is my Sin before thy Father, that he seeketh my Life?] Such violent and unwearied Persecution must arise from some extraordinary Cause or other; which he desires to know: For he could not accuse himself of any kind of Fault, that should imbitter *Saul* against him.

Ver. 2. *And he said, God forbid, thou shalt not die.*] He would have him think there was no such danger as he suspected.

Behold, my Father will do nothing, either great or small, but he will show it me; and why should my Father hide this from me? it is not so.] These Words signify that *Jonathan* knew nothing of his Father's Design; and that he had sent the Messengers fore-named, without his privity, to seize *David*. Yet it is strange he should not know of his sending to his House to apprehend him. Therefore some think *Jonathan*, out of dutiful Affection to his Father, dissembled the matter: and would not have *David* think him so very wicked as he was.

Ver. 3. *And David sware moreover and said.*] That it was certainly so.

Thy Father certainly knoweth that I have found grace in thine eyes, and he saith, let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved.] He was willing to believe that *Saul* might conceal his Intentions from *Jonathan*; for the Reason here mentioned.

But truly, as the LORD liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, there is but a Step between me and Death.] But by a most solemn Oath, he endeavours to persuade him, that he was in extream danger of losing his Life.

Ver.

Ver. 4. *Then said Jonathan to David, Whatsoever thy Soul desireth, I will even do it for thee.*] Both to find out *Saul*'s Intentions, and to save *David's* Life.

Ver. 5. *And David said unto Jonathan, To-morrow is the new Moon, and I should not fail to sit with the King at Meat.*] There were solemn Sacrifices every new Moon, and then a Feast upon them. And *David* being one of the King's Family, by marrying his Daughter, used to eat with him at these Festival Times: And he thought it possible, that *Saul*, who lately pursued him in a fit of Rage, when the evil Spirit was upon him, might now be mitigated by the Spirit of God coming upon him at *Naioth*: And so might enquire after him, and receive him into Favour again, as he had formerly done. But he durst not trust to this Opinion, till he had tried his Mind and Affection to him, after the manner here propounded.

But let me go, that I may hide my self in the Field.] He desires, with his Approbation, to retire to his Father's House, and the Field thereabouts, with which he was well acquainted.

'Till the third day at even.] That is, till the next Day but one, after the New Moon, as appears from *ver.* 27, 35.

Ver. 6. *If thy Father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem, his City; for there is a yearly Sacrifice there for all the Family.*] It is likely this was the custom among pious Families to meet together once a Year, and praise God for his Mercies towards them all.

Ver. 7. *If he say thus, It is well, thy Servant shall have peace: but if he be very wroth, then be sure that Evil is determined by him.*] If he approved of *Jonathan*'s Licence, he might hope he was pacified: But if he still stormed and raged, he might probably conclude his Destruction was decreed, and that his Hatred continued so implacably, that he must be forced to leave his Country.

Ver. 8. *Therefore thou shalt deal kindly with thy Servant.*] In giving him a faithful Account how he found his Father disposed towards him.

For thou hast brought thy Servant into a Covenant of the LORD with thee.] It was *Jonathan*'s motion, that they should make a solemn Covenant before God (who is the Avenger of all Falseness) of mutual Friendship, xviii. 3.

Notwithstanding, if there be in me Iniquity, slay me thy self: for why shouldst thou bring me to thy Father?] A marvellous Assurance of his Integrity, which made him freely offer himself to die, without troubling his Father any further, if he knew any Guilt in him.

Ver. 9. *And Jonathan said, Far be it from thee.*] Do not speak after this manner.

For if I knew certainly that evil was determined by my Father, to come upon thee, then would not I tell it thee?] He disclaims all Thoughts either of killing him himself, or letting him fall into the hands of his Father, if he could prevent it. For who could imagine a Man so solemnly engaged, and who had already shown himself such a faithful Friend, would not discover any Design he knew against him?

Ver. 10. *And David said, Who shall tell me?*] He desired to know who should bring him Advice how matters stood.

And what if thy Father answer thee roughly?] And not suffer thee to come to me thy self.

Ver. 11. *And Jonathan said unto David, Come, let us go into the Field; and they went both of them into the Field.*] To take their measures about this matter.

Ver. 12. *And Jonathan said unto David, O LORD God of Israel, when I have sounded my Father any time to-morrow, or the third day, and behold, if there be Good towards David, and I then send not unto thee, and shew it thee.*] The first Words seem to be an Exclamation: And the rest, as if he had said, Shall I who love thee so much, be thought capable of breaking my word with thee? All these Verses are full of Passion; and the Words are broken, concise, and interrupt: As the Words of Lovers are wont to be, especially when they are disturbed.

Ver. 13. *And the LORD do so, and much more to Jonathan: but if it please my Father to do thee evil, then I will shew it thee, and send thee away, that thou mayest go in peace: and the LORD be with thee, as he hath been with my Father.*] In this case he advises him to get away, and preserve himself as well as he could: Praying God to make him as successful as his Father had been; and bring him to the Kingdom.

Ver. 14. *And thou shalt not only while I yet live, shew me the Kindness of the LORD.*] The Kindness promised him before the LORD, or the greatest Kindness. The Words in the *Hebrew* run plainly thus, *and wilt thou not if I be then alive, (viz.* when God had advanced him to the Throne, as he did his Father) *wilt thou not shew me the Loving-kindness of the LORD?* He made no doubt, but rather strongly affirmed his Belief of it.

That I die not.] After the manner of those Kings, who were wont to cut off the Children of their Predecessors: Unto whose Throne they were advanced.

Ver. 15. *But also thou shalt not cut off thy Kindness from my House for ever.*] The Covenant they had made was not merely personal, but reached to their Posterity.

No not when the LORD hath cut off the Enemies of David, every one from the Face of the Earth.] When he had the greatest Power, and none to oppose his Will.

Ver. 16. *So Jonathan made a Covenant with the House of David, saying, Let the LORD even require it at the hand of David's Enemies.*] They had made a League of personal Friendship, a little after the Slaughter of *Goliath*: And now they make a Friendship between their Families; and *Jonathan* wished that God would requite it, if any of his Family proved *David*'s Enemies. This he renewed afterwards, and added farther Articles to the League, that *Jonathan* should be next to himself, xxiii. 18.

Ver. 17. *And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him.*] Or he made him swear again by the Love he bare to him.

For he loved him as he loved his own Soul.] The greatness of his Love to him, made him think

think, he could never do enough to ſecure his Friendſhip to all Generations.

Ver. 18. *Then Jonathan ſaid unto David, to-morrow is the new Moon, and thou ſhalt be miſſed, becauſe thy Seat will be empty.*] The place where he uſed to ſit with *Saul* at Table.

Ver. 19. *And when thou haſt ſtayed three days, then thou ſhalt go down quickly.*] It is commonly interpreted, of ſtaying ſo long with his Kindred at *Bethlehem*, or ſome other place of Retirement. But in the *Hebrew* the Words are, *thou ſhalt three times* (or three days) *go down to a very low place:* And the meaning ſeems to be, that if *Jonathan* did not come the firſt day, he ſhould take it for granted he knew nothing; and come again the ſecond; and if he brought him no News then, come the third.

And come to the place where thou didſt hide thyſelf, when the Buſineſs was in hand.] When they were diſcourſing of this very matter; how to diſcover *Saul*'s Affection toward *David*. Or, when he did *David*'s Buſineſs with his Father, and interceded ſo effectually for him, that *Saul* promiſed not to kill him.

And thou ſhalt remain by the Stone Ezel.] It is thought to be a Stone that ſhowed Men their way, where ſeveral Roads met: Becauſe the word imports *going* or *travelling*.

Ver. 20. *And I will ſhoot three Arrows, as tho' I ſhot at a mark.*] For when he came, there might be Paſſengers going to and fro': which would deprive them of the Privacy they deſired. Therefore this ſeems to have been given as a ſign that the Coaſt was clear.

Ver. 21. *And behold, I will ſend a Lad, ſaying, Go find out the Arrows; if I expreſly ſay to the Lad, behold the Arrows are on this ſide of thee, take them, and come thou; for there is peace to thee and no hurt, as the* LORD *liveth.*] So that he might ſurely appear, and ſhow himſelf.

Ver. 22. *But if I ſay thus unto the young Man, behold, the Arrows are beyond thee; go thy way: for the* LORD *hath ſent thee away.*] He would not have him venture to diſcover himſelf; but look upon this as a ſign that God would not have him appear at Court.

Ver. 23. *And as touching the matter, that thou and I have ſpoken of; behold, the* LORD *is between me and thee for ever.*] As a Witneſs, and an Avenger, if we keep not the Covenant we have made of perpetual Friendſhip.

Ver. 24. *So David hid himſelf in the Field: and when the new Moon was come, the King ſat him down to eat Meat.*] He did not immediately hide himſelf in the Field, but when the time came that he had appointed: For he firſt went to *Bethlehem*, *ver.* 6, 28.

Ver. 25. *And the King ſat upon his Seat, as at other times, even upon a Seat by the Wall.*] The *Iſraelites* ſat at Meat (as did the *Greeks* and *Romans* in after-times) in a Half-Round, or Circle: Which they called *Sigma*, from the antient Figure of that Letter, which was thus, C. Now the middle place, in this faſhion of ſitting, was moſt honourable among this People, as our Mr. *Thorndike* gathers from this very place. Upon which *R. Solomon* ſaith, *Saul ſat in the head of the Couch next the Wall.* For ſuppoſing them to ſit in a Round, or Half-Circle, as the manner always was, we muſt needs conceive that the back or middle of this Half-Circle muſt be towards the Wall, for all Conveniencies. See his *Religious Aſſemblies*, p. 62. It may be alſo here obſerved, that the cuſtom of lying along, leaning on their Elbows, was not yet introduced, in theſe ancient times; but they ſat at Meat as we do. See *Bochartus*, *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. cap. 5. p. 598.

And Jonathan aroſe.] When his Father came into the Room: And after *Saul* had taken his place, it is likely, ſat on his right hand.

And Abner ſat by Saul's ſide.] On his left hand, I ſuppoſe, being his Couſin, and the General of his Army.

And David's place was empty.] Which, it is probable, was next to *Abner*'s.

Ver. 26. *Nevertheleſs Saul ſpake not any thing that day.*] Made no enquiry after *David*.

For he thought ſomething is befallen him; he is not clean, ſurely he is not clean.] What this *Mikrah*, or *Accident* ſignifies, which we tranſlate *ſomething hath befallen him*, ſee upon *Levit.* xv. 16.

Ver. 27. *And it came paſs that on the morrow, which was the ſecond day of the Month, that David's place was empty; and Saul ſaid unto Jonathan his Son, wherefore cometh not the Son of Jeſſe.*] His calling him the *Son of Jeſſe* argued both Scorn and Diſpleaſure againſt him.

To meat, neither yeſterday, nor to-day?] By this it appears, the *Jews* anciently obſerved two days, in the beginning of every Month, with Feſtival Joy. The Reaſon was, becauſe the New Moon being proclaimed according to its Appearance, and it appearing unequally, ſometimes in the Afternoon, ſometimes in the Evening, ſometimes at Midnight, therefore they obſerved two days, as *Scaliger* and others have obſerved. And they who were not clean the firſt day, might obſerve the ſecond: For that ſort of Uncleanneſs here ſpoken of, laſted but one day.

Ver. 28. *And Jonathan anſwered Saul, David earneſtly aſked leave of me to go to Bethlehem.*] Which he, being next to the King, had power, I ſuppoſe, to grant: As appears from his demanding of *Jonathan* an Account what was become of him.

Ver. 29. *And he ſaid, let me go, I pray thee, for my Family hath a Sacrifice in the City, and my Brother he hath commanded me to be there.*] The eldeſt Brother let all the reſt know that their Company was expected.

Now, if I have found grace in thine Eyes, let me go away, I pray thee, and ſee my Brethren: therefore he cometh not to the King's Table.] He expreſſes in many words, the great Importunity of *David*, for leave to go and viſit his Relations: which he thought might make the King not take it ill, that he had granted it.

Ver. 30. *And Saul's Anger was kindled againſt Jonathan; and he ſaid unto him, Thou Son of a perverſe rebellious Woman.*] Or, as it is in the *Hebrew*, *thou Son of perverſe Rebellion*. That is, a very perverſe Rebel.

Do not I know that thou haſt choſen the Son of Jeſſe, to thy own confuſion?] Made him his Friend, to his utter undoing.

And unto the confuſion of thy Mother's Nakedneſs.] For the World would think that he was none

none of his Son: becauſe he loved him entirely, whom *Saul* hated extremely.

Ver. 31. *For as long as the Son of Jeſſe liveth upon the ground, thou ſhalt not be eſtabliſhed, nor thy Kingdom.*] He was fully ſatisfied that *David*, if he lived, would be King of *Iſrael*. Which if he knew by *Samuel*'s anointing him, it was Madneſs to imagine that he ſhould be able to overthrow the Counſel of God.

Wherefore now fetch him to me, for he ſhall ſurely die.] He could not expect to be obeyed, ſince his Son loved him ſo much: But his Fury made him lay this Command upon him.

Ver. 32. *And Jonathan anſwered Saul his Father, Wherefore ſhould he be ſlain? what hath he done?*] He declines his Command, by deſiring to know what his Guilt was.

Ver. 33. *And Saul caſt a Javelin at him to ſmite him.*] It is not ſaid, as it is of *David* (xix. 10.) *to ſmite him to the Wall:* And therefore ſome think he intended only to wound him, not to kill him: But the word *ſmite*, in Scripture, commonly ſignifies to kill, and there is no reaſon to take it otherwiſe here: *Saul*'s Fury being ſo great, that he minded not what he did. One would think that he uſed a *Javelin* or Lance, as a Scepter: For it was always ready at hand.

Wherefore Jonathan knew that it was determined of his Father to ſlay David.] That it was his unalterable Reſolution. Which is implied in that Phraſe, *ver.* 31. *he is the Son of Death*, as *Conſtantius L'Empereur* obſerves upon *Bava Kama*, p. 90.

Ver. 34. *So Jonathan roſe from the Table in fierce Anger, and did eat no Meat the ſecond day of the Month, for he was grieved for David, becauſe his Father had done him ſhame.*] Here are two Reaſons why he faſted: *firſt*, becauſe he was extremely afflicted for *David*; and *ſecondly*, his Father had put *Jonathan* to ſhame, by his foul Language, and by throwing a *Javelin* at him: For ſo the Words run clearly in the *Hebrew*; *for he was grieved for David, and becauſe*, &c. the copulative *and* being wanting, as in many other places.

Ver. 35. *And it came to paſs in the morning.*] Of the third day.

That Jonathan went out into the Field, at the time appointed with David, and a little Lad with him.] According to their Agreement, *ver.* 20, 21.

Ver. 36. *And he ſaid to the Lad, Run, find out the Arrow which I ſhoot; and as the Lad ran, he ſhot the Arrow beyond him.*] Which was the Sign given to *David* of *Saul*'s ill Intentions, *ver.* 22.

Ver. 37. *And when the Lad was come to the place of the Arrow, which Jonathan had ſhot, Jonathan cried after the Lad, Is not the Arrow beyond thee?*] He cried ſo loud, I ſuppoſe, that *David* might hear him what he ſaid.

Ver. 38. *And Jonathan cried after the Lad, make ſpeed, ſtay not.*] So deſirous he was to be alone with *David*.

And Jonathan's Lad gathered up the Arrows and came to his Maſter.

Ver. 39. *And the Lad knew not any thing, only Jonathan and David knew the Matter.*] The meaning of all this.

Ver. 40. *And Jonathan gave his Artillery to the Lad, and ſaid unto him, Go carry them into the City.*] That he might be left alone with *David*.

Ver. 41. *And as ſoon as the Lad was gone, David aroſe out of his place towards the South.*] On the South of the Stone *Ezel*: On the North ſide of which *Jonathan* ſhot his Arrows, that the Lad might not chance to ſtumble upon *David*.

And fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himſelf three times.] After three Bows, he fell on his face; out of Reverence to him, as the King's Son, and his excellent Friend. *Arrianus* ſaith, *lib.* 4. that this Proſtration was introduced by *Cyrus*: But he is confuted by this Action of *David*; which ſhows it to have been a far more ancient Poſture.

And they kiſſed one another, and wept one with another: until David exceeded.] Being to become an Exile from his Friend, from his Wife, from his Kindred, and the People of God; and from all ſacred Solemnities.

Ver. 42. *And Jonathan ſaid to David, Go in peace, foraſmuch as we have ſworn both of us, in the Name of the* LORD, *ſaying the* LORD *be between me and thee, and between my Seed and thy Seed for ever.*] As much as to ſay, doubt not that I will faithfully keep my Covenant with thee; as I doubt not of thy perpetual Stedfaſtneſs in it, when I am dead. And this muſt be our Satisfaction, in this ſad Separation.

And he aroſe and departed.] That is, *David* left *Jonathan*.

And Jonathan went into the City.] I ſuppoſe their Diſcourſe continued but a ſhort time; for fear of being diſcovered.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *Then David came to Nob.*] It is hard to tell where this City was; for it is not reckoned among the Cities of the Prieſts, either in the Tribe of *Judah*, or of *Benjamin*, or of any other. But *D. Kimchi* ſaith, his Father took it for *Jeruſalem*; and perhaps it was near to it: Where the Tabernacle being fixed, the Prieſts reſorted thither in great Numbers, and ſettled there. In *Neh.* xi. 32. we find mention of a City of this Name, in the Tribe of *Benjamin*: Whither *Saul* perhaps brought the Tabernacle, being his own Tribe.

Unto Ahimelech the Prieſt.] Intending here to commend himſelf and his Cauſe to God; and to beg his Direction and Protection. *Ahimelech* is no where called the High-Prieſt, but always *Ahimelech the Prieſt*, or ſimply *the Prieſt*, *ver.* 4, 5, 6, 9. yet being the Son of *Ahitub* (xxii. 9, 11.) who was the Son of *Phineas*, the Son of *Eli*, he is generally ſuppoſed to have been the Brother of *Abijah* (mentioned xiv. 3.) and he being dead, to have ſucceeded him in the High-Prieſthood.

And Ahimelech was afraid at the meeting of David.] Seeing him alone; and having heard, perhaps, ſomething of the King's Diſpleaſure againſt him.

And ſaid unto him, Why art thou alone, and no Man with thee?] A Man of *David*'s Quality, he knew, never went without Attendants.

And the truth is, *David* had ſome Perſons with him, as the 4th Verſe tells us, and appears from our Saviour's Words (in the *ſecond* of St. *Mark*) where he mentions *David and thoſe that were with him.* But he had no ſuch Perſons as uſed to be his Guard; and he left thoſe that were with him at ſome diſtance, that *Abimilech* might not ſee them.

Ver. 2. *And David ſaid unto Ahimelech the Prieſt, The King hath commanded me a Buſineſs, and hath ſaid unto me, let no Man know any thing of the Buſineſs whereon I ſend thee, and what I have commanded thee.*] We are not from hence to take an Example of ſpeaking Untruths (as *Conradus Pellicanus* here gloſſes) but the Wickedneſs of the World is the more to be deplored, which ſometimes puts a neceſſity upon excellent Men to lye, that they may preſerve their Lives, which cannot be ſafe without it.

And I have appointed my Servants to ſuch and ſuch a place.] Here he acknowledges he had Servants with him: But he had diſpoſed them into ſeveral Places, that the King's Buſineſs might be the better concealed.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore what is under thy hand?*] He deſires to know what he was able to do for him, to ſupply his Wants.

Give me five Loaves of Bread in my hand.] Particularly he deſires to ſatisfy his Hunger, and enough for his Servants.

Or, what is there preſent.] That is, any other Victuals.

Ver. 4. *And the Prieſt anſwered, There is no common Bread under my hand, but there is hallowed Bread: if the young Men have kept themſelves at leaſt from Women.*] It was the ancient Cuſtom among other Nations, for the Prieſts to keep themſelves even from the lawful uſe of Women, before they performed their Office: As *Porphyry* informs us, *lib.* 4. Περὶ Ἀποχῆς, *ſect.* 7. Therefore *Ahimelech* requires this of *David*'s Soldiers, or Companions, that being to eat of the holy Bread, which none but Prieſts might eat, they ſhould eat it with the ſame Purity, which was required of the Prieſts.

Ver. 5. *And David anſwered the Prieſt, and ſaid unto him, of a truth Women have been kept from us about theſe three days, ſince I came out.*] As many Days as the LORD himſelf required for the ſanctifying of the People, when he appeared on Mount *Sinai*, at the giving of the Law, *Exod.* xix. 15.

And the Veſſels of the young Men.] That is, *their Bodies:* So the Word *Keli* here ſignifies, as σκεῦος doth in 1 *Tim.* iv. 4.

Are holy.] That is, ſeparated from Women.

And the Bread is in a manner common.] He adds, that he need not ſcruple to give them the hallowed Bread; for it was not ſo holy as when it was upon the Table of the LORD: But became, in a manner, or in ſome part, common Bread; being now the Food not only of the Prieſt, but of his whole Family.

Yea, tho' it were ſanctified this day in the Veſſel.] The marginal Tranſlation is more plain, *eſpecially when there was other that day ſanctified in the Veſſel.* He means new Bread was ſet upon the Table of the LORD: So that no wrong was done to him. By the *Veſſel* is meant, the Diſh on which the Bread was placed, mentioned *Exod.* xxv. 29.

Ver. 6. *So the Prieſt gave him hallowed Bread; for there was no Bread there but the Shew-bread, that was taken from before the LORD, to put hot Bread in the day that it was taken away.*] In this neither *Abimelech* nor *David* committed any Sin: For invincible Neceſſity diſpenſed with all theſe ritual Laws; as the *Jews* themſelves confeſs. Particularly *R. Levi*, who ſaith in a great Famine, they might eat an Aſs's Head, which was an unclean Creature. And they juſtify this by the Words of the Law, *Levit.* xviii. 5. *he ſhall live in them*; not, He ſhall die in them. From whence they gather, that in danger of Life ſuch Laws were not to be obſerved. And ſo *Procopius Gazæus* obſerves, that wiſe Men among the ancient People of God, had leſs regard to theſe bodily Precepts of the Law: And that *Abiathar* in granting leave to *David* and his Men to eat of the Pontifical Bread, *pluſquam vulgus ſapiebat*, was much wiſer than the vulgar People. He calls him *Abiathar*, not *Ahimelech*, who granted this Indulgence; for ſo doth our bleſſed Saviour, *Mark* ii. 26. and there is a learned Friend of mine, who hath a *Diſſertation* ready for the Preſs, to prove that *Abiathar* was at this time High-Prieſt. Tho' it is commonly thought he was only the *Sagan*, as the *Jews* in later times call him who was the High-Prieſt's Vicar: And upon that account was a ſecondary High-Prieſt; tho' that Name of High-Prieſt did not belong to *Abiathar* in the higheſt Senſe. And beſides this, there is no Incongruity in ſaying, That was done *in the days of Abiathar the High-Prieſt* (as our Saviour ſpeaks) which was done in *Abiathar*'s days, tho' done ſomewhat before he came to the High-Prieſthood. As things may be ſaid to have been done in the days of *Henry* VIII. or any other King of *England*, which came to paſs before he began to reign.

Ver. 7. *Now a certain Man of the Servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the LORD.*] It is not to be imagined, that he was detained here by Force and Conſtraint: But by ſome Vow he had upon him; or other Religious Performance, to which he had obliged himſelf.

And his Name was Doeg, an Edomite.] His native Country was *Edom:* But he was proſelyted to the *Jewiſh* Religion.

The chiefeſt of the Herdſmen that belonged unto Saul.] The *Hebrew* Word *Abir* ſignifies a *potent Man* or Prince, and is ſometimes attributed to God. And therefore here ſignifies, That he was ſet over all the Herdſmen, as their Inſpector and Governor. Such there were in *Syria*, as *Bochartus* obſerves, out of *Diodorus Siculus*; who mentions one that was προεστὼς τῶν βασιλικῶν κτηνῶν, *pecoris regii præfectus.* And ſo the *Targum* and *Kimchi*, and others, here tranſlate it.

Ver. 8. *And David ſaid unto Ahimelech, Is there not here under thy hand either Spear or Sword? for I have not brought my Sword, nor any Weapon with me.*] He left them all behind, that he might the better conceal himſelf, and paſs for a private Man.

Becauſe the King's Buſineſs required haſte.] But he pretended to *Ahimelech*, it was becauſe he had

had not time to go to his Houſe: The King preſſing him immediately to be gone about his Buſineſs.

Ver. 9. *And the Prieſt ſaid, The Sword of Goliath the Philiſtine, whom thou ſleweſt in the Valley of Elah, behold it is here wrapt up in a Cloth behind the Ephod.*] Behind the place where the Garments of the Prieſts were laid up: Of which the *Ephod* and its Appurtenances were the chief.

If thou wilt take that, take it; for there is no other ſave that here. And David ſaid, There is none like unto that, give it me.] Which he thought he might uſe, tho' it had been laid up in God's Treaſury, as a Monument of his wonderful Mercy: Becauſe he was in great Neceſſity to provide for his own Defence.

Ver. 10. *And David aroſe and fled that day, for fear of Saul.*] Out of the Country of *Iſrael.*

And went to Achiſh the King of Gath.] A miſerable Condition! to be forced to flee to thoſe for Protection, who, he had reaſon to think, were his bitter Enemies. For this was the City of *Goliath* whom he had ſlain; and whoſe Sword he had now about him. But perhaps he thought he ſhould not be known; or he knew *Achiſh* to be a very generous Perſon; or being now in Diſgrace with *Saul*, he thought the *Philiſtines* might take him for *Saul*'s Enemy, and engage with them againſt him. Thus *Themiſtocles* being baniſhed his own Country, fled firſt to *Admetus* the King of the *Moloſſians*, with whom he had been at enmity, and then to the King of *Perſia.*

Ver. 11. *And the Servants of Achiſh ſaid unto him, Is not this David the King of the Land?*] Either they meant a chief Commander in *Iſrael*, who was reſpected as the King: Or they had heard of his being deſigned to be King inſtead of *Saul*, which made him perſecute him.

Did they not ſing of him one to another, in Dances, ſaying, Saul hath ſlain his thouſands, and David his ten thouſands?] By this it appears, they had good Information of what was done in the Land of *Iſrael:* And ſo might know what was reported, that *Samuel* had anointed him to be their King.

Ver. 12. *And David laid up theſe Words in his Heart, and was ſore afraid of Achiſh King of Gath.*] This diſcourſe deeply affected him; and made him think himſelf not ſafe there.

Ver. 13. *And he changed his Behaviour before them, and feigned himſelf mad in their hands, and ſcrabbled on the Doors of the Gates, and let the Spittle fall down upon his Beard.*] He counterfeited himſelf to be out of his Wits; or to be a Fool, who never had any. For he wrote upon the Gates, and ſlavered, as Fools are wont to do.

Ver. 14. *And Achiſh ſaid unto his Servant, Lo, the Man is mad, wherefore have ye brought him unto me?*] Some of the Courtiers had preſented him unto the King: Who ſeeing him a goodly Perſon, had liſted him, perhaps, as an Officer in his Service.

Ver. 15. *Have I need of mad Men, that ye have brought this Fellow to play the Madman in my preſence? ſhall this Fellow come into my Houſe?*] He would not have his Court troubled with Fools or Madmen. For it is likely he did not believe this to be *David*; or if he was, he was now become good for nothing: And come out of his own Country, becauſe he was beſide himſelf.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *DAVID therefore departed thence, and eſcaped to the Cave of Adullam.*] Which was a Strong-hold (1 *Chron.* xi. 13.) in the Tribe of *Judah* (*Joſh.* xv. 35.) unto which Tribe he belonging, might hope to find ſome Friends there.

And when his Brethren and all his Father's Houſe heard it, they went down thither to him.] Either to comfort him; or to ſecure themſelves from the Fury of *Saul:* Who they thought might probably wreck his Hatred to *David* upon them.

Ver. 2. *And every one that was in Diſtreſs.*] All needy People, pinched with want, who heard that *David* was there.

And every one that was in debt.] Perhaps *David* might not know they were ſuch Perſons: Or if he did, intended not to protect them from their Creditors, if they had been able to pay them. It was the manner in ancient times, among the *Gauls*, for thoſe who were in Debt, or oppreſſed, to betake themſelves to the Service of ſome great Men: By whom, as they were maintained, ſo they devoted themſelves to live and die with them. Thus *Cæſar* tells us, *Lib.* 6. de Bello Gall. Cap. 13. *Plerique cùm aut ære alieno aut magnitudine tributorum, aut injuria potentiorum premantur: ſeſe in ſervitutem dicant nobilibus*, &c. And theſe they called *Soldurii:* And the Men that came to *David* ſeem to have been ſuch, as reſolved to live and die with him.

And every one that was diſcontented.] In the *Hebrew*, *bitter of Soul*; that is, lay under ſore Afflictions.

Gathered themſelves unto him, and he became a Captain over them.] They liſted themſelves under him, as their Commander: Who was forced to take this courſe in his own Defence, that he might not be ſuddenly ſurprized. But *Grotius* obſerves, Lib. 1. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 4. Sect. 6. that *David* did not entertain theſe Men into his Service, till in the Judgment of *Jonathan*, and by many other certain Arguments, his Life appeared to be in imminent danger. And then he neither aſſaulted any City, nor ſought for an occaſion to fight: but avoided it, by ſeeking for lurking Places, ſometimes in the Deſarts, ſometimes among ſtrange People; always taking care not to hurt his Countrymen.

And there were with him about four hundred Men.] Among whom, I ſuppoſe, his own Kindred were the chief.

Ver. 3. *And David went thence to Mizpeh of Moab.*] For the *Moabites* were at difference with *Saul*, xiv. 47.

And he ſaid unto the King of Moab, Let my Father and my Mother, I pray thee, come forth, and be with you.] He the rather hoped for this Kindneſs to be ſhown to his aged Parents

(who were not able to travel up and down, as he was likely to do) becauſe he was deſcended from a *Moabite*, by the Mother's ſide: Eſpecially if *Ruth* the *Moabiteſs* were of the Royal Family, as the *Jews* imagine.

Till I know what God will do with me.] Who, he doubted not, would make good his Word to him.

Ver. 4. *And he brought them before the King of Moab, and they dwelt with him, all the time that David was in the Hold.*] All the time of his Exile; when he wandered here and there, and had no certain place of Abode: Being haunted by *Saul* from place to place; ſeldom ſuffering him to reſt. So *Pelicanus* expounds the *Hebrew* word *Metzudah:* Which ſignifies alſo a *Strong-hold.*

Ver. 5. *And the Prophet Gad.*] Who being bred under *Samuel*, and knowing he had anointed *David* to be King, reſolved to accompany him in his Baniſhment: Which was a great comfort to him.

Said unto David, abide not in the Hold.] This doth not ſignify any particular ſtrong Place, where he now was: But in general, all thoſe places where he thought himſelf ſecure, in the neighbouring Countries.

Depart, and get thee into the Land of Judah.] Where he would have him publickly appear; as one that confided in God, and in his own Innocence.

Then David departed, and came into the Foreſt of Hereth.] Where there were many ſecret lurking places: Unto which he might upon occaſion reſort.

Ver. 6. *And when Saul heard that David was diſcovered, and the Men that were with him.*] He was not ſo well beloved, as to have early Intelligence of *David*'s liſting Men: Which made him reproach thoſe that attended him in the following Verſe.

Now Saul abode in Gibeah, under a Tree in Ramah.] Or, in an *high place*, as *Ramah* ſignifies. Otherwiſe the firſt Words muſt be interpreted *near Gibeah*; or in the Territories of *Gibeah.*

Having his Spear in his hand.] By his *Spear* is to be underſtood his *Scepter*, according to the Phraſe of thoſe times. For ſo *Juſtin* (Lib. xliii. Cap. 3.) ſpeaking of the firſt times of the *Romans* (which was about the Reign of *Saul*) ſaith, *Per ea adhuc tempora, Regis haſtas pro diademate habebant, quas Græci ſceptra dixere*, &c. 'In thoſe days, Kings hitherto had *Spears* as 'Signs of Royal Authority: Which the *Greeks* 'call *Scepters.* For in the beginning of things, 'the Ancients worſhipped Spears for immortal 'Gods. In memory of which Religion, Spears 'are ſtill added to the Images of the Gods.' And thus the Kings of *Argos* (as *Pauſanias* tells us, in his *Bœotica*) called their Scepters, Spears.

And all his Servants were ſtanding about him.] His uſual Guards, and the principal Officers of his Court.

Ver. 7. *Then Saul ſaid unto his Servants that ſtood about him, Hear now ye Benjamites.*] Ye Men of my own Tribe: of whom he ſeems to ſpeak with diſdain.

Will the Son of Jeſſe give every one of you Fields and Vineyards, and make you all Captains of thouſands and Captains of hundreds?] Beſtow Preferment upon them all, more or leſs; if not Lands of Inheritance. For ſo the Words are to be tranſlated, *give you Fields*, &c. or *make you Captains*, &c.

Ver. 8. *That all of you have conſpired againſt me.*] To conceal *David*'s Deſigns from him, if not to aſſiſt him in them. The Spirit of Jealouſy always poſſeſſes thoſe who are engaged in ſuch bloody Deſigns, as he had againſt *David:* Which all good Men abhorred.

And there is none of you that ſhows me, my Son hath made a League with the Son of Jeſſe; and there is none of you that is ſorry for me.] He ſuſpected *Jonathan* had made a League with *David*; but did not certainly know it, much leſs what it was: And was very much vexed, that none were ſollicitous enough for him (ſo the word ſignifies, as *De Dieu* obſerves, which we tranſlate *ſorry for him*) to make a Diſcovery of it to him.

Or ſhew me, that my Son hath ſtirred up my Servant againſt me, to lie in wait as at this day.] His Jealouſy carried him ſo far, as to make him ſuſpect, *Jonathan* not only ſided with *David*; but had encouraged him to take up Arms, and to appear openly, as having many Friends and Partakers: For ſince he threw the Javelin at *Jonathan*, it is likely he abſented himſelf from Court; or did not appear ſo frequently; or looked diſcontented, when he came into his Preſence.

Ver. 9. *Then anſwered Doeg the Edomite, which was over the Servants of Saul.*] The reſt being ſilent, he undertook to inform the King, who were falſe unto him: Or being a forward Man, and hated *David*, prevented all the reſt of his Fellow-Servants.

And ſaid, I ſaw the Son of Jeſſe.] He ſpeaks as contemptibly of him, as his Maſter had lately been wont to do; not vouchſafing to call him by his Name, xx. 27, 30.

Coming to Nob, to Ahimelech, the Son of Ahitub.] He repreſents him as if he came to take Advice of *Ahimelech*, and lay his Deſigns accordingly.

Ver. 10. *And he enquired of the LORD for him.*] Some think *Doeg* in this ſlandered *Ahimelech*, becauſe we read nothing of it; and *David* ſpeaks of his falſe Tongue: But this may as well be true, as that which follows it. And *Doeg*'s Wickedneſs conſiſted in repreſenting things wrong: Concealing the Truth, and ſaying nothing of *David*'s Pretences to *Ahimelech*; but inſinuating as if he were in a Plot with *David* againſt the King. Whereas, the good Man was made to believe, that *David* was going about the King's Buſineſs, and upon that account aſſiſted him.

And gave him Victuals, and gave him the Sword of Goliath the Philiſtine.] And very innocently, as he very well knew: But repreſented theſe as Acts, whereby he abetted *David* in his Conſpiracy: Which are the Lyes of which *David* accuſes him; nothing being farther from the Truth.

Ver. 11. *And the King ſent to call Ahimelech the Son of Ahitub, and all his Father's Houſe, the Prieſts that were in Nob: and they came all of them to the King.*] By *his Father's Houſe* is meant all the Houſe of *Eli:* Whom God had threatned to cut off.

Ver. 12. *And Saul said, Hear now thou Son of Ahitub.*] He shows not the least respect to him, but rather the utmost Contempt: Calling him in his Rage, *the Son of Ahitub.*

And he answered, Here am I, my Lord.] But he did not forget his respect unto the King.

Ver. 13. *And Saul said unto him, Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the Son of Jesse? in that thou hast given him Bread, and a Sword, and hast enquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day.*] A very rash Charge, unless there had been Proof, that he did these things with an evil intent, which there was not.

Ver. 14. *Then Ahimelech answered and said, And who is so faithful among all thy Servants as David, which is the King's Son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honourable in thy House?*] The Oracle was consulted only upon publick Occasions, not for any private Business. And therefore the Sense of *Ahimelech*'s Apology for himself is this: Since *David* was held by all to be a most Loyal Subject, as well as a Person of great Honour, and in high Favour with the King, having married his Daughter; what could he think but that *David* was sent by the King (as he said he was) upon some Business of publick concern; to command his Forces, suppose (as he had often done) in some Expedition against his Enemies? And doubting what course to take, came to advise with God, as he had done heretofore. For this was not the first time (as he saith in the next Verse) that he had consulted the Divine Majesty for him, in difficult Cases, concerning the good of the Kingdom.

Ver. 15. *Did I then begin to enquire of God for him?*] He desired that might not be an Argument against him; for he had theretofore done the same thing without any imputation of Guilt.

Be it far from me.] That which he was charged withal; Conspiracy against the King, *ver.* 13.

Let not the King impute any thing to his Servant, or to his Father's House; for thy Servant knew nothing of all this, more or less.] If there was any bad design, he pleads perfect Ignorance of it.

Ver. 16. *And the King said unto him, Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou and thy Father's House.*] A mad Resolution! For what had the rest of the Priests done, to deserve such a bloody Execution?

Ver. 17. *And the King said unto the Footmen that stood about him.*] In the *Hebrew* it is, *to the Runners:* That is, to those who used to go before him, and to follow him when he went abroad.

Turn and slay the Priests of the LORD, because their hand is also with David; and because they knew when he fled, and did not shew it me.] Such was the Power their Kings exercised (as *Samuel* told them they would) that without a formal Process against a Man accused of a Crime, they commanded him to be cut off at their pleasure.

But the Servants of the King would not put forth their hand to fall upon the Priests of the LORD.] Such was their Reverence to God and Religion in ancient Times: Which kept them in their Wars from doing any hurt to the Priests of their Enemies, as *Grotius* observes, *Lib.* 3. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 11. Sect. 10. And therefore *Theodoret* here justly praises the Guards of *Saul*, that they chose rather to expose themselves to the inraged Fury of *Saul*, than execute it upon the Priests of God.

Ver. 18. *And the King said to Doeg, Turn thou and fall upon the Priests.*] He who was the Informer, he made also his Executioner.

And Doeg the Edomite turned and fell upon the Priests, and slew that day eighty five Persons.] Kings never want some to execute their Commands, tho' never so bloody. *Saul* was little better than a Mad-man; and yet had those at his beck who would do as he bid them, because he was their King. It was excellently therefore said by *Justin Martyr*, Εὐχόμεθα τῆς βασιλεῖς καὶ ἀρχοντας, μετὰ τῆς βασιλικῆς δυνάμεως, καὶ σώφρονα τὸν λογισμὸν ἔχοντας εὑρεθῆναι: *Let us pray that Kings and Rulers, together with a Royal Power, may be found having a sober Mind.*

That did wear a Linen Ephod.] i. e. ministred unto God: But we are not to understand by the *Ephod* such a Garment as the High-Priest wore, for this is distinguished from that by the matter of it, which was merely *Linen:* And nothing else but a Linen Robe, which was an honourable kind of Garment, which others who were not Priests were permitted to wear; as I observed before upon *Chap.* ii. *ver.* 18. and see *Braunius*, Lib. 2. *de Vestitu Hebr. sacr.* Cap. 6.

Ver. 19. *And Nob, the City of the Priests, smote he with the edge of the Sword, both Man, and Woman, and Suckling, and Oxen, and Asses, and Sheep, with the edge of the Sword.*] His Fury transported him to deal worse with them than he did with the *Amalekites:* Some of whom he spared, tho' God commanded him to destroy them all. But he did this to terrify all the *Israelites* from giving the least Assistance to *David*; and make them forward to come and tell him, if they knew where he was. In all this was fulfilled the Word of the LORD against the House of *Eli* by the Prophet, in the *second* Chapter of this Book: And by *Samuel* when he was a Child, in the *third* Chapter. *Abarbinel* thinks that at this time the *Gibeonites* were slain; upon which account there was a sore Famine in the Days of *David*. For *Josephus* saith, *Lib.* 6. *Cap.* 14. that *Doeg* slew in all three hundred and eighty five Persons: Taking some Men as wicked as himself unto his Assistance.

Ver. 20. *And one of the Sons of Ahimelech, the Son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David.*] For he could be safe no where else.

Ver. 21. *And Abiathar shewed David that Saul had slain the LORD's Priests.*] Which confirmed *David* in his Belief, of the Hatred he bare him, and his Resolution to destroy him.

Ver. 22. *And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul.*] For he knew he was none of his Friend, and a Man that loved Mischief.

Ver. 23. *Abide thou with me; fear not: for he that seeketh my Life, seeketh thy Life.*] He comforts him with the Assurance, that he would take as much care of him, as of himself.

But

But with me thou ſhalt be in ſafeguard.] For he was ſure God would make good his Promiſe of protecting him, 'till he was made King of *Iſrael.*

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *THEN they told David, ſaying, The Philiſtines fight againſt Keilah.*] Or, *they had told David*, &c. For this was done before *Abiathar* came to him to tell him of the Slaughter of the Prieſts, *ver.* 6. where it is ſaid he *fled to David to Keilah.* Which was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 44. Which the *Philiſtines* now beſieged: being encouraged thereunto, perhaps, by the News they heard that *David* was forced to flee his Country.

And they rob the threſhing Floor.] Which was commonly without their Cities; for the Convenience of Wind, to ſeparate the Chaff from the Corn. See *Ruth* iii. 2, 15.

Ver. 2. *And David enquired of the LORD.*] It is probable by the Prophet *Gad*, who we read before (xxii. 5.) was now with him. For there is no mention yet of *Abiathar*'s having the *Ephod:* Tho' ſome think it is mentioned, *ver.* 6. to ſhow how *David* enquired of God.

Shall I go and ſmite theſe Philiſtines? and the LORD ſaid unto David, Go and ſmite the Philiſtines and ſave Keilah.] A remarkable Inſtance of *David*'s Love to his Country: Unto which he did not become an Enemy, when he was baniſhed from it.

Ver. 3. *And David's Men ſaid unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah.*] In that part of the Country where they then were.

How much more then if we come to Keilah, againſt the Armies of the Philiſtines?] His Men argued againſt this Expedition, becauſe they did not think themſelves ſafe in their own Country, where they hoped they had ſome Friends: And therefore thought they ſhould be in greater Danger, if they made the *Philiſtines* their Enemies.

Ver. 4. *Then David enquired of the LORD yet again.*] Not for his own Satisfaction, but for theirs: As we read in the Hiſtory of *Gideon*, that he did.

And the LORD anſwered him and ſaid, Ariſe.] Make no delay.

Go down to Keilah, for I will deliver the Philiſtines into thy hand.] Here he expreſsly aſſures him of Victory.

Ver. 5. *So David and his Men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philiſtines, and brought away their Cattle, and ſmote them with a great Slaughter. So David ſaved the Inhabitants of Keilah.*] He ſeems to have purſued the *Philiſtines* to their own Country: From whence he brought their Cattle. Or elſe we muſt ſuppoſe theſe Cattle were the Booty they had among the *Iſraelites:* Which is not ſo probable, becauſe then *David* would have reſtored them to their Owners.

Ver. 6. *And it came to paſs that when Abiathar, the Son of Ahimelech, fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an Ephod in his hand.*] Or rather, *with the Ephod.* For he being left, I ſuppoſe, to keep the Sanctuary, while his Father and the reſt of the Prieſts went to wait upon *Saul*, as ſoon as he heard of their Slaughter, took this principal Veſtment of the High-Prieſt, *viz. the Ephod*, unto which the *Urim* and *Thummim* with the Breaſt-plate were annexed, and carried it unto *David.* Unto whom he hoped to be the more acceptable, when he appeared capable to ſerve him in that high Office. And accordingly he calls upon him, *ver.* 9. to *bring hither the Ephod:* As he did afterward, xxx. 7. But the *Ephod* could do no good, without the *Urim* and *Thummim*, which were inſeparable from it. And that he ſpeaks of the High-Prieſt's *Ephod* is manifeſt, becauſe he doth not call it *Linen Ephod*, ſuch as the Prieſts wore; but the *Ephod.* The only Difficulty is, that *Saul* after this ſeems to have conſulted God by *Urim*, xxviii. 6. But perhaps he made a new one, in the room of that which *Abiathar* carried away: But God would not own it, nor any other way give him Advice. *Aben Ezra* indeed here notes, that there wants that which they call the *He Hajediah*, that is, the demonſtrative Particle *He*, to ſhow that he means the High-Prieſt's *Ephod*, and therefore it was only *a Linen Ephod.* Which led him into this abſurd Opinion, that in ſome caſes God anſwered without *Urim* and *Thummim*; being conſulted merely by an *Ephod.*

Ver. 7. *And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah.*] So remarkable an Action could not but come preſently to *Saul*'s ears; who was not at all mollified by it, but rather more reſolutely bent upon *David's* Deſtruction.

And Saul ſaid, God hath delivered him into my hand, for he is ſhut in, by entring into a Town that hath Gates and Bars.] The Men of *Keilah* could not but open their Gates to their Deliverer; but *Saul* fancied that he ſought for ſafety in a place, that would only ſecure him from runing away from him.

Ver. 8. *And Saul called all the People together to war.*] Raiſed a great Army.

To go down to Keilah to beſiege David and his Men.] He pretended, it is likely, he would go, and be avenged of the *Philiſtines:* But his inward Intention was to go againſt *David.*

Ver. 9. *And David knew that Saul ſecretly practiſed miſchief againſt him.*] This intimates that *Saul* did not openly declare, when he raiſed his Army, he would beſiege *Keilah*; but made a ſhew of ſome other deſign.

And he ſaid to Abiathar the Prieſt, Bring hither the Ephod.] Which no doubt he put on: Otherwiſe he could not have enquired of the LORD by it.

Ver. 10. *Then ſaid David, O LORD God of Iſrael, thy Servant hath certainly heard that Saul ſeeks to come to Keilah, to deſtroy the City for my ſake.*] Some think that *David* put on the *Ephod*, and then aſked the LORD's Advice: But that is a great Miſtake; for the High-Prieſt was the Perſon appointed by God, to aſk Counſel of him for the ſupreme Governour, *Numb.* xxvii. 21. Therefore *David* ſpake theſe Words by the Mouth of *Abiathar.*

Ver. 11. *Will the Men of Keilah deliver me into his hands? will Saul come down, as thy Servant hath heard: O LORD God of Iſrael, I beſeech thee, tell thy Servant. And the LORD ſaid,*

He will come down.] He seems to have been in a great Fright, and some confusion of Spirit, when he spake these Words: Which made him not only ask two things together (which the *Jews* say was not usual) but also out of due Order. For the first Question should have been, *Will Saul come down?* and then the other should have followed, *Will they deliver me into his hand?* God therefore put him into the right Method, by answering to the last Question first: As the *Jewish* Doctors observe in the *Gemara* of the *Codex Joma*.

Ver. 12. *Then said David, Will the Men of Keilah deliver me and my Men into the hand of Saul?*] Hence the *Talmudists* gather, that he who asked out of order, was bound to ask again.

And the LORD said, They will deliver thee.] He saw the base Disposition of their Hearts, whatsoever Gratitude they pretended to *David* for their Deliverance. For that's a rare Virtue; not to be found in those, in whom Self-love prevails. It is not easy to be resolved, how they enquired of God, the Tabernacle not being there. It is likely *David* had some Tent, wheresoever he was, wherein he was wont to pray to God, and meditate his Praises, and there God was pleased to answer him.

Ver. 13. *Then David and his Men, which were about six hundred.*] His Forces were increased two hundred, since the famous Victory over the *Philistines*, at *Keilah*.

Arose, and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go.] Sometimes to one place, sometimes to another: according as they found any hope of Safety. So *Hackspan* interprets this Phrase in his *Disputationes*, p. 403.

And it was told Saul, that David was escaped from Keilah.] Now he began to have better Intelligence of *David*'s Motions; since the Slaughter at *Nob*: Which made the People afraid to fall under his Displeasure.

And he forbore to go forth.] Not knowing as yet where to find him.

Ver. 14. *And David abode in the Wilderness, in strong Holds: and remained in a Mountain, in the Wilderness of Ziph.*] Where it was not easy to come at him.

And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand.] As he foolishly fancied he would (*ver.* 7.) tho' God very manifestly had forsaken him, and was with *David*.

Ver. 15. *And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his Life.*] That he was restless in his Endeavours to destroy him.

And David was in the Wilderness of Ziph, in a Wood.] Where he could better defend himself, than in an open Country.

Ver. 16. *And Jonathan, Saul's Son, arose and went to David into the Wood.*] Being a very private Place, they had, it is likely, by some Intelligence which passed between them, appointed a meeting there.

And strengthened his hand in God.] In his Promise to him. What *Hecuba* saith in *Euripides*, is most true in this Friend of *David*'s, and in *Saul* his Father.

Ὁ μὲν πονηρὸς οὐδὲν ἄλλο πλὴν κακος·
Ὁ δ' ἐσθλός, εσθλός· οὐδὲ συμφορᾶς ὑπὸ
Φῦσιν διέφθειρ' ἀλλὰ χρηςὸς ἐς' ἀεί.

A bad Man is nothing else but bad. But a good Man is still good: Nor because of any Calamity doth he lose his Nature; but is always good.

Ver. 17. *And he said, Fear not, for the hand of Saul my Father shall not find thee: and thou shalt be King over Israel, and I will be next unto thee.*] He doth not mean, that he would succeed him in his Throne: But be the principal Person in the Kingdom, next to *David*. Which, I suppose, had been agreed between them.

And that also Saul my Father knoweth.] For he remembred what *Samuel* told him, xv. 28. and by his wonderful Successes concluded he was the Person of whom *Samuel* spake.

Ver. 18. *And they two made a Covenant before the LORD.*] Solemnly renewed the Covenant, which they had formerly made. This is the third time that we read of their making a Covenant. See xviii. 3. xx. 16. In none of which there is any mention of a Sacrifice, no more than there is in the Covenant between *David* and the Elders of the People, 2 *Sam.* v. 3. and between *Solomon* and *Hiram*, 1 *Kings* v. 12. which is an Argument that eating together of a Sacrifice, or going between the parts of a Sacrifice, was not essential to the making a Covenant: Tho' it must be acknowledged, the Rite was so ancient of dividing the Parts of the Sacrifice, that hence is the Phrase which is so frequent in Scripture of *cutting a Covenant*, *i. e.* entering into it.

And David abode in the Wood, and Jonathan went to his House.] For he did not accompany his Father in his search after *David*.

Ver. 19. *Then came up the Ziphites to Saul to Gibeah, and said, Doth not David hide himself with us in the Strong-hold in the Wood, in the Hill of Hachilah, which is in the south of Jeshimon?*] These People were of the Tribe of *Judah*; among whom *David* thought himself the safer, because he was of the same Tribe. But they were afraid to be served as those at *Nob*: Which made them come and discover the Place where he was, very particularly and precisely.

Ver. 20. *Now therefore, O King, come down according to all the desire of thy Soul to come down.*] Which they knew was very great.

And our part shall be to deliver him into the King's hand.] For being Neighbours to it, they knew all the Avenues of the Wood where he was; and how to come at him.

Ver. 21. *And Saul said, Blessed are ye of the LORD, for ye have compassion on me.*] This signifies, that the Generality of People did not favour him in his Design: Which made him so joyfully receive the *Ziphites* Intelligence.

Ver. 22. *Go, I pray you, and prepare ye.*] Dispose all things so, that I may take him.

And know and see his place, where his haunt is.] Inform themselves perfectly, in what Hill, or Wood, or Cave he hid himself.

And who hath ſeen him.] He would have them certainly informed, that he might not go after him in vain.

For I am told he dealeth very ſubtilly.] So that it was not eaſy to catch him.

Ver. 23. *See therefore and take knowledge of all the lurking Places, where he hideth himſelf, and come to me again with the certainty, and I will go with you.*] He ſeems very diffident, having been ſo oft diſappointed: And by this means gave *David* time to get Intelligence, and remove to another place.

And it ſhall come to paſs, that if he be in the Land, I will ſearch him out through all the thouſands of Judah.] Their Tribes were divided into Thouſands (ſee *Judges* vi. 15.) among ſome of whom he ſuppoſed he would lurk: And he would not ceaſe ſearching for him till he found him.

Ver. 24. *And they aroſe and went to Ziph before Saul.*] As he had directed them, *ver.* 22.

But David and his Men were in the Wilderneſs of Maon, in the Plain on the South of Jeſhimon.] Having heard what the *Ziphites* had undertaken, he diſappointed their Deſign, by going into another Place, with which, it is likely, they were not ſo well acquainted. For *Maon* was a diſtinct Wilderneſs from *Ziph:* Tho' both in the Tribe of *Judah.*

Ver. 25. *Saul alſo and his Men went to ſeek him.*] Hearing, I ſuppoſe, by the *Ziphites*, whither he was gone.

And they told David.] He alſo had Intelligence brought him, that *Saul* was coming againſt him.

Therefore he came down into a Rock.] Some craggy Place.

And abode in the Wilderneſs of Maon.] Not thinking himſelf ſafe there, he went into another part of the ſame Wilderneſs.

And when Saul heard that, he purſued after David in the Wilderneſs of Maon.] So that he came to the very Place where he was.

Ver. 26. *And Saul went on this ſide of the Mountain, and David and his Men on that ſide of the Mountain: and David made haſte to get away for fear of Saul; for Saul and his Men compaſſed David and his Men round about to take them.*] *Saul's* Forces being far more numerous, he divided them into ſeveral Parties; who marching ſeveral ways, were about to encompaſs the whole Mountain: So that it ſhould be impoſſible for *David* to eſcape them. Who therefore made haſte to get away before he was quite ſurrounded.

Ver. 27. *But there came a Meſſenger unto Saul, ſaying, Haſte thee and come: for the Philiſtines have invaded the Land.*] A marvellous Providence of God, who ſtirred them up at this very time to make an Irruption into the Land of *Iſrael*, for the Preſervation of *David* when he was in extreme Danger.

Ver. 28. *Wherefore Saul returned from following after David, and went againſt the Philiſtines.*] It was very probable *David* wou'd in a little time have fallen into his hands, had not the Meſſenger, who, I ſuppoſe, was ſent by his Council, deſired him with all ſpeed to come and oppoſe the *Philiſtines*, who were the moſt dangerous Enemy.

Therefore they called the Name of that place Sela-hamah-le-koth.] That is, *the Rock of Diviſions.* Either becauſe *Saul* was diſtracted here between two Counſels, whether to purſue *David*, or go immediately againſt the *Philiſtines*: Or becauſe God divided *Saul* from *David*; when he was coming up cloſe unto him.

Ver. 29. *And David went up from thence, and dwelt in the Strong-holds at En-gedi.*] A place in the Tribe of *Judah*, not far from the dead Sea; which *Solomon* in his Song celebrates for the famous Vineyards which were there. And St. *Hierom* and *Euſebius* ſay there was excellent Balm at *En-gedi*: From which the Wilderneſs near it took its name, where *David* found ſecure lurking Places.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs when Saul was returned from following the Philiſtines.*] Who either retreated upon *Saul's* March towards them; or he drove them out of the Land.

That it was told him, ſaying, Behold, David is in the Wilderneſs of En-gedi.] The very place was not told him where *David* was; but only in general that he was in that Wilderneſs.

Ver. 2. *Then Saul took three thouſand choſen Men out of all Iſrael.*] Men of Valour; and whom he thought he might truſt.

And went to ſeek David and his Men upon the Rocks of the wild Goats.] In craggy and buſhy Places, where none but wild Goats lived; but he imagined *David* might there skulk: And therefore reſolved to be at the pains of ſearching for him there.

Ver. 3. *And he came to the Sheep-coats by the way, where there was a Cave.*] In which the Sheep reſted in the Heat of the Day. Unto which Place *David* was directed by God's Guidance: For *Saul* would not ſuſpect that he would abide in the high way unto thoſe Rocks; where he was going to look for him.

And Saul went in to cover his Feet.] See upon *Judges* iii. 24.

And David and his Men remained in the ſides of the Cave.] Where they could ſee him by the Light at the entrance of it: But he could not ſee them, becauſe it was dark in the remote parts of it. Some of theſe Caves were exceeding large: *Strabo* in his Sixteenth Book mentions one that would contain four thouſand Men.

Ver. 4. *And the Men of David ſaid unto him, Behold the day of which the* LORD *ſaid unto thee; Behold, I will deliver thine Enemy into thy hand, that thou mayſt do to him, as ſhall ſeem good unto thee.*] We do not read any where that God made a Promiſe to deliver *Saul* into *David's* hand: But ſo they interpreted what *Samuel* had ſaid, that God would take the Kingdom from *Saul* and give it to *David.* And they having a deſire to return to their own Habitations, and likewiſe to have Preferment under *David*, deſired him to make uſe of the Opportunity which now preſented it ſelf of deſtroying his Enemy, and advancing himſelf.

Then

Then David arose, and cut off the Skirt of Saul's Robe privately.] Which he might easily do, if he were asleep: As that Phrase may be interpreted, *he went in to cover his Feet.* This Robe was long, coming down to the Feet: As the *Hebrew* Word *Meli* signifies.

Ver. 5. *And it came to pass, that afterwards David's Heart smote him.*] He was inwardly troubled.

Because he had cut off Saul's Skirt.] For it looked like an Indignity unto a Prince, to have his Royal Robe disfigured. *Tantam intelligebat personæ illius sanctitudinem* (as *Grotius* speaks) such he understood was the Sacredness of his Person. And that very deservedly; for the supreme Powers being obnoxious to many Men's Hatred, ought to be secured in the discharge of their Office. Of which the *Romans* took care in the very *Tribunes* of the People, that they should be ἄσυλοι, inviolable, L. 1. *de Jure B. & P.* Cap. 4. Sect. 7.

Ver. 6. *And he said unto his Men.*] When he returned unto them, and they grew angry, he had only cut off the Skirt of his Robe, and not killed him.

The LORD forbid that I should do this thing.] Which they desired.

Unto my Master.] For I must own him, as long as he is alive, to be my Lord and Master; unto whom I am bound to be faithful.

The LORD's Anointed.] Whom God hath appointed to be King as long as he lives.

To stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the Anointed of the LORD.] Set up by God; who alone could throw him down. For he was as much constituted King by God while he lived, as *David* was after his Death. And his *anointing* made his Person sacred: For the very Heathens look'd upon their Kings, as holding the Place of God. So *Artabanus* the *Persian* (as *Plutarch* relates in the Life of *Themistocles*) *This is the very best of our many excellent Laws,* Τὸ τιμᾶν βασιλέα καὶ προσκυνεῖν ὡς εἰκόνα Θεοῦ τὰ παυλασώζοντος, *That we should honour and adore our King, as the Image of God, who preserves all things.*

Ver. 7. *So David stayed his Servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul.*] Who still had a desire to kill him, tho' *David* would not: Which he hindered by his wise and pious Persuasions.

But Saul rose up out of the Cave, and went his way.] To his Camp: Which he had left, to take some Repose in the Cave; having a Guard to attend him, who stood without, while he covered his Feet within.

Ver. 8. *David also arose afterwards.*] When *Saul* was gone.

And went out of the Cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My Lord the King.] A bold Attempt to adventure to come into the Presence of such an inraged Enemy. But his Innocence and Confidence in God emboldened him, especially having so strong an Evidence to give him of his Integrity.

And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his Face to the Earth and bowed himself.] See xx. 41.

Ver. 9. *And David said unto Saul, Wherefore hearest thou Men's Words, saying, behold, David seeketh thy hurt.*] He wisely endeavours, at the Entrance of his Speech, to mollify *Saul*, by transferring all the blame of his Persecution from him, unto the Sycophants and false Accusers that were about him.

Ver. 10. *Behold, this day thy Eyes have seen that the LORD had delivered thee into my hand in the Cave.*] Out of which he followed *Saul.*

And some bad me kill thee, but my Eyes spared thee.] A Phrase for taking Pity and Compassion upon those whom we have in our power to hurt.

And I said, I will not put forth my hand against my Lord, for he is the LORD's Anointed.] He acknowledgeth him both to be his King; and appointed by God so to be.

Ver. 11. *Moreover my Father.*] So he was by the Marriage of his Daughter; and as he was supreme Governour, the Father of his Country. Or if he had not been so, yet this Word was proper to be used, that he might soften and sweeten him into more tender Usage to him.

See, yea see, the Skirt of thy Robe in my hand.] He offers him a Demonstration of the Truth of what he declared: And prays him to observe it.

For in that I cut off the Skirt of thy Robe, and killed thee not; know thou and see.] Let it convince thee.

That there is neither Evil nor Transgression in my hand.] That he had no bad design against him, nor ever attempted to do him any harm. For if he had, it had been as easy to cut his Throat, as to cut off the Skirt of his Robe.

And I have not sinned against thee, yet thou huntest my Soul, to take it.] This was a great Aggravation of *Saul*'s Guilt (which makes *David* repeat it) that he sought the Life of one, who had no way offended him, and when it was in his power, would not hurt him.

Ver. 12. *The LORD judge between me and thee; and the LORD avenge me of thee.*] If he still persisted to persecute him. But he doth not, by these Words, *avenge me of thee*, pray God to punish him for the Injuries he had done him; but only to vindicate and deliver him from his violent and unjust Persecution. So the *Hebrew* Word *Nakam* often signifies.

But my hand shall not be upon thee.] He persisted in his Resolution, not to avenge himself: But leave it to God to do him right.

Ver. 13. *As saith the Proverb of the Ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the Wicked: but my hand shall not be upon thee.*] Men may be known by their Actions. And this is, as if *David* had said, were I so bad as I am represented, I should now have shown it: But I will never have my hand in such Crimes. Or thus, it is for wicked Men to do this: But I am none of them.

Ver. 14. *After whom is the King of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue?*] He turns every Stone, as we speak, to appease *Saul*'s Rage; and tells him in conclusion, that it was below him, and a Disparagement to him to raise Armies against such a mean Person as he was.

After a dead Dog, after a Flea.] He repreſents himſelf as contemptible, as it was poſſible: that he might convince *Saul* it was not for his Honour to take ſo much pains to kill him, if he could: For what an inglorious thing was it for a King, with ſo many armed Men, to triumph over a dead Dog? As if a Lion ſhould hunt after a Flea. *Which* (as *Bochartus* gloſſes) *if it be ſought, is not eaſily found; and if it be found, is not eaſily caught; and if it be caught, is a poor Prey, eſpecially for a Prince.*

Ver. 15. *The LORD therefore be Judge, and judge between me and thee: and plead my Cauſe, and deliver me out of thy hand.*] He thought he could not repeat this too often, that as hitherto, ſo he reſolved hereafter to leave it to God to judge which of them was in the right; and not avenge himſelf. It may ſeem ſtrange that *Saul* who came with ſuch an inraged Mind to ſeek for *David*, ſhould hear him make ſo long a Speech to him with Patience, and not furiouſly fall upon him, as ſoon as he ſaw him. But we may well think, that at the firſt he was ſurprized to ſee him follow after him out of the Cave; and more aſtoniſhed to find, after a few words, that it was in *David*'s power to kill him, if he had pleaſed: Which he knew he had, by a long Perſecution of him, provoked him to do.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs, when David had made an end of ſpeaking theſe Words unto Saul, that Saul ſaid, Is this thy Voice, my Son David?*] Tho' he ſtood at ſuch a diſtance, that it is likely he could not know him by his Face; yet he very well knew his Voice.

And Saul lift up his Voice, and wept.] His Heart being mollified at preſent, by this unparallell'd Kindneſs of *David*, in ſparing his Life, when he could have taken it away.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid unto David, Thou art more righteous than I; for thou haſt rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.*] Moſt Men have their good Moods. And *Saul* now could ſcarce avoid being touched with a deep ſenſe, how very unjuſt and unkind he had been to one, who truly loved him.

Ver. 18. *And thou haſt ſhewed this day, how that thou haſt dealt well with me: foraſmuch, as when the LORD had delivered me into thy hand, thou killedſt me not.*] The Demonſtration of his Kindneſs was ſo clear, that he could not but acknowledge it, and be affected with it.

Ver. 19. *For if a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go well away?*] i. e. He will certainly deſtroy him, to ſave himſelf. The Kindneſs of *David* therefore was unuſual, and without Example.

Wherefore the LORD reward thee good, for that thou haſt done unto me this day.] Herein *David* had imitated God; who doth good to the Evil: From whom, *Saul* prays *David* might receive his Reward for the good done to him.

Ver. 20. *And now I know well, that thou ſhalt ſurely be King, and that the Kingdom of Iſrael ſhall be eſtabliſhed in thy hand.*] Theſe wonderful Providences of God over *David*, and *David*'s no leſs wonderful Virtue, at laſt convinced *Saul* that God deſigned him to be the King of his People, and that none could hinder his Eſtabliſhment.

Ver. 21. *Swear now therefore unto me by the LORD, that thou wilt not cut off my Seed after me, and that thou wilt not deſtroy my Name out of my Father's Houſe.*] As he had endeavoured to deſtroy *David*; and as Kings frequently deſtroyed the Family of thoſe, into whoſe Thrones they were advanced.

Ver. 22. *And David ſware unto Saul.*] Who ſhould rather have ſworn unto *David*, he would ſuffer him to live quietly; yea, have invited to return home, and aſſured him of his Protection. But *David* did not require this: Reſolving to truſt to God, and not to him. Some queſtion how *David* kept his Oath, when he hanged up ſeven of *Saul*'s Sons, 2 *Sam.* xxi. But they ſhould conſider, that he did not this of himſelf; but at the deſire of the *Gibeonites*, unto whom God required Satisfaction ſhould be given, for *Saul*'s bloody Endeavours to deſtroy them.

And Saul went home: But David and his Men gat them up into the Hold.] *viz.* of *Engedi*. For he durſt not ſtay in ſuch an open place as he now was in: Knowing *Saul*'s Inconſtancy, and the Hatred he had to him; and the Fury he was in, when the evil Spirit came upon him. It is dangerous to truſt a reconciled Enemy: And the old Saying is very wiſe, μέμνησο ἀπιστεῖν, *remember not to be too credulous.* And ſo the Son of *Sirach*, *Ecclus.* xii. 10, 11. *Never truſt thine Enemy. Though he humble himſelf, yet take good heed, and beware of him.*

CHAP. XXV.

Verſe 1. *AND Samuel died.*] According to *Joſephus* (*Lib.* vii. latter end) he governed *Iſrael* after the Death of *Eli* twelve Years, and lived eighteen in the Reign of *Saul*, and then died. But according to Sir *J. Marſham*, he judged *Iſrael* ſixteen Years before *Saul*'s Inauguration; and after he was made King lived eighteen.

And all the Iſraelites were gathered together, and lamented him.] Such was his Virtue, and ſuch was the Love the People bare to him, that the whole Nation bewailed his Loſs, and that many Days; as *Joſephus* ſaith, Καὶ ἐπὶ πολλὰς ἡμέρας ἐκλαυσεν.

And buried him in his Houſe at Ramah.] The place where he was born, and had long lived: Where, it is likely, there was a place, belonging to his Houſe, in which his Family was interred.

And David aroſe and went into the Wilderneſs of Paran.] Which was in the ſouthern Parts of *Judæa*, near to *Arabia*: Into which he might preſently flee, if there were occaſion. The *Mahometan* Writers (as *Hottinger* obſerves) make *Paran* a part of *Arabia deſerta*: So that now it was, that *David* dwelt *in the Tents of Kedar*; which was the ſame with *Paran*, as our learned *Fuller* obſerves in his *Miſcellanies*.

Ver. 2. *And there was a Man in Maon, whoſe Poſſeſſions were in Carmel.*] There were two *Carmels*: One in the North near the Sea, in the Confines of *Aſhur* and *Zebulon*, to which *Elijah* was wont to reſort; and another in the South near *Hebron*, in the Tribe of *Judah*, which is here

here meant. See *Josh.* xv. 55. both concerning *Maon* and *Carmel.*

And the Man was very great, and he had three thousand Sheep, and a thousand Goats.] A very wealthy Man.

And he was shearing his Sheep in Carmel.] They pulled off the Wool at *Rome*, and in the neighbouring Countries (as *Bochartus* observes) but not in *Greece*, nor *Judæa*; where they sheared it, as we do now.

Ver. 3. *And the Name of the Man was Nabal, and the Name of his Wife was Abigail: and she was a Woman of great Understanding, and of a beautiful Countenance; but the Man was churlish, and evil in his doings.*] Uncharitabe, and perhaps oppressive in his Dealings.

And he was of the House of Caleb.] Descended from a worthy Ancestor, but very unlike him. In the *Hebrew* the word is *Calebi*, a *Calebite*, of the Family of *Caleb*. But the word *Caleb* signifying a *Dog*, some of the ancient Interpreters understand the word here, as if the holy Writer insinuated he was of *dog-like* Dispositions and Manners. Whence the LXX translate it, ὁ ἄνθρωπος κυνικός, *a dogged Man*, or a Cynick. And so the *Syriack* and *Arabick*.

Ver. 4. *And David heard in the Wilderness that Nabal did shear his Sheep.*] For the Wilderness of *Paran* was not far from *Nabal*'s House.

Ver. 5. *And David sent out ten young Men.*] To show his great respect to him.

And David said unto the young Men, Get ye up to Carmel.] For it was a Mountain, as the other *Carmel* was.

And go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.] Present his Service to him, as we now speak; and wish him continued Happiness, as it is in the following words.

Ver. 6. *And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in Prosperity.*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are only, *to him that liveth:* Unto which we add *in Prosperity*; because *Life* in Scripture signifies Happiness, as *Death* signifies Misery.

Peace be both to thee, and Peace be unto thy House, and Peace to all that thou hast.] A most affectionate, and comprehensive Salutation. Wherein he wishes well to him (both his Soul and Body) and to his whole Family, and to all that he possessed, either at home or abroad: And some think in the first words, he wishes all this might be perpetuated as long as he lived. There could not well be an higher Compliment, as we now speak: For *Peace* comprehends all manner of Blessings, in the holy Language.

Ver. 7. *And now I have heard that thou hast Shearers.*] Whom he entertained that day.

Now thy Shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not; neither was there ought missing to them, all the while they were in Carmel.] He represents the good Demeanour of those who belonged to him, while they were in his Neighbourhood. And suggests, that he would not have had so many Sheep to shear, if his Men had been like others, in their Condition. But tho' they were Soldiers, and in great necessity, they never took any thing from him.

Ver. 8. *Ask thy young Men, and they will show thee.*] He desires him to be informed of the Truth of this, from his own Servants.

Wherefore let the young Men find favour in thine eyes (for we come in a good day) give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh unto thy hand unto thy Servants, and to thy Son David.] Most humble Words, and full of respect: Mixed with strong Arguments; from their harmless and friendly living in his Neighbourhood; and from the present Festival which he kept, when Men's Hearts use to be open and bountiful: And they did not desire Delicates, but any thing that was at hand, which he could spare.

Ver. 9. *And when David's young Men came, they spake to Nabal according to all these Words in the name of David, and ceased.*] Added nothing of their own, but waited for his Answer in silence, as *Maimonides* interprets it, in his *More Nevochim*, P. i. Cap. 116.

Ver. 10. *Nabal answered David's Servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the Son of Jesse?*] A most rude and brutish Answer, to such a civil Message, and humble Request.

There be many Servants now-a-days that break every Man from his Master.] He reproaches them all as a Company of Fugitives and Vagabonds: and taxes *David* secretly, with Infidelity to his Master *Saul*.

Ver. 11. *Shall I take my Bread, and my Water, and my Flesh that I have killed for my Shearers; and give it unto Men, whom I know not whence they are?*] A most foolish Speech; when he had just before called *David* the Son of *Jesse:* Which shows he knew well enough who he was.

Ver. 12. *And David's young Men turned their way, and went again, and told him all these Sayings.*] They did not stand arguing with him, or intreating him: But slighted him, as much as he did them.

Ver. 13. *And David said unto his Men, Gird you on every Man his Sword: and they girded on every Man his Sword, and David also girded on his Sword.*] Being resolved, in his Passion, to be revenged on *Nabal*.

And there went up after David about four hundred Men, and two hundred abode by the Stuff.] For he had with him six hundred Men in all; as we read before, xxiii. 13.

Ver. 14. *But one of the young Men.*] Belonging unto *Nabal*.

Told Abigail Nabal's Wife, saying, Behold David sent Messengers out of the Wilderness, to salute our Master, and he railed on them.] Some of his Servants were wiser and better than he himself, which makes good that Saying of *Seneca* (in his third Book *de Beneficiis*) *Nulli præcluſa est virtus, omnibus patet*, &c. *Virtue is shut up from none; it lies open to all. It admits all, it invites all; Free-men and Servants, Kings and Exiles. It makes not choice of such an House, or of such an Estate: But is content with a Man himself.* For who can chuse but admire the Wisdom and Fidelity of this Shepherd? who admonished his Mistress of the danger her Family was in; as he rationally concluded from the rude Abuse that had been put upon *David*; whose Merits he honestly set before her.

Ver. 15. *But the Men were very good to us, and we were not hurt; neither missed any thing, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the Field.*] They confirm every word

that *David*'s Meſſengers had told their Maſter, *ver.* 7.

Ver. 16. *They were a Wall unto us, both by night and day, all the time we were with them, keeping Sheep.*] They add more than *David*'s Men had ſaid of themſelves, that they not only did them no hurt, but were a Guard and Defence to them againſt Robbers, and againſt wild Beaſts.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore know and conſider what thou wilt do; for Evil is determined againſt our Maſter, and againſt all his Houſhold.*] This they underſtood, either from the young Men whom *David* ſent, who let fall ſome words ſignifying how highly he would reſent the Indignity done to him: Or they concluded it from what they had obſerved of the Nature of *David*; who was very kind, but would not put up rude Affronts.

For he is ſuch a Son of Belial, that a Man cannot ſpeak to him.] So wilful and obſtinate, that they durſt not ſpeak to him of this matter: Fearing he would be more inſolent to them, than he had been to *David*.

Ver. 18. *Then Abigail made haſte.*] For ſhe was ſo prudent a Woman as not to neglect the good Advice of a Servant.

And took two hundred Loaves, and two Bottles of Wine, five Sheep ready dreſſed, and five Meaſures of parched Corn, and two hundred Cluſters of Raiſins, and two hundred Cakes of Figs, and laid them upon Aſſes.] This ſhows he was a great Man, who had ſuch plenty of Proviſions in his Houſe. For it is not to be imagined, that ſhe would rob the Shearers of a Feſtival Day, to gratify *David*.

Ver. 19. *And ſaid unto her Servants, Go before me, behold I come after you.*] They carried the Preſent; that *David* beholding it, might be a little mitigated before ſhe came to him.

But ſhe told not her Husband Nabal.] Who, it is likely, would have perſiſted in his Folly: Or been ſo long before he would have been perſuaded to be wiſer, that it would have been too late to prevent the Danger.

Ver. 20. *And it was ſo, as ſhe rode upon the Aſs, that ſhe came down by the Covert of the Hill.*] By a way full of Buſhes, ſo that *David* ſaw not her, nor ſhe him, till they met together.

And behold David and his Men came down againſt her.] From another Hill, I ſuppoſe.

And ſhe met them.] In the Bottom, between the two Hills.

Ver. 21. *Now David had ſaid, Surely in vain have I kept all that this Fellow hath in the Wilderneſs; ſo that nothing was miſſing of all that pertained to him: and he hath requited me evil for good.*] This he ſaid to himſelf: Or to his Men, as ſoon as the Meſſengers came back; or as they were upon the Road to *Nabal*'s Houſe.

Ver. 22. *So, and more alſo, do God unto the Enemies of David.*] He means to himſelf: But being unwilling to pronounce his own Name, or any other whom he reſpected, together with a Curſe, he transfers it to an Enemy: By a Figure called *Euphemiſmus*. Or, as ſome take it, the meaning is, let my Enemy deſtroy me, if I let *Nabal* and his Family eſcape. But the former is the plaineſt Interpretation, it being common in the *Jewiſh* Language (as *Joh. Cocceius* obſerves) when they ſpeak of any evil to themſelves, to tranſlate it to another Perſon. Of which he gives Inſtances out of *Maccoth*, and *Bava Bathra*. See him upon the *Gemara Sanhedrim*, Cap. 4. Sect. 18. Annot. 1.

If I leave to him before the Morning-light.] He intended to fall upon them in the Night, when they were in a dead Sleep, after great Jollity.

Any that piſſeth againſt the Wall.] That is (as the Generality of Interpreters think) *ſo much as a Dog:* This being, they take it, like that Saying of *Aurelian* mentioned by *Vopiſcus*, who going to a City, and finding the Gates ſhut againſt him, ſaid in his Wrath, *Canem in hoc oppido non relinquam*, I will not leave a Dog in this Town. But *Bochartus* excepts to this Interpretation, that all Dogs do not piſs againſt the Wall, but only the Males; and that not 'till they be ſix or eight Months old: as *Ariſtotle* and others obſerve. And therefore (to omit his other Reaſons) he takes this Phraſe to be a *Periphraſis* of a Man: As the *Hebrews* expound it, particularly *Ralbag*. So that it is as much as to ſay, *I will not leave a Man alive.*

Ver. 23. *And when Abigail ſaw David, ſhe haſted, and lighted off the Aſs, and fell before David on her Face, and bowed her ſelf to the ground.*] Both out of Reverence to him as a great Man; and as an humble Supplicant, for pardon of a great Offence.

Ver. 24. *And fell at his feet, and ſaid, Upon me, my Lord, upon me let this Iniquity be.*] She applies herſelf to him, in a Speech full of Art and Prudence: And firſt begs, like a kind Wife, that ſhe might ſuffer, not her Huſband; who was not ſo wiſe as he ſhou'd be.

And let thine Handmaid, I pray thee, ſpeak in thy Audience, and hear the Words of thy Handmaid.] She deſires him patiently to hear her Reaſons.

Ver. 25. *Let not my Lord, I pray thee, regard this Man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his Name is, ſo is he; Nabal is his Name, and Folly is with him.*] She repreſents him as a Man that offended out of Folly rather than Malice: Which might a little excuſe his Rudeneſs. There are many ſuch Alluſions in Scripture, as there is here of *Nebala* and *Nabal*. See *Gen.* v. 25. xlix. 8, 16, 19. and *Zephan.* ii. 4.

But I, thine Handmaid, ſaw not the young Men of my Lord, whom thou diſt ſend.] If any were to be puniſhed, ſhe had deſired it might be herſelf; yet ſhe had this to ſay in her own behalf, that ſhe knew nothing of the Meſſage ſent by *David*.

Ver. 26. *Now therefore, my Lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy Soul liveth, ſeeing the LORD hath with-holden thee from coming to ſhed Blood, and from avenging thy ſelf with thine own hand.*] This is wonderfully artificial, to preſume ſo much upon his Goodneſs and Clemency, as already to conclude, ſhe had diverted him from his purpoſe; or rather, that God had interpoſed by his good Providence, to hinder him from ſhedding Blood.

Now let thine Enemies, and they that ſeek evil to my Lord, be as Nabal.] That is, may thou have no worſe Enemy than he. Or, may thy Enemies have no more power to hurt thee, than *Nabal* hath. This is another Argument to perſuade him to Mercy, that *Nabal* was ſo inconſiderable, that as he would do him no good, ſo he could do him no evil.

Ver.

Ver. 27. *And now this Bleſſing.*] That is, this Preſent or Gift. The ſame Phraſe in xxx. 26. 2 *Kings* v. 15.

Which thine Handmaid hath brought unto my Lord, let it even be given unto the young Men that follow my Lord.] To appeaſe their Anger: Or, as unworthy of *David*'s Acceptance.

Ver. 28. *I pray thee forgive the Treſpaſs of thine Handmaid.*] She ſtill ſpeaks as if ſhe had been the Offender; becauſe ſhe deſired none might ſuffer but herſelf.

For the LORD will certainly make my Lord a ſure Houſe.] She prays him to be good to her, as God would certainly be to him.

Becauſe my Lord fighteth the Battels of the LORD; and Evil hath not been found in thee all thy days.] Se puts him in mind of all his Heroical Acts againſt the *Philiſtines*, and other Enemies; and that hitherto he had been blameleſs, and done no hurt to the *Iſraelites*: And therefore hoped he would do none to her, and her Family.

Ver. 29. *Yet a Man is riſen to purſue thee and to ſeek thy Soul.*] *Saul* ſhe means reſtleſly endeavoured to take away his Life.

But the Soul of my Lord ſhall be bound in the Bundle of Life, with the LORD thy God.] Be preſerved. For thoſe things which we would not have loſt, nor ſcattered about, we are wont to bind up in Bundles.

And the Souls of thine Enemies, them ſhall he ſling out, as out of the middle of a Sling.] As we bind up things to preſerve them from being thrown about, and loſt; ſo we put things into a Sling, that they may be caſt out of ſight, or a great way from us.

Ver. 30. *And it ſhall come to paſs, when the LORD ſhall have done to my Lord, according to all the good that he hath ſpoken concerning thee, and ſhall have appointed thee Ruler over Iſrael.*] Nothing could be more obliging than this, at every word to call him her *Lord*, and to acknowledge his Title to the Kingdom; and her belief that he would certainly enjoy it.

Ver. 31. *That this ſhall be no Grief unto thee, nor offence of Heart to my Lord, either that thou haſt ſhed Blood cauſeleſs, or that my Lord hath avenged himſelf.*] She reſerves the moſt divine Argument to the laſt; that he would have a clear and quiet Conſcience, and not be diſturbed with a Remembrance that he had ſhed the Blood of the Innocent, or otherwiſe avenged himſelf: which belonged unto God.

And when the LORD hath dealt well with my Lord, remember thine Handmaid.] Thou wilt thank me for my Advice.

Ver. 32. *And David ſaid to Abigail, Bleſſed be the LORD God of Iſrael, which ſent thee this day to meet me.*] He was ſo moved with this pathetical Speech, that in the firſt place, he acknowledges the good Providence of God, which directed her to come ſo ſeaſonably to prevent the Effects of his Anger: Whereby he was abſolved from his Oath, which he had ſworn to cut off *Nabal*'s Family. And indeed it was null in itſelf; for no Man can oblige himſelf to do an evil thing; as this would have been: There being a double Guilt in it, as *Philo* obſerves, if he had ſhed their Blood. To which may be applied the Words of *Seneca*, that in ſuch Caſes, *ſcelus eſt fides*, to keep one's word, is a wicked thing. See *Grotius de Jure B. & P. lib.* 2. *Cap.* 13. *Sect.* 6. Where he obſerves that *Cicero* mentions the like Caſe with this in the Vow of *Agamemnon*. And *Procopius Gazæus* here well reſolves, that this Oath of *David* was the effect of Anger; but his ſparing *Nabal* the effect of Reaſon and prudent Counſel.

Ver. 33. *And bleſſed be thy Advice, and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this day from coming to ſhed Blood, and from avenging my ſelf with my own hand.*] Next, he commends her, and her wiſe Counſel; for which he beſeeches God to bleſs her: For ſhe had preſerved him from a very outrageous piece of Revenge; which might have afflicted him all his days.

Ver. 34. *For in very deed, as the LORD God of Iſrael liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadſt haſted and come to meet me, ſurely there had not been left unto Nabal, by the morning light, any that piſſeth againſt the Wall.*] It may ſeem ſtrange that his Anger ſhould not cool, in ſo much time as paſſed between the return of his Meſſengers, and *Abigail*'s meeting him: But the Affront was great, and his Soldiers it is likely inflamed his Rage, and he reſolved to make *Nabal* an Example to others, not to uſe him ſo rudely.

Ver. 35. *So David received of her hand that which ſhe brought, and ſaid unto her, Go in peace unto thy Houſe: for I have hearkened unto thy Voice, and have accepted thy Perſon.*] Both ſhe herſelf, and what ſhe ſaid, and what ſhe brought were moſt welcome to him. So happy a thing it is (as *Euripides* ſpeaks in his *Heraclidæ*, verſe 359.) to fall into the hand of a wiſe, and not a fooliſh Enemy. For the latter, if he get the better, exerciſes nothing but Cruelty: But with the former there is room for Mercy, Juſtice, Moderation, and Pardon. Such an Enemy *Abigail* met withal; unto whom *Nabal*'s Offence was not more provoking to the Deſtruction of his Family, than the Admiration of *Abigail*'s Virtue to its Preſervation.

Ver. 36. *And Abigail came to Nabal; and behold, he held a Feaſt in his Houſe like the Feaſt of a King: and Nabal's Heart was merry within him, for he was very drunken.*] He had eaten and drank too liberally, at a very great Feaſt, which he made for his Shearers.

Wherefore ſhe told him nothing, leſs or more, 'till the morning-light.] Said not a word of what had paſſed, becauſe he was not capable to underſtand the Mercy of God to him.

Ver. 37. *But it came to paſs in the Morning, when the Wine was gone out of Nabal.*] When he had ſlept himſelf ſober.

And his Wife told him of theſe things, that his Heart died within him, and he became as a Stone.] He fainted away, and was as cold as a Stone; out of dread of the Danger, which he imagined ſtill hung over him. For it is a frigid Interpretation of *Raſi* and *Kimchi*, that he was troubled to hear of the great Preſent that his Wife had made to *David*.

Ver. 38. *And it came to paſs, that about ten days after, the LORD ſmote Nabal, that he died.*] It ſeems he lay ſo long diſpirited, in a ſtupid ſenſeleſs Condition; and then God put an end to his Life, either by ſome Diſeaſe, or by a ſudden ſtroke.

Ver.

Ver. 39. *And when David heard that Nabal was dead, he ſaid, Bleſſed be the* LORD, *who hath pleaded the Cauſe of my Reproach upon the head of Nabal; and hath kept his Servant from Evil: for the* LORD *hath returned the Wickedneſs of Nabal upon his own head.*] He doth not rejoice ſo much in his Death (who was a worthleſs Wretch) as in the Juſtice of God: Who ſhowed him, that if Men would have patience, they ſhould ſee Right done them; ſo that they need not go about to revenge themſelves.

And David ſent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.] Being a Woman of admirable Prudence, as well as Beauty, (*ver.* 3.) and one that expreſſed an high Eſteem of him, he ſent ſome to treat with her about Marriage with him.

Ver. 40. *And when the Servants of David were come to Abigail to Carmel, they ſpake unto her ſaying, David ſent us unto thee, to take thee unto him to wife.*] This was their Buſineſs: Which no doubt they delivered in many more Words, which ſignified the great Eſteem and Affection which *David* had for her; whom he knew to be a Woman of ſuch great Wiſdom, that ſhe had reſpect not merely to his preſent, but to his future Condition. Otherwiſe, he would not have adventured, being now very poor, to court one that had ſuch Riches.

Ver. 41. *And ſhe aroſe, and bowed her ſelf with her Face to the Earth.*] In reverence to the very Name of *David:* Who ſhe highly honoured, as a Man of an heroick Spirit; and who ſhe was fully perſuaded ſhould be King of *Iſrael*, ver. 30.

And ſhe ſaid, Behold, let thine Handmaid be a Servant to waſh the Feet of the Servants of my Lord.] She ſent him an Anſwer in theſe Words; which ſhow her Humility to be as great, as her other Virtues: for to waſh one's Feet was the loweſt ſort of Service.

Ver. 42. *And Abigail haſted, and aroſe and rode upon an Aſs, with five Damſels of hers, that went after her.*] That ſhe might come attended ſuitable to her Quality and his. See *Grotius*, *Gen.* xxx. 3.

And ſhe went after the Meſſengers of David.] Tho' ſhe did not long deliberate about the Matter, but ſoon conſented; yet it is not likely ſhe followed them immediately: But ſtaid ſome decent time before ſhe went to *David.*

And became his Wife.] She had a ſtrong Faith in God, to marry a Man who had nothing to live upon, but was forced to wander from place to place, and beg the Aſſiſtance of his Friends. But ſhe verily believed he would at laſt come to the Throne, as ſhe had before expreſſed: And could make ſome Proviſion for him out of her own Eſtate.

Ver. 43. *David alſo took Ahinoam of Jezreel, and they were alſo both of them his Wives.*] At the ſame time; according to the corrupt Cuſtom of thoſe Days, wherein they had perverted the Law of Nature, which is admirably expreſſed by *Euripides* in his *Andromache*, ver. 177, &c.

——————καδὲ γὰρ καλὸν
Δυσῖν γυναιξοῖν ἄνδρ' ἓν' ἠιάς ἔχειν, &c.

It is not good for one Husband to govern two Wives: But he ſhould be content with one, who who would live happily.

And again, *ver.* 909.

Κακὸν δ' ἔλεξας ἓν' ἄνδρα δισσ' ἔχειν λέσχη.

Thou haſt ſaid, it is an evil thing for one Man to have two Wives.

For where there are more than one, they ſeldom agree, but breed great Trouble to their Huſband. It is commonly thought, that *Ahinoam* was his Wife before he married *Abigail.* See upon xxvii. 3.

Ver. 44. *And Saul.*] Or rather *for Saul*, the Particle *Vau* being often ſo uſed.

Had given Michal his Daughter, David's Wife, to Phalti the Son of Laiſh.] Here is the reaſon why *David* took another Wife; becauſe *Saul* had deprived him of his former: But it was no good Reaſon for taking two, which were more than he had before. He was not forced from *Michal*, and therefore we read afterwards that he took her again. And the *Jewiſh* Doctors are of opinion that this *Phalti* was a very pious Man, and would never touch her, becauſe ſhe was another Man's Wife: Which was the Reaſon *David* received her again. See 1 *Sam.* iii. 15.

Which was of Gallim.] A Town near *Accaron*, as *Euſebius* and St. *Hierom* tell us: Which had its Name from *Gal*, an heap of Stones; it being, I ſuppoſe, a ſtony Place.

CHAP. XXVI.

Verſe 1. AND *the Ziphites.*] The old Enemies of *David*, xxiii. 19.

Came unto Saul to Gibeah, ſaying, Doth not David hide himſelf in the hold of Hachilah, which is before Jeſhimon?] He thought he might ſafely return thither, *Saul* having ſo lately made peace with him. The *Ziphites* alſo could not but hear how he had obliged *Saul*, and what Declaration *Saul* had made, that he knew *David* would be King of *Iſrael*, xxiv. 20. Which *David* thought might diſcourage them from meddling any more. But quite contrary, they being afraid, if he came to be King, he would remember and revenge their ill uſage of him, went to excite *Saul* to deſtroy him.

Ver. 2. *Then Saul aroſe, and went down to the Wilderneſs of Ziph, with three thouſand Men of Iſrael with him.*] The ſame Number he had the laſt time he purſued after him, xxiv. 2.

To ſeek David in the Wilderneſs of Ziph.] The Inconſtancy, Falſeneſs, and implacable Rage of this Prince is inconceivable. Who having not long ago been obliged to *David* for his Life, and had acknowledged his Error, and made *David* ſwear he would be good to his Poſterity, yet openly declared himſelf again to be his Enemy, and ſought to kill him.

Ver. 3. *And Saul pitched in the Hill of Hachilah, which is before Jeſhimon, by the way.*] That is, by the way that went to the Wilderneſs.

But

But David abode in the Wilderneſs, and he ſaw that Saul came after him into the Wilderneſs.] He thought at firſt his Intelligence had not been true; but he was credibly informed, that *Saul*'s Wrath was broke out again, and that he intended to come thither.

Ver. 4. *And David therefore ſent out Spies, and underſtood that Saul was come in very deed.*] A good Captain always hath Scouts abroad: who aſſured him his Information was true, and that *Saul* was not far from him.

Ver. 5. *And David aroſe, and came to a place, where Saul had pitched.*] Within ſight of it; where he might obſerve how they lay.

And David beheld where Saul lay, and Abner the Son of Ner, the Captain of the Hoſt.] Who, it is likely, lay near him.

And Saul lay in the Trench.] Or rather, *in his Chariot*, for ſo the LXX tranſlate the *Hebrew* Word by λαμπλήνη, or as ſome Editions have it, ἁπλήνη: Which ſignifies a *Chariot* drawn by Mules, as *Bochartus* ſhows out of *Homer*, and other Authors, P. 1. *Hierozoicon*, L. 2. *Cap.* 19.

And the People lay round about him.] He was incloſed, I ſuppoſe, with the Carriages; as our Marginal Tranſlation is of the foregoing Word.

Ver. 6. *Then anſwered David and ſaid to Ahimelech the Hittite.*] A valiant Man of that Nation, who was a Proſelyte to the *Jewiſh* Religion: And not only followed *David*, but was always near to his Perſon.

And to Abiſhai the Son of Zeruiah, Brother to Joab.] Who were the Sons of *David*'s Siſter, 1 *Chron.* xi. 16. whoſe Father is no where mentioned; being a Man, I ſuppoſe, of no note.

Saying, who will go down with me to Saul to the Camp.] That is, which of theſe two.

And Abiſhai ſaid, I will go down with thee.] Either *Ahimelech* declined it, as too hazardous an Enterprize: Or *Abiſhai*, being an hot forward young Man, offered himſelf, while the other ſtood deliberating.

Ver. 7. *So David and Abiſhai came to the People by night.*] A bold Attempt for two Men to come into the midſt of an Army of three thouſand choſen Men: Who were not without a Watch; tho' they were now aſleep. But a ſtrong Confidence in God's Promiſe that he would preſerve him, overcame all Fear of Danger.

And behold, Saul lay ſleeping within the Trench, and his Spear ſtuck in the ground at his Bolſter: but Abner and the People lay round about him.] To ſecure his Perſon from any ſudden Aſſault.

Ver. 8. *Then ſaid Abiſhai to David, God hath delivered thine Enemy into thy hand this day: Now therefore let me ſmite him, I pray thee, with the Spear, even to the Earth at once; and I will not ſmite him the ſecond time.*] Tho' *David* would not kill him himſelf, when he had the like Opportunity (xxiv. 4.) yet *Abiſhai* thought he might give him leave to do it: And he undertook to ſtick him to the ground at one thruſt, ſo that he ſhould make no noiſe by crying out.

Ver. 9. *And David ſaid to Abiſhai, deſtroy him not: For who can ſtretch forth his hand againſt the LORD's Anointed, and be guiltleſs?*] Being made King by God's ſpecial Appointment, he look'd upon it as a high Crime to do him any hurt; becauſe he was a ſacred Perſon.

Ver. 10. *David ſaid furthermore, As the LORD liveth, the LORD ſhall ſmite him, or his day ſhall come to die, or he ſhall deſcend into Battel, and periſh.*] God who made him King, after a ſolemn manner, could only depoſe him: And that he could do ſeveral ways; either by a ſudden Stroke, or in the courſe of Nature, or letting him fall in Battel.

Ver. 11. *The LORD forbid, that I ſhould ſtretch my hand againſt the LORD's Anointed.*] What he permitted another to do, when he could hinder it, was as if he had done it himſelf. But he abhorred to meddle with that, which belonged to God, as he had before ſaid.

But I pray thee, take now the Spear that is at his Bolſter.] As a witneſs what they could have done, if Reſpect to God, whoſe Anointed he was, had not with-held them.

And the Cruſe of Water, and let us go.] This was ſet there, either for him to drink, if he was thirſty: Or to waſh himſelf; which was preſcribed by their Law in caſe of many Pollutions.

Ver. 12. *So David took the Spear and the Cruſe of Water.*] By the Hand of *Abiſhai*: Who like an excellent Soldier was perfectly ſubject to his Commander, to forbear, or to do whatſoever *David* enjoined him.

And gat them away, and no Man ſaw it, or knew it, neither awaked: for they were all aſleep, becauſe a deep Sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.] The *Jewiſh* Doctors in *Bereſchith Rabba* obſerve, that there are three ſorts of that they call *Tardama*, which is the *Hebrew* word for *deep Sleep* in this Place. The *firſt* mere ſound Sleep, which God ſent upon *Adam*, *Gen.* xi. 21. The *ſecond* is the deep Sleep of Prophecy, which he ſent upon *Abraham*, *Gen.* xv. 12. The *third* is this here mentioned, which they call the Sleep *Marmorita* (it ſhould be printed *Marmota*, as *Bochart* obſerves) which is a little Creature more drowſy than a Dormouſe. *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 33.

Ver. 13. *Then David went over to the other ſide, and ſtood on the top of an Hill afar off (a great ſpace being between them.)* So that he was in Safety, and yet his Voice might be heard.

Ver. 14. *And David cried unto the People, and to Abner the Son of Ner, ſaying, Anſwereſt thou not, Abner?*] Art thou ſtill aſleep?

Then Abner anſwered, and ſaid, Who art thou that crieſt unto the King?] And diſturbeſt his Repoſe.

Ver. 15. *And David ſaid unto Abner, Art not thou a valiant Man,* &c.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *Art not thou a Man?* That is, in Place of Authority, as well as of great Courage and Valour.

Wherefore haſt thou not kept thy Lord the King.] Obſerved better military Diſcipline, for the Preſervation of *Saul*'s Perſon.

For there came one of the People in to deſtroy the King thy Lord.] Came into the Camp with that Intention, and had a very fair Opportunity.

Ver.

Ver. 16. *This thing is not good that thou haſt done.*] A ſoft way of ſpeaking: But the meaning was, that he was very faulty, as appears by what follows.

Ye are worthy to die, becauſe ye have not kept your Maſter, the LORD's Anointed.] Guarded him better from any Danger. It is probable they deſpiſed *David*'s ſmall Forces, which made them ſo groſsly negligent.

Now ſee where the King's Spear is, and the Cruſe of Water that was at his Bolſter.] He ſets before them the Tokens of their Careleſſneſs; and of the Opportunity he had to kill *Saul*.

Ver. 17. *And Saul knew David's Voice, and ſaid, Is this thy Voice, my Son David?*] He was in great Confuſion of Mind, and knew not what more to ſay to him.

And David ſaid, It is my Voice, my Lord, O King.] He humbly acknowledgeth his Authotity; and the Allegiance he owed him: Tho' he had done him ſo many Injuries.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid, Wherefore doth my Lord thus purſue after his Servant? for what have I done, or what evil is in my hand?*] Being conſcious of his own Innocence, *David* expoſtulates with him in a long Speech: And deſires in the firſt place, to know what Crime he had to accuſe him of: eſpecially ſince he lately acknowledged that he was more righteous than himſelf, xxiv. 17.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore, I pray thee, let my Lord the King hear the Words of thy Servant.*] Having no Anſwer to that Queſtion, he deſires him to be ſo patient, as to ſuffer him to argue a while with him.

If the LORD have ſtirred thee up againſt me, let him accept an Offering.] For God is not implacable, but willing to be reconciled, if I have offended him. Or the meaning may be, if for any Offence againſt God there be juſt Cauſe for this Anger, I refuſe not to die, and expiate the Fault with my Blood. Or the words may refer to *Saul*, as if he had ſaid, Offer to God ſome Sacrifice, that he being appeaſed, may free thee from this pertinacious Melancholy.

But if they be the Children of Men, curſed be they before the LORD, for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the Inheritance of the LORD.] From having any ſettled Abode in his own Country; which he foreſaw he ſhould be forced alſo to leave, as we read he did in the next Chapter.

Saying, go ſerve other Gods.] That was the effect of their Actions, tho' they did not ſay ſo in ſo many Words. For they baniſhed him into a Nation of another Religion, as Mr. *Mede* expounds theſe Words. See *Book* 3. *p.* 823.

Ver. 20. *Now therefore let not my Blood fall to the Earth, before the Face of the LORD.*] God ſeeing it, and being the Avenger.

For the King of Iſrael cometh out to ſeek a Flea.] Which was neither for his Profit nor for his Glory. See xxiv. 14.

As when one doth hunt a Partridge in the Mountains.] Hunt a poor Bird from mountain to mountain, with a great deal of Labour, which is not eaſily caught, and worth nothing when one hath it: The *Hebrew* word *Kore* is no where to be found, but here and in *Jer.* xvii. 11. from both which places, we learn it was a mountainous Bird, and of no great value: in taking of which, the Fowler ſpent his pains to little purpoſe. And it was one of thoſe Birds, that ſits upon the Eggs of other Birds, as the words of *Jeremiah* import, *ſhe gathereth what ſhe hath not brought forth*, that is, Eggs which ſhe did not lay. From which it is apparent, that this word doth not ſignify a *Partridge*, which is a Bird of Price, and doth not ſit on other Birds Eggs: But, as *Bochart* hath taken a great deal of pains to ſhow, was a Bird with a long Bill, and ſhort Feet, called *Ruſticula*. I will not mention the Opinions of Interpreters about it, for they are very various, and the ſame Men are not conſtant to themſelves; for *R. Solomon*, who here takes it for a *Partridge*, in that place of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, takes it for a *Cuckow*. See *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. L. 1. C. 12.

Ver. 21. *Then ſaid Saul, I have ſinned, return my Son David.*] He invites him to come to the Court again; which is more than he did at their former meeting.

For I will no more do thee harm, becauſe my Soul was precious in thine eyes this day: I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.] This is a very ingenuous Confeſſion, wherein he condemned himſelf, as a great Offender againſt God, and againſt *David*. In which for the preſent, no doubt he was very ſerious, and both aſhamed and ſorry for what he had done.

Ver. 22. *And David anſwered and ſaid, Behold the King's Spear, let one of the young Men come over and fetch it.*] He durſt not venture to go and preſent it himſelf to *Saul*, tho' it was the Teſtimony of his Fidelity and Affection to him. For he did not know but the evil Spirit might come on a ſudden upon him, and make him change his good Reſolution.

Ver. 23. *The LORD render to every Man according to his Righteouſneſs and Faithfulneſs: for the LORD delivered thee this day into my hand, but I would not ſtretch forth my hand againſt the LORD's Anointed.*] He repeats what *Saul* had confeſſed, the more to affect his Heart with it: and tells him he doubted not the LORD would deal with him accordingly, howſoever *Saul* uſed him.

Ver. 24. *Behold, as thy Life was ſet by this day in mine eyes, ſo let my Life be ſet by in the ſight of the LORD, and let him deliver me out of all Tribulation.*] He prays God to deal with him, as he had done with *Saul*; and then he doubted not to come out of all his Troubles.

Ver. 25. *And Saul ſaid unto David, Bleſſed be thou, my Son David; thou ſhalt do great things, and alſo ſhalt ſtill prevail.*] He perceived it was in vain to contend any longer againſt *David*, whom God deſigned for great things (as he ſaw by his moſt worthy and noble Actions) and would ſtill have the better of him, 'till he came to the Throne: for poſſibly *Saul* look'd upon the taking away his Spear, which I obſerved (upon xxii. 6.) was his Scepter, as an Omen the Royal Authority ſhould be tranſlated to *David*.

So David went on his way, and Saul returned to his Place.] To *Gibeah*, from whence he came, *ver.* 1. but *David* did not think fit to accompany him, remembring how fickle he was, and therefore, notwithſtanding all thoſe good Words, not to be truſted.

CHAP. XXVII.

Verse 1. *AND David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.*] Whose Heart he believed was not altered, though he had felt lately some Compunction for what he had done against him. But *David* had the greatest reason to believe he would never be able to compass his Design, having God's Promise he should be King of *Israel*; therefore these Words were spoken in a melancholy Fit, when he was under some great Depression of Spirit.

There is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the Land of the Philistines: and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any Coast of Israel; so shall I escape out of his hand.] He thought that as long as he remained in any part of *Saul*'s Dominions, he would never cease his Persecution: But by going into an Enemy's Country, he would be forced to be quiet.

Ver. 2. *And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred Men that were with him, unto Achish the Son of Maoch, King of Gath.*] It is not certain that this was the same *Achish* mentioned xxi. 10. with whom *David* took shelter at his first flight from *Saul*. He seems rather to have been another, who is distinguished from the former by the Name of his Father. But whichsoever he was, he had either invited *David* to come thither for his Security (hoping to make use of his Valour, or his Prudence in his Wars) or *David* had sent Embassadors before to treat with him, and had his Royal Word, that he should be protected by him. And it appears afterwards, that he had *David* in great Esteem; for he gave him a Town for his own Inheritance, *ver.* 6.

Ver. 3. *And David dwelt with Achish at Gath, he and his Men, every Man with his Household: even David with his two Wives, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the Carmelite, Nabal's Wife.*] It was a very capacious Place, that could contain so many Men and their Families; some of which might be numerous. And *Achish* was very generous to receive so many Strangers and old Soldiers into his Royal City, as might have made themselves Masters of it. *Ahinoam* being here mentioned before *Abigail*, hath made many think she was his Wife before he took the other.

Ver. 4. *And it was told Saul that David was fled to Gath, and he sought no more again for him.*] Unto which, it is likely, he was inclined; if he had not found it to be in vain.

Ver. 5. *And David said unto Achish, If I have now found grace in thine Eyes, let them give me a Place in some Town in the Country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy Servant dwell in the Royal City with thee?*] This he said, that he might avoid Envy. For perhaps he might have too much the Port of a King; having so many Men at his Service, and being attended, no doubt, with a considerable number of them about his Person. In a private Town also he might more freely exercise his own Religion; without any Offence to the *Philistines*, who worshipped other Gods.

Ver. 6. *Then Achish gave him Ziklag that day.*] Either out of his Royal Bounty, or on condition of some Service he should do him.

Wherefore Ziklag pertaineth unto the Kings of Judah unto this day.] In the Division of the Land of *Canaan*, it was first given unto the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh.* xv. 31. and afterwards to that of *Simeon*, who had a Portion out of the Land given to *Judah*, *Josh.* xix. 5. But the *Philistines* kept possession of it; so that neither of them enjoyed it; till now it became by *Achish* his Gift the peculiar Inheritance of *David* and his Successors.

Ver. 7. *And the time that David dwelt in the Country of the Philistines, was a full Year and four Months.*] How long he wandered up and down, till he settled here, we are no where told: But it is probable the Persecution of *Saul* lasted a great while.

Ver. 8. *And David and his Men went out and invaded the Geshurites, and the Gezerites, and the Amalekites; for those Nations were of old the Inhabitants of the Land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the Land of Egypt.*] The *Geshurites* and *Gezerites* were both of them Reliques of the *Canaanites*, whom God commanded to be rooted out. See *Grotius*. The *Amalekites*, who were near, had been destroyed by *Saul*, but not these that were afar off: Or perhaps these were some that fled into these remote Parts, when they heard *Saul* was coming against them. And the following Words, (*ver.* 11. of *David*'s killing all) must be understood, that he left none alive whom he found in these Parts: But there still were *Amalekites* in other Places, xxx. 1. *Abarbinel* imagines all the People here mentioned were at enmity with *Achish*, and hated him and his People: So that when *David* smote them, he made no Complaint about it.

Ver. 9. *And David smote the Land, and left neither Man nor Woman alive, and took away the Sheep, and the Oxen, and the Asses, and the Camels, and the Apparel, and returned and came to Achish.*] To give an account of his Actions, and to present him, I suppose, with part of the Spoil.

Ver. 10. *And Achish said, Whither have ye made a rode to day?*] For *David*, it is likely, constantly kept his Men in Exercise, upon some Expedition or other.

And David said, against the South of Judah, and against the South of the Jerahmelites, and against the South of the Kenites.] He answers *Achish* cunningly, in such ambiguous Words, that he might understand him as if he had assaulted the Land of *Judah*; whereas he only fell upon those People who bordered on those Parts which he mentions. For these Countries lay on the South of *Judah*: and the *Jerahmelites* were a Part of *Judæa*, and the *Kenites* of the Family of *Jethro*, were their Neighbours, and Confederates.

Ver. 11. *And David saved neither Man nor Woman alive to bring Tidings to Gath, saying, lest they should tell on us, saying, so did David, and so will be his manner all the while he dwells in the Country of the Philistines.*] Who had People of some Countries thereabouts; perhaps Tributaries to them, and under their Protection: Whom they might fear *David* would serve in the same manner, had they known how he dealt with these.

Ver. 12. *And Achiſh believed David, ſaying, he hath made his People utterly to abhor him, therefore he ſhall be my Servant for ever.*] The Enmity between him and his own People being, as he thought, irreconcilable, he muſt make him his Friend by faithful Service for ever.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs in thoſe days.*] While *David* was in the Country of the *Philiſtines.*

That the Philiſtines gathered their Armies together for warfare, to fight with Iſrael.] Muſtered all their Forces to invade the Land of *Iſrael*; being encouraged, it is probable, by the Baniſhment of *David*, the Death of *Samuel*, and the Frenzy of *Saul.*

And Achiſh ſaid unto David, Know thou aſſuredly, that thou ſhalt go with me to Battel, thou and thy Men.] *Achiſh* ſeems to have been the principal Perſon in the Country, and the Commander of all their Forces. For we read of no other King among them but he: Who required *David*, who was now one of his Subjects, to aſſiſt him in this Warfare againſt his own Native Country.

Ver. 2. *And David ſaid to Achiſh, Surely thou ſhalt know what thy Servant can do.*] He anſwered in doubtful Words, which might be taken in different Senſes.

And Achiſh ſaid to David, Therefore will I make thee Keeper of my Head for ever.] *Achiſh* underſtood him, that he would do his beſt to ſerve him: And thereupon promiſed, if he did, that he would make him Captain of his Guard, or ſome great Officer, near to his Perſon.

Ver. 3. *Now Samuel was dead, and all Iſrael lamented him, and buried him in Ramah, even in his own City.*] This was noted before (xxv. 1.) but repeated here again, to ſhew, that *Saul* now was ſenſible of his Loſs, wanting his Advice in a time of great Diſtreſs.

And Saul had put away thoſe that had familiar Spirits, and the Wizards out of the Land.] According to the Divine Commandment, *Levit.* xx. 27. which perhaps he had executed in the beginning of his Reign, when he was governed by *Samuel:* Or if he did it ſince, it was to ſhew that he had ſome Zeal for God left, whereby he kept up his Authority among the People.

Ver. 4. *And the Philiſtines gathered themſelves together.*] Met at an appointed Place.

And came and pitched in Shunem.] A Place in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, as we learn from *Joſh.* xix. 18.

And Saul gathered all Iſrael together, and pitched in Gilboa.] A Mountain near the Valley of *Jezreel*, not far from *Shunem:* As that Place in *Joſhua* informs us. So that they ſeem to be pitched, as they were before the great Battle was fought when *Goliath* fell, upon two Mountains, with a Valley between them.

Ver. 5. *And when Saul ſaw the Hoſt of the Philiſtines.*] Of which he had a full View from Mount *Gilboa.*

He was afraid, and his Heart greatly trembled.] For the Spirit of God having forſaken him, his Courage very much failed him: when he ſaw how numerous the *Philiſtines* were; and heard, perhaps, that *David* was among them; and reflected upon all the Evil he had done unto him.

Ver. 6. *And when Saul enquired of the LORD,*] This ſeems to contradict what is ſaid 1 *Chron.* x. 14. that he *did not enquire of the LORD:* Which was the reaſon that *he ſlew him.* But *Kimchi* and others thus reconcile theſe two Places; that ſince he did not continue to enquire of him, but went to a Witch, it was all one, as if he had not enquired at all; for he did it faintly, coldly, and indifferently: Reſolving, if he was not heard there, to go to ſome other Place for Counſel. See *Buxtorf, Hiſt. Urim* and *Thummim*; who obſerves out of *Samuel Laniado*, a learned *Jew*, that 'he 'whoſe Heart is perfect with God, lifts up his 'Eyes unto him, and fixes them on him; ho-'ping in him, tho' he doth not preſently hear 'him: And perſeveres in his Hopes, firmly 'ſettling a Reſolution to wait upon him. But 'ſo did not *Saul*, who was remiſs and negli-'gent, ſaying, If God will not hear me, I will 'go and conſult a familiar Spirit.'

The LORD anſwered him not,] Becauſe he had killed his Prieſts, as *R. Solomon* here notes. And by this means, as *R. Levi Ben Gerſon* here farther obſerves, had no body capable of the Holy Spirit, to conſult God for him.

Neither by Dreams,] By which he prayed, perhaps, that God would inform himſelf.

Nor by Urim,] *Kimchi* thinks that he ſent to *Abiathar* to enquire about the Event of this War: For he had the *Urim* with him. It is obſervable, that the Scripture never ſaith that God anſwered by *Thummim*; for that is comprehended under *Urim:* Which is always put firſt when they are joined together, and here it is mentioned alone. See xxiii. 6.

Nor by Prophets.] A College of which, no doubt, was ſtill remaining at *Ramah*; whom *Samuel* had educated. It will not be amiſs to obſerve that the ſame ways of Enquiry were among the *Gentiles*, as appears by what *Achilles* ſaith, in the Council of the *Greeks*, who met to conſider about the Plague *Apollo* had ſent among them. *Iliad.* 1. *ver.* 62.

Ἀλλ' ἄγε δή τινα μάντιν ἐρείομεν, ἠὲ ἱερῆα,
Ἢ ἠὲ ὀνειρόπολον, (καὶ γὰρ τ' ὄναρ ἐκ Διός ἐστιν)
Ὅς κ' εἴποι——

Where he reckons three ſorts of Men, a *Prophet*, or a *Prieſt*, or an *Expounder of Dreams:* Who might tell why *Apollo* was ſo angry with them.

Ver. 7. *Then ſaid Saul unto his Servants, Seek me a Woman that hath a familiar Spirit, that I may go to her, and enquire of her.*] In this he acted like a diſtracted Man, who now approved what he had condemned. He mentions a *Woman* rather than a *Man*; becauſe the weaker Sex were moſt addicted to theſe Practices (being moſt eaſily deceived by evil Spirits) among whom ſuch a Perſon he thought might be ſooneſt found.

And

And his Servants said unto him, There is a Woman that hath a familiar Spirit.] There are always some Flatterers in Courts, who will never contradict their Princes; but are ready to comply with them in their worst Designs. And it appears by this, that though this sort of Divination was not publickly practised, yet it was known that there were some who privately continued to consult the Dead. I say *publickly*, because it is very probable that before *Saul* executed the Law against them, there were those that made Profession of having familiar Spirits, as there were among the Heathen. For *Plutarch*, in the Life of *Cimon*, speaks of *Pausanias* going to a Νεκυομαντεῖον (an Oracle of the Dead) at *Heraclea*, where he called up the Soul of *Cleonice*.

At Endor.] A Place in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Josh.* xvii. 11. not far from *Shunem*, as *Salianus* observes: And part of the Mountain of *Gilboa* was over-against *Endor*, and another part of it against *Shunem*. This Woman, the *Jewish* Doctors say, was the Mother of *Abner*.

Ver. 8. *And Saul disguised himself, and put on other raiment, and went, and two Servants with him.*] He put off his Royal Apparel, and cloathed himself like an ordinary Man, having but a small Attendance; that he might not be suspected to be what he was. These two Servants, the *Jewish* Doctors say, were *Abner* and *Amasa*.

And they came to the Woman by night.] They could not go the direct way, for then they must have passed through the Army of the *Philistines:* And therefore they fetched a Compass, and travelled also by Night, that they might not be discovered. And it is likely they went on foot, that less notice might be taken of them; and they might go and return through by-ways, which made their Journey the longer. In the Night also it was, that Women went about such magical Practices. For, as *Psellus* observes in his Book of *Dæmons*, it is the common Opinion of the *Greeks*, that none of the Terrestrial Dæmons dare appear in the Day time. Ἑλληνικῆς γὰρ ἔστι δόξης τὸ μήδενα τῶν ἐνύλων δαιμόνων θάρρειν τὰς τῷ ἡλίῳ αὐγάς. Nay, he saith all those things were performed after the Summer Solstice; when the Days grew short, and the Nights increased.

And he said, Divine unto me by the familiar Spirit, and bring me him up whom I shall name unto thee.] This consulting the Dead, was a very ancient Practice among the *Gentiles*, as appears from *Homer:* But long before him, mentioned by *Moses* himself, who forbids it in *Deut.* xviii. 10. Notwithstanding which, the *Israelites*, who had a Divine Oracle, and holy Prophets to guide them, fell into this foul Sin, as they did into most of the *Gentile* Abominations.

Ver. 9. *And the Woman said unto him, Behold, thou knowest what Saul hath done, how he hath cut off those who have familiar Spirits and Wizards out of the Land: wherefore then layest thou a snare for my Life, to cause me to die?*] For so the Law was, *Levit.* xx. 27. And *Saul* seems by the Woman's Speech to have executed it, for she saith he had *cut them off*; whereas it is only said, that he had *put them away:* As if he had failed in his Duty, and merely banished such Persons, when he should have put them to death.

Ver. 10. *And Saul sware unto her by the* LORD, *saying, As the* LORD *liveth, there shall no Punishment happen to thee for this thing.*] An Oath was so sacred a Thing in those Days, that they entirely relied upon it, and ventured their Lives upon its Credit.

Ver. 11. *Then said the Woman, whom shall I bring up to thee? and he said, bring me up Samuel.*] It is a wonderful Thing, that he should believe a Woman should have power to disturb the Rest of *Samuel*, and bring him thither at her Command: But he was forsaken by God, and grown delirious.

Ver. 12. *And when the Woman saw Samuel.*] Here Interpreters are very much divided; some imagining it was *Samuel* himself that appeared: Others, a Spectre, which by the Power of the Devil appeared in his likeness. Several of the ancient Fathers are of the former Opinion, and particularly *Justin Martyr:* Who in his Dialogue with *Trypho* the *Jew*, alledges this as a Demonstration of the Immortality of the Soul, *p.* 333. And most of the *Roman* Church are now of the same mind. But *Tertullian* saith (in his Book, *De Anima*, Cap. 57.) *God forbid we should believe the Soul of any holy Man, much less of a Prophet, should be brought up by the Power of the Devil.* Of this Persuasion are a great Number of the Ancients, particularly St. *Cyril* of *Alexandria*; who thinks it the greatest Absurdity to believe, that a wretched Woman should call up *Samuel*'s Soul; the Dæmons, with whom such People deal, having no such Power. And so St. *Hierom* calls this *Samuelis Phantasma*. Yet there are vast Numbers of modern Authors, who think that by God's Permission, or Dispensation, the Soul of *Samuel* might appear: Which Sir *John Marsham* himself takes not to be improbable: See *Chron. Canon.* xiii. But the very Letter of the Text seems to me to be against this Opinion: Which speaks of bringing him *up*, and his *coming up* out of the Earth; whereas, if it had been *Samuel*, he should rather have come down from Heaven. This Apparition therefore was one of those fallacious Spirits, whom *Porphyry* speaks of (Lib. 2. *De Abstinentiâ*) *who put on any Shape, and counterfeit* (as his Words are) *the Gods, and Dæmons, and the Souls of the Dead,* Γένος ἀπαταλῆς φύσεως παυλόμορφον καὶ πολύτροπον, ὑποκρινόμενον καὶ θεὺς, καὶ δαίμονας, καὶ ψυχὰς τεθνηκότων. Which a very learned Person (*Joh. Wagenseil*) hath confirmed, by this Reason, which to me seems very solid; that since God was not pleased to answer *Saul* (as he confessed) either by Prophets, or by Dreams, or by *Urim* and *Thummim*, but had withdrawn himself wholly from him, it is not probable, that he would send *Samuel* himself to him from the Dead (and none else could do it) and that at the Call of a Witch: When he would not favour him with any Revelation from a living Prophet, or any other way. *Confut. Car. Lipmanni*, p. 198.

She cried with a loud Voice: and the Woman spake to Saul, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul.] She cried out for fear of *Saul:*

Saul: When she perceived, by the Reverence the Spectre paid him, who he was. For so *Abarbinel* interprets it, he bowed with his Face to the ground, in honour of *Saul*, whereby the Woman concluded he was the King.

Ver. 13. *And the King said unto her, Be not afraid.*] Do not imagine I come with any design to discover thee, and bring thee to Punishment.

For what sawest thou?] But tell me what appeared to thee.

And she said, I saw Gods ascending out of the earth.] By the word *Elohim* the *Jews* understand a *Judge:* For so Judges are called in *Psalm* lxxxii. 1, 6. *Peter Martyr* therefore interprets it not amiss, *a Person very majestick, like a Judge or a King*. And so *R. Esaias* mentioned by *Vorstius* upon *Pirke Eliezer*, p. 113. who by *Elohim* understands *hominem insignis atque excelsæ staturæ*, a Man of an eminent and high Stature; as the Scripture calls high Trees and Mountains, *Trees and Mountains of God*. And he is said, *to ascend out of the Earth*. For so the Heathen endeavoured (as *Homer*, *Virgil*, *Statius*, and other ancient Poets tell us) to bring up the Dead out of the Earth, to give them Answers to their Doubts. Which wicked Custom prevailed long among the *Jews*; for *Isaiah* alludes to it in xxix. 4. when he saith they should be brought so low, as to speak like a familiar Spirit out of the Ground, and whisper out of the Dust. And it is evident likewise from *Isa.* lxiv. 4. that they were wont to go to the Sepulchres of the Dead, there to consult them. For that's the Meaning of *sacrificing in Gardens*, ver. 3. for there they were wont to bury their Dead.

Ver. 14. *And he said unto her, What form is he of?*] This is an Argument he saw nothing; but afterwards heard a Voice.

And she said, an old Man cometh up, and he is covered with a Mantle.] Such as Kings wore, and also Prophets; who had very great Authority, xv. 27. 2 *Kings* ii. 8, 13. The *Hebrew* word *Meil* signifies as much as the *Greek* ποδήρης, a long Garment which came down to the Feet.

And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.] By the Description which the Woman gave of him, he concluded it was *Samuel*; and thereupon made his Reverence to him.

Ver. 15. *And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, and brought me up?*] This shews it was an evil Spirit, personating *Samuel*, who spake these Words. For it is not in the power of Witches to disturb the Rest of good Men; and to bring them into this World when they please. And *Samuel*, we may be sure, would never have acknowledged such a Power in Magical Arts: The Credit of which the Devil endeavoured to support.

And Saul answered, I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more; neither by Prophets, nor by Dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayst make known to me what I shall do.] Some think he omits Enquiry by *Urim:* Because in truth, he neither did nor could make use of that; *Abiathar* having carried it away to *David*. But this doth not agree with *ver.* 6. which supposes he did enquire by *Urim*. He should rather, by Repentance, and Prayer, and Sacrifices, and doing right to *David*, have besought the Favour of God; as *Pellicanus* here well observes.

Ver. 16. *And Samuel said to Saul, Wherefore dost thou ask me, seeing the LORD is departed from thee, and become thine enemy?*] Nothing could be more senseless, than to imagine *Samuel* could do any thing for him, when the LORD, whose Servant *Samuel* was, would not regard him.

Ver. 17. *And the LORD hath done to him.*] That is, to *David*, mentioned in the Conclusion of the Verse.

As he spake by me.] Still the evil Spirit personates *Samuel*, that *Saul* might be deceived into a Belief, that it was really he who spoke to him.

For the LORD hath rent the Kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to thy Neighbour, even unto David.] As *Samuel* had foretold long ago; and now it was ready to be accomplished.

Ver. 18. *Because thou obeyedst not the Voice of the LORD.*] This relates (*Abarbinel* thinks) to his Sin in *Gilgal*, Chap. xiii.

Nor executed his fierce wrath upon Amalek.] This was his next Sin, whereby he highly provoked God's Anger against him: For he was not sensible he had offended his express Command, but justified his Conduct, till *Samuel* took a great deal of pains to convince him; and then told him, he would rend the Kingdom from him, xv. 28.

Therefore hath the LORD done this unto thee this day.] He doth not mention his Sin in killing the LORD's Priests; because this Decree of taking the Kingdom from him, was passed before that Sin was committed.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, the LORD will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines.*] *Samuel* himself could no more know this, than an evil Spirit; unless God had been pleased to suggest it: Which he might think good to do to this Ghost, which personated *Samuel*, that he might terrify *Saul*. Or he saw the *Philistines* to be so numerous, and *Saul* so feeble and dispirited, that he doubted not the Victory would be on the *Philistines* side; and therefore confidently pronounced it. But the former is more probable, that God used this evil Spirit to declare his Mind at this time: So that he spake nothing but by his Direction.

And to-morrow shalt thou and thy Sons be with me.] If we take the Word *to-morrow* strictly, *Eustathius*, Arch-Bishop of *Anticch*, his Argument against *Origen* is good, that this could not be *Samuel* who spake, because his Words are false: There being more than a Day between this and the Fight, as many have clearly proved from the Story itself. But the Meaning may be no more, than very shortly thou shalt be as I am, that is, dead. For, as many have well observed (particularly *Hackspan* in his Disputation concerning *Angels* and *Dæmons*) by these Words, *be with me*, *mors simpliciter notatur, non vero peculiaris mortem secutus status.* Death is simply noted, but not the State which follows after Death.

And

And the LORD shall deliver the Host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines.] He would not have him think his Army should be able to defend him. *Abarbinel* observes, that he reckons up three Judgments, in the very Order wherein they fell out (which shews all was spoken by God's Order) *first*, That the Host of *Israel* should be delivered into the hand of the *Philistines*: Then, that *Saul* and his Sons should be slain: And *lastly*, that the *Philistines* should come and dwell in their Cities, xxxi. 7. which he takes to be the Sense of the last Words, which otherwise are only a Repetition of the first.

Ver. 20. *And Saul fell straightway all along on the earth, and was afraid, because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him: for he had eaten no bread all the day, nor all the night.*] No wonder he fainted away, being weak in Body for want of Food: And extreamly afflicted in Mind by this dismal Message, which *Samuel*, he thought, brought him from God.

Ver. 21. *And the Woman came unto Saul.*] These Words suggest that *Saul* was in some private Room, where he alone heard the Words that were spoken by the Apparition.

And saw that he was sore troubled, and said unto him, Behold thy Handmaid hath obeyed thy voice, and I have put my Life in my hand, and have hearkened unto thy words which thou spakest unto me.] She had exposed herself to extream Danger: For what we carry in our Hand may easily fall out, or be snatcht from us.

Ver. 22. *Now therefore, I pray thee, hearken thou also unto the voice of thine Handmaid, and let me set a morsel of bread before thee, and eat; that thou mayst have strength when thou goest on thy way.*] For without some Refreshment she saw it would be impossible for him to get to his Camp again.

Ver. 23. *But he refused, and said, I will not.*] He chose rather to die there, than by the *Philistines*.

But his Servants, together with the Woman, compelled him.] Prest him so hard, that he yielded to them.

And he hearkned to their voice.] Who knew nothing of what he had heard, but thought he had fainted away only for want of Food.

So he arose from the earth, and sat upon the bed.] As the manner (I observed before) then was; and not to lie along when they eat.

Ver. 24. *And the Woman had a fat Calf in the house.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Marbek* is well translated *fat*, as *Bochartus* confesses, though it properly signifies (as he demonstrates) a Calf that treads out the Corn, and is fatted up by that means. *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 31.

And she hasted, and killed it, and took flour and kneaded it, and did bake unleavened Bread thereof.] Because there was no time to let it ferment.

Ver. 25. *And she brought it before Saul, and before his Servants, and they did eat: then they arose up, and went away that night.*] Before the break of Day; that none might discover they had been with such a Woman.

CHAP. XXIX.

Verse 1. *NOW the Philistines gathered all their Army to Aphek.*] There were three places of this Name; one in the Tribe of *Judah*, another in *Manasseh*, and a third in *Ashur*. Which last seems to be here meant, where the Sons of *Eli* were slain. See iv. 1.

And the Israelites pitched by a Mountain which is in Jezreel.] A Valley which was overlook'd by the Mountain *Gilboa:* From whence the *Israelites* came down (xxviii. 4.) to draw up their Army here.

Ver. 2. *And the Lords of the Philistines passed on by hundreds and by thousands.*]. When they took a view of their Army, the great Men appeared, some at the Head of an Hundred, some of a Thousand Soldiers.

But David and his Men passed on in the rearward with Achish.] Who seems to have been the General of the Army: and to have made *David* and his Men his Life-guard, according to his Resolution, xxviii. 2.

Ver. 3. *Then said the Princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here?*] Who, they were afraid, would prove false to them, and take part with their own Countrymen.

And Achish said unto the Princes of the Philistines, Is not this David the Servant of Saul, the King of Israel, who hath been with me these days, or these years?] The meaning is, *I may say years, not days:* For he had been with him part of two Years: And, if he had not formerly known him, his Predecessor had (xxi. 10.) and it is likely he had held Correspondence with him before he came to him.

And I have found no fault in him, since he fell unto me, unto this day?] This intimates, that he looked on him as revolted from *Saul*; and by the Experience he had of his Fidelity, he thought he might be still trusted.

Ver. 4. *And the Princes of the Philistines were wroth with him; and the Princes of the Philistines said unto him,*] In an angry Tone,

Make this Fellow return, that he may go again to his place, which thou hast appointed him.] At *Ziglag*, which they were contented he should possess.

And let him not go down with us to the battel, lest in the battel he be an Adversary to us.] And thereby do them more mischief than the Army of the *Israelites*.

For wherewith should he reconcile himself to his Master? should it not be with the heads of these men?] That is, of the *Philistines*. They reasoned wisely, according to the common Practice of Mankind; and well it was for *David*, that they were such Politicians: For hereby God delivered him out of a very great strait; either of being an Enemy to his Country, or false to his Friends, and to his Trust. And by the same good Providence he was sent back to rescue his Wives, and the Wives and Children of his Men, who were taken captive.

Ver. 5. *Is not this David of whom they sung one to another in Dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?*] They remembred that he was their old Enemy, who killed

killed *Goliath*: And was highly magnified for it, above *Saul* himſelf.

Ver. 6. *Then Achiſh called David, and ſaid unto him, Surely, as the LORD liveth.*] He ſwears by the God whom *David* worſhipped, that he might be the more believed. Or perhaps he had learn'd ſomething from *David* of the true God, though he worſhipped others with him.

Thou haſt been upright, and thy going out and coming in with me in the Hoſt, is good in my ſight.] He commends him as an unblameable Perſon in his private Converſation; and as an excellent Commander in his Army.

For I have not found Evil in thee, ſince the day of thy coming unto me, unto this day.] A very honourable Teſtimony from a Foreign Prince.

Nevertheleſs, the Lords favour thee not.] Unto whom *Achiſh* was forced to yield: For he was not an abſolute King; but the Lords of the Country ſtill retained a great Authority.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore now return and go in peace: that thou diſpleaſe not the Lords of the Philiſtines.*] From the effects of whoſe Envy and Jealouſy he could not preſerve him.

Ver. 8. *And David ſaid unto Achiſh, But what have I done? and what haſt thou found in thy Servant ſo long as I have been with thee unto this day, that I may not go fight againſt the Enemies of my Lord the King?*] He had told him before, that he found not the leaſt Fault in him: Therefore this Queſtion may ſeem impertinent. But *David* was to act his Part handſomely, upon this Occaſion; ſo that, though he was inwardly pleaſed, he would not have them ſuſpect he was glad to be diſmiſſed: And therefore, ſince the King was ſatisfied with his Fidelity, asks why he might not be truſted to fight againſt his Enemies, and that his Lords would give him a Reaſon? But *Abarbinel* thinks he never intended this; but being choſen by *Achiſh* to be *the Keeper of his Head* (xxviii. 2.) he reſolved only to diſcharge this Office; but not to join in the Battle againſt *Iſrael*.

Ver. 9. *And Achiſh anſwered and ſaid to David, I know that thou art good in my ſight as an Angel of God.*] He had learn'd ſomething, as I obſerved before, *ver.* 6. of the *Hebrew* Religion: And it appears by this, of their Language alſo. And the Meaning is, he look'd upon *David* as a Man ſent down from Heaven to him: All things proſpering that he took in hand.

Notwithſtanding the Princes of the Philiſtines have ſaid, he ſhall not go with us to Battle.] They ſeem to have made ſuch an Order in Council: Which the King durſt not contradict.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore now riſe up early in the Morning.*] Leſt any Miſchief ſhould come to him, if he delayed his Departure.

With thy Maſter's Servants that are come with thee.] This intimates, that the Lords of the *Philiſtines* would not truſt them, becauſe they looked on them ſtill as *Saul*'s Subjects.

And as ſoon as ye are up early in the Morning, and have light, depart.] He adviſes them to loſe no Time, but as ſoon as they could ſee their Way, leave the Army, and march to *Ziklag*.

Ver. 11. *So David and his Men roſe up early in the Morning, to return into the Land of the Philiſtines.*] For now they were in the *Philiſtines* Camp, in the Land of *Iſrael*, at *Aphek*, xxix. 1. *And the Philiſtines went up to Jezreel.*] To the Battel to the *Iſraelites*, who were pitched there, *ver.* 1.

CHAP. XXX.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, when David and his Men were come to Ziklag on the third Day.*] So many Days Journey it was from the Camp of the *Philiſtines* to this Place. See the beginning of the next Book, *ver.* 2.

That the Amalekites had invaded the South, and Ziklag, and ſmote Ziklag, and burnt it with Fire.] To revenge themſelves for what *David* had done to them, xxvii. 8. which they might eaſily do, when he and his Men were abſent; and but a ſmall, if any, Guard left in the Place.

Ver. 2. *And had taken the Women captive that were therein: they ſlew not any, either great or ſmall; but carried them away, and went on their way.*] Towards their own Country. This may ſeem ſtrange, that *David* having killed all he could meet with, and ſpared none, neither Men nor Women, xxvii. 9, 11. they ſhould not ſerve his People in the ſame kind. But though they ſought Revenge, yet they deſired Booty much more: Being a poor, and very covetous People; who intended to ſell them for Slaves, and make Money of them.

Ver. 3. *And David and his Men came to the City, and behold it was burnt with Fire: and their Wives, and their Sons, and their Daughters were taken captive.*] This befel *David* when he ſeemed to be in the greateſt Security: Having eſcaped the Fury of *Saul*, and alſo the Service of the *Philiſtines*; who were likely to make *Saul* pay very dear for his ill Uſage of *David*. But ſuch is the State of this World, we are oft ſurprized with ſudden unexpected Troubles; and, as the Proverb is, *many Things fall out between the Cup and the Lip*.

Ver. 4. *And David and the People that were with him lift up their Voice and wept: until they had no power to weep.*] For ſuch Calamities are enough to break the Heart of the moſt couragious and undaunted Spirits.

Ver. 5. *And David's two Wives were taken captive, Ahinoam the Jezreelite, and Abigail the Wife of Nabal the Carmelite.*] This is ſet down diſtinctly, to aggravate *David*'s Loſs.

Ver. 6. *And David was greatly diſtreſſed, for the People ſpake of ſtoning him.*] As the Cauſe of this Calamity, in leaving the City unguarded; or in provoking the *Amalekites* ſo grievouſly as he had done, in the Slaughter of all he could find.

Becauſe the Soul of the People was grieved; every Man for his Sons, and for his Daughters.] Grief took away the uſe of their Reaſon.

But David encouraged himſelf in the LORD his God.] Who had never failed him in the greateſt Diſtreſſes: But done great things for him, and promiſed to do greater.

Ver. 7. *And David ſaid to Abiathar the Prieſt, Ahimelech's Son, Bring me hither, I pray thee, the Ephod.*] From theſe Words *Petrus Cunæus*, (*Lib.* 1. *de Rep. Heb. Cap.* 14.) concludes that the Kings of *Iſrael* might make uſe of the *Ephod*, as well as the High-Prieſt: Becauſe *David*

ſaith, *bring me hither*, &c. But this doth not ſignify that he himſelf meant to uſe it; but only that he deſired it might be uſed for him: According to what is ſaid of *Joſhua*, in *Numb.* xxvii. 21. that he ſhould ſtand before *Eleazar* the Prieſt, *who ſhould enquire for him*, &c.

And Abiathar brought thither the Ephod unto David.] From theſe Words the ſame *Cunæus*, in an Epiſtle of his to *Caſpar Barlæus* (*Epiſt. Eccleſiaſticæ*, 506. *p.* 767.) argues for his forenamed Opinion, becauſe it is not ſaid he brought it *le David*, but *el David:* The former of which, he thinks, might have ſignified for his Uſe; but this denotes, it was for him to uſe himſelf. Which he endeavours to confirm from the high Privilege which the King had above other Men, of ſitting in the Houſe of God, *&c.* But this is confuted lately by a Man very learned in theſe Matters, (*John Braunius*, *Lib.* 2. *de Veſt. Hebr. Sacerd. Cap.* 20. *n.* 32.) who well obſerves (as *Buxtorf* alſo doth) that in the foregoing Words *David* doth ſay, bring the Ephod, *li*, i. e. *pro me*, or *mea cauſa*, for me, or *in meam gratiam*, for my ſake.

Ver. 8. *And David enquired at the* LORD, *ſaying, Shall I purſue after this Troop?*] He enquired by *Abiathar*. So all the *Hebrew* Doctors, as *Buxtorf* obſerves in his *Hiſt. Urim*, *Cap.* 3.

Shall I overtake them?] This ſhews it is a vain Obſervation of the *Jews*, that they were not to ask two Queſtions together: For *David* ſtill continues to do ſo here, as he had done at *Keilah*; though God, they ſay there, had ſet him right in his Enquiry, and taught him to do otherwiſe.

And he anſwered him, Purſue; for thou ſhalt ſurely overtake them, and without fail recover all.] He anſwers both Queſtions at once, and tells him alſo more than he ask'd; that he ſhould regain all that he had loſt: Which no doubt was a mighty Encouragement unto him in his Purſuit.

Ver. 9. *So David went, he and the ſix hundred Men that were with him, and came to the Brook Beſor; where thoſe that were left behind, ſtayed.*] They that were left to look after the Stuff (*ver.* 24.) who were ſo tired, that they were not able to march any farther.

Ver. 10. *So David purſued, he and four hundred Men: for two hundred abode behind, who were ſo faint, that they could not go over the Brook Beſor.*] Grief, it is likely, made them neglect to take neceſſary Refreſhment, before they came out.

Ver. 11. *And they found an Egyptian in the Field.*] They knew him to be ſo by his Habit: Or perhaps they did not know whence he was, 'till he came to himſelf, and told them. But finding him in the Garb of a Soldier, they thought he belonged to the *Amalekites*.

And brought him to David.] Half dead.

And they gave him Bread, and he did eat, and made him drink Water.] Natural Compaſſion might move them to this: But they had another Motive, which was the Hope of making ſome Diſcovery, by his means, where the Enemies were.

Ver. 12. *And they gave him a piece of a Cake of Figs, and two Cluſters of Raiſins.*] Did all they could to comfort him up, and revive his Spirits.

And when he had eaten, his Spirit came again to him: For he had eaten no Bread, nor drunk any Water, three days and three nights.] Having no body near him to look after him: And being ſo ſick, he could not look after himſelf. This is to be underſtood as *Matth.* xii. 40. of one whole Day, and part of two others: As appears from the next Verſe, where he ſaith, *three Days ago I fell ſick*. In the *Hebrew*, *I fell ſick this third Day*, i. e. this is the third Day ſince I fell ſick.

Ver. 13. *And David ſaid, To whom belongeſt thou, and whence art thou? And he ſaid, I am a young Man of Egypt, Servant to an Amalekite: and my Maſter left me, becauſe three Days ago I fell ſick.*] A barbarous Act, to leave him there to periſh; when they had Camels good Store, for the Carriage of Men, as well as of their Spoil, *ver.* 17. But this Inhumanity coſt them dear: For by this means they loſt their own Lives. Such is the wonderful Providence of God (as *Conr. Pellicanus* here piouſly obſerves) which governs all the Deſires, and Thoughts, and Counſels, and Works, and whatſoever is done among Men; both the good and the bad.

Ver. 14. *And we made an Invaſion upon the South of the Cherethites,*] They are the ſame with the *Philiſtines*. For the *Arabians* call their Country (as *Bochartus* obſerves) *Keritha*, and the *Syrians* call it *Creth*. Whoſe Inhabitants the *Hebrews* call *Crethi* or *Crethim*. And to put all out of doubt, *the South of the Cherethites* here mentioned, is in the *ſixth* Verſe explained, *the Land of the Philiſtines*. Who were excellent Archers, as we may gather from xxxi. 3. See there.

And upon the Coaſt that belongeth to Judah.] The South Coaſt of that Tribe.

And upon the Land of Caleb;] We read no where elſe of this Land: which, in all probability, ſignifies that South part of *Judah* which was given to *Caleb*, and which his Poſterity inherited, *Joſh.* xiv. 13.

And we burnt Ziklag with Fire.] With which they ſeem to have ended their Expedition.

Ver. 15. *And David ſaid, Canſt thou bring me down to this Company? And he ſaid, Swear unto me by the* LORD, *that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hand of my Maſter,*] Who, it is likely, had otherwiſe been cruel to him: And therefore he had no mind to ſerve him any longer. Beſides his Service, I ſuppoſe, was no better than Slavery.

And I will bring thee down to this Company.] For he heard them ſay, it is likely, where they would ſtay and reſt themſelves.

Ver. 16. *And when he had brought him down,*] Who had given him Security, no doubt, by his Oath, as he deſired: And that, as I obſerved before, was ſuch a ſacred thing in ancient times, that all Men relied upon it.

Behold, they were ſpread abroad upon the Earth, eating and drinking, and dancing: becauſe of the great Spoil they had taken out of the Land of the Philiſtines, and out of the Land of Judah.] They had laid aſide their Arms, and were feaſting and making merry; as Men are wont to do, when they have had great Succeſs in their Enterprizes.

Ver. 27. *And David ſmote them from the Twilight, even unto the Evening of the next Day.*] He came

came upon them in the Evening, when they were refreshing and resting themselves with Mirth and Jollity: Being secure that no Danger was near them; because the *Israelites* and the *Philistines* (among whom they thought *David* was) were ready to engage; so that he could no more come to revenge himself, than the *Philistines* could for the Injuries done to them. And it is probable *David* let them fall asleep, when they had eaten and drunk liberally; and at Peep of Day fell upon them, and hunted them until the Evening; which begun the next Day.

And there escaped not a Man of them, save four hundred young Men that rode upon Camels,] The Country of *Arabia*, where this People lived, abounded with Camels: One sort of which run very swiftly. They were used also by some Nations in Battel: As *Vegetius* observes, *Lib.* 3. *de Re Militari, Cap.* 23. See *Stewechius*'s Annotations on him.

Ver. 18. *And recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away: and David rescued his two Wives.*] Which are here particularly mentioned, because he had the greatest concern for them.

Ver. 19. *And there was nothing lacking to them, either small or great, neither Son nor Daughter, neither Spoil, nor any thing they had taken to them.*] According to the Word of God, *ver.* 6.

Ver. 20. *And David took all the Flocks and the Herds,*] Which had been taken by the *Amalekites* from the *Philistines*, and other Places.

Which he drave before those other Cattle,] His Soldiers drave them before those Cattle that had been taken from *David* and his Men.

And said, This is David's Spoil.] Not that he challenged it all to himself: But that it was acquired by his Valour and Conduct; which they now magnified, who lately spake of stoning him. For some think they sung a triumphant Song, and that this was the Burden of it: Which they repeated at the end of every Verse.

Ver. 21. *And David came to the two hundred Men, which were so faint that they could not follow David: whom he had made also to abide at the Brook Besor.*] That they might look after their Stuff.

And they went forth to meet David, and to meet the People that were with him.] To congratulate their happy Success: And to receive their Wives and Children, who had been carried captive.

And when David came unto the People, he saluted them.] He was glad to see them, and enquired how they did (as it is in the Margin) for he had left them very weak.

Ver. 22. *Then answered all the wicked Men, and Men of Belial of those that went with David, and said,*] It is likely *David* told these two hundred Men, when he saluted them, that they should lose nothing, by their not being able to go along with him: Which made these Men, who had no Conscience, but were only greedy of Prey, to say what follows.

Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil which we have recovered; save to every Man his Wife and his Children, that he may lead them away, and depart.] This was a savage Resolution of such as feared not God, nor regarded Men: Since it was not the Choice of their Brethren to stay behind, but meer Necessity, and Inability to travel further.

Ver. 23. *Then said David,*] Who still preserved his Authority over the most wicked among them.

Ye shall not do so, my Brethren.] He overrules them: But thought fit to do it in a friendly manner.

With that which God hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the Company that came against us, into our hand.] As much as to say, when God hath been so good to us, we ought not to be unkind to our Brethren.

Ver. 24. *For who will hearken unto you in this matter?*] No equal Persons, he was confident, would be of their Opinion, if the Matter was referred to them.

But as his part is that goeth down to the Battel, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the Stuff: their parts shall be alike.] *Polybius* explains the Order of dividing the Spoils of War (as *Grotius* observes, *Lib.* 3. *de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap.* 6. *Sect.* 17.) some of which was allotted those who remained in the Camp. But the Proportions were various in several Places. In some, a simple Portion was given to a Footman; a double to a Centurion; and a treble to a Horseman. In other Places they varied from this: But howsoever the Division was made, the Commander in Chief was allowed to take the best of the Spoil to himself. As *David* perhaps now did: And then left the rest to be equally divided among his Men. But the *Talmudists* say, that in After-Times, the King had all the royal Furniture that was found in the Tent of the conquered Prince, given unto him for his Share.

Ver. 25. *And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a Statute and an Ordinance for Israel, unto this day.*] The Equity of this Law appears from hence; that by common Consent these two hundred Men were left behind, to look after their Baggage: And they were part of the same Body of Men, linked together in the same common Society: And were hindred by meer Weariness from going to fight, which otherways they would have done. And their Will was accepted for the Deed. And they were in the same common Danger; for if the four hundred had been routed, their Enemies would soon have cut them off.

This Law may seem to have been ordained before by God himself in *Numbers* xxxi. Which if it were, it may be thought strange that *David* should not alledge that Law, to quiet the present Contention. But it is evident, this was a very different Case from that: For threescore thousand who staid at home, had no more among them, than the twelve thousand had who went to the Battle, *ver.* 27. of that Chapter. And what was then done was not ordained to be observed as a Statute through all Generations. This therefore was a new Law, but perpetually continued to the Time of the *Maccabees*; as appears from the second Book of their History, chap. viii. ver. 28, 30. And *Osiander* observes, that it pleased the *Romans* to do the same, as *Festus* tells us. See *Josh.* xxii. 8.

But

But the moſt ancient Cuſtom among the *Romans* was (as *Godeſcalcus Stewechius* ſhews at large, upon *Vegetius de Re Militari*, Lib. 2. Cap. 7.) to burn part of the Spoils, as an Offering to their Gods; and for the reſt, ſometimes the Soldiers were permitted to keep what every Man had got, to himſelf: And ſometimes, if the Neceſſities of the Commonwealth required, they were all brought to the *Quæſtor*, to be put into the Publick Treaſury. Out of thoſe which every Man kept to himſelf, they were wont, when they came home, to have ſome of them upon the Poſts of the Gates to their Houſes: Which it was lawful to remove, when an Houſe was ſold to another Man.

Ver. 26. *And when David came to Ziklag, he ſent of the Spoil to the Elders of Judah, even to his Friends.*] By this ſeems plain, that he had reſerved ſome Part of the Spoil to himſelf; out of which he made Preſents to his Friends: Some of which were of the beſt Quality in the Tribe of *Judah*.

Saying, Behold, a Preſent for you of the Spoil of the Enemies of the LORD.] In the *Hebrew*, *a Bleſſing for you*, &c. So he calls the Preſent, becauſe it was a Token that he wiſhed all Proſperity to them; who had been kind to him in his Baniſhment, and help'd to maintain and protect him: And whom he was deſirous ſtill to oblige, that they might more readily receive him, when he had a Right to take Poſſeſſion of the Kingdom.

Ver. 27. *And to them which were in Bethel.*] This ſeems to be the ſame Place, with that which is called *Baalath* and *Kirjath-baal*, *Joſh.* xv. 9, 60.

And to them which were in South-Ramoth.] A Place in the Tribe of *Simeon*, *Joſh.* xix. 8. called *Ramoth in the South*, to diſtinguiſh it from *Ramoth-Gilead*, which lay Northward. By which it appears he had other Friends, who ſometimes gave him Shelter, or Subſiſtence, beſides thoſe in his own Tribe.

And to them which were in Jattir.] A Town in the Mountainous Part of the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 48.

Ver. 28. *And to them that were in Aroer*, &c.] Not that on the other ſide *Jordan* (mentioned in *Numb.* xxxii.) but ſome other Place, in the Tribe of *Judah*, or ſome neighbouring Tribe, where the other Places here mentioned were: For we no where read, that *David* ever fled, during *Saul*'s Perſecution, into the Country beyond *Jordan*.

Ver. 29. *And to them which were in Rachal, and to them which were in the Cities of the Jerahmeelites.*] Theſe People lay on the South of *Judah*, xxvii. 10. where it is likely, *Rachal* alſo was.

And to them that were in the Cities of the Kenites.] Who were near to the *Jerahmeelites*; it appears from the forenamed Place.

Ver. 30. *And to thoſe that were in Hormah.*] This was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 30. afterwards given unto the Tribe of *Simeon*, *Joſh.* xix. 4.

And to them that were in Chor-aſhan, and to them that were in Athach.] It is probable that theſe two Places were alſo in the ſame Tribe.

Ver. 31. *And to them which were in Hebron.*] Which was certainly a City of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 54. Where *David* was firſt made King, and reigned over that Tribe, 2 *Sam.* ii. 1, 2, &c.

And to all the Places where David and his Men were wont to haunt.] Either to lurk among them, or to get Proviſions, or Intelligence from them.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Philiſtines fought againſt Iſrael.*] i. e. Gave them Battel: And as they began the Quarrel (xxix. 1.) ſo they ſeem to have begun the Fight.

And the Men of Iſrael fled from before the Philiſtines, and fell down ſlain in Mount Gilboa.] They fled thither from the Valley of *Jezreel*, and were there ſlain in great numbers.

Ver. 2. *And the Philiſtines followed hard upon Saul, and upon his Sons.*] Who were the Leaders of the Army: Which the *Philiſtines* thought would never rally again, if they were ſlain or taken.

And the Philiſtines ſlew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchiſhua, Saul's Sons.] It ſeems *Iſhboſheth* was not there, being no warlike Man; or he eſcaped out of the Battel by flight, as *Abner* and other great Men did: Or perhaps he was left at home to manage domeſtick Affairs. *Jonathan* ſeems to have deſerved a better Fate: But the Providence of God ſuffered him to be ſlain, that *David* might more eaſily come to the Throne. For though he had freely conſented to it, yet he was ſuch a Favourite of the People, that many of them might have ſtickled for him.

Ver. 3. *And the Battel went ſore againſt Saul.*] They purſued him ſo cloſe, that there was no Hope he could eſcape.

And the Arthers hit him, and he was ſorely wounded of the Archers.] In the *Hebrew* the words are, the Archers *found him*: Which ſignifies in that Language, to ruſh upon one on a ſudden. Bows and Arrows were the principal Weapons of this Nation; in the Uſe of which they were very dexterous, and did terrible Execution. Which is the Reaſon, ſome think, that *David* when he came to the Throne, taught the *Iſraelites* the Uſe of the Bow (as we read in the next Book, Chap. i. ver. 18.) that they might not be inferior to the *Philiſtines*, nor fall into the like Diſaſter that *Saul* had done. And when he had made Peace with the *Philiſtines*, he took ſome of their Archers, with whom he was well acquainted, to be the Keepers of his Body: Which are thoſe ſo often mentioned in the following Books under the Name of *Cerethites*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 18. xv. 18. xx. 7. 1 *Kings* i. 38, 44. 1 *Chron.* xviii. 17. in all which Places where the *Hebrew* hath the word *Cerethi*, the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt interprets it *Archers*. See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, Lib. 1. Cap. 15. p. 459.

Ver. 4. *Then ſaid Saul unto his Armour-bearer, draw thy Sword, and thruſt me through therewith.*] For tho' he had received many Wounds, yet they were not mortal; at leaſt, not for the preſent.

Leſt theſe uncircumciſed come, and thruſt me through, and abuſe me.] He was afraid they might put him to ſome ignominious Death, or make ſport with him, as they did with *Samſon*.

But his Armour-bearer would not, for he was ſore afraid.] Dreaded to think of killing his King.

Therefore Saul took a Sword, and fell upon it.] And killed himſelf, as appears by the next Words.

Ver. 5. *And when his Armour-bearer ſaw that Saul was dead, he fell likewiſe upon his Sword, and died with him.*] Some of the *Jews* think this was *Doeg*.

Ver. 6. *So Saul died, and his three Sons, and his Armour-bearer, and all his Men, the ſame day together.*] That is, all the Men that attended upon his Perſon.

Ver. 7. *And when the Men of Iſrael that were on the other ſide of the Valley.*] Of *Jezreel*.

And they that were on the other ſide Jordan.] Or rather, on *this ſide Jordan*: For the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies either ſide. And there was no Occaſion for thoſe beyond *Jordan* to flee.

Saw that the Men of Iſrael fled, and that Saul and his Sons were dead, they forſook the Cities and fled.] Being afraid, I ſuppoſe, to be carried Captive.

And the Philiſtines came and dwelt in them.] The Conſternation being ſo great, that there were none to oppoſe them.

Ver. 8. *And it came to paſs on the morrow, when the Philiſtines came to ſtrip the Slain, that they found Saul and his three Sons fallen in Mount Gilboa.*] It was contrary to Military Diſcipline, preſently to fall upon the Spoil: Which they did not till the next day.

And they cut off his Head.] As *David* had done the Head of *Goliath*.

And ſtript off his Armour, and ſent into the Land of the Philiſtines round about.] They ſent the News of this great Victory; and perhaps his Head and Armour in token of it.

To publiſh it in the Houſe of their Idols, and among the People.] That they might give thanks to their Gods, for the Victory they had obtained.

Ver. 10. *And they put his Armour in the Houſe of Aſhtaroth.*] As the Sword of *Goliath* was laid up in the Tabernacle.

And they faſtned his Body to the Wall of Beth-ſhan.] To expoſe it, as we do the Bodies of great Malefactors, to publick Shame and Reproach. And thus it appears by *ver.* 12. they did with the Bodies of his Sons.

Ver. 11. *And when the Inhabitants of Jabeſh-Gilead heard of that which the Philiſtines had done to Saul.*] They lived on the other ſide *Jordan*: For the People on this ſide were fled.

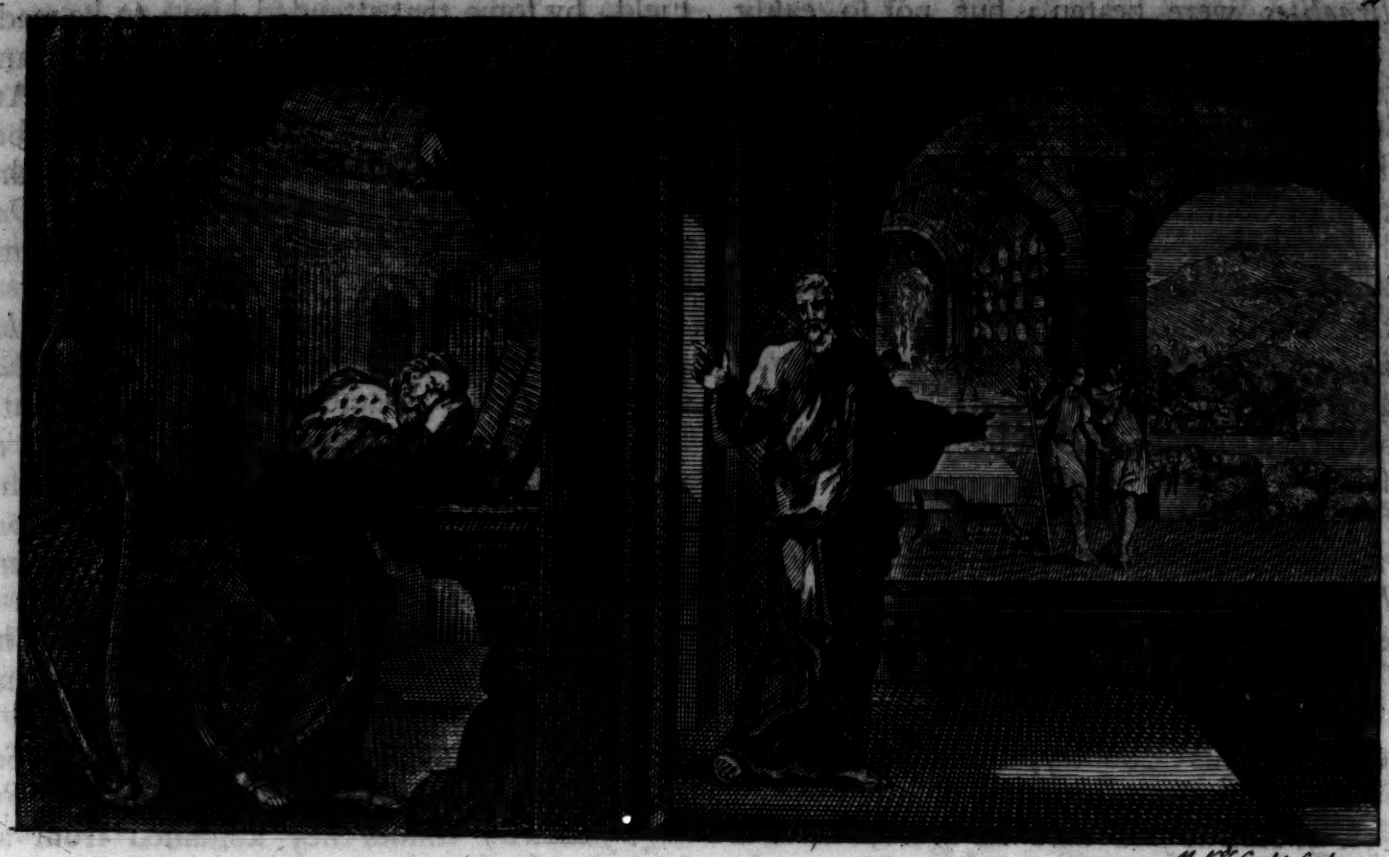
Ver. 12. *All the valiant Men aroſe, and went all night.*] To avoid Diſcovery.

And took the Body of Saul and the Bodies of his Sons from the Wall of Bethſhan.] Which was a City in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, not far from *Jordan*, and the Sea of *Geneſaret*: Out of which the *Manaſites* could not expel the old Inhabitants, *Judges* i. 27. To this Place they of *Jabeſh* might march in a Night's Time, and accompliſh their Deſign. *Ariſtotle* reports in the fifth Book of his *Ethicks* (as *Strigelius* here obſerves) that the Temples of the *Graces* were built in the very midſt of the Cities of the *Greeks*, that all Men might be admoniſhed to be grateful. Of which Virtue the Men of *Jabeſh-Gilead* gave a moſt Noble Example: Who being delivered by *Saul*, in the beginning of his Reign, from the *Ammonites*, when they were in danger to loſe their Eyes (Chap. xi.) now repay his Care of them when he was dead, by not ſuffering his Carcaſe to want the Honour of Burial.

And came to Jabeſh, and burnt them there.] Some think they burnt their Fleſh, which was rotten and putrid: Others, that they poured upon their Fleſh Aromatick hot Spices, ſuch as *Joſeph* ordered for the embalming of his Father: Or, as the *Targum* underſtands it, *they burnt upon*, or *over them*. Where *Kimchi* notes, that the Paraphraſt had reſpect to the Cuſtom delivered down from their Anceſtors, of burning the Beds and other Utenſils of the Dead upon their Graves; or to the burning of Spices. Certain it is, there was no ſuch Cuſtom as this among the *Jews*, of burning the Bodies of the Dead. Though ſome think that theſe People imitated the Heatheniſh Cuſtom, affecting Singularity, as appears from the Story of the *Benjamites*, *Judges* xxi. 8. where we read, they alone would not come into the Aſſembly of the whole Nation. Such a Singularity *Gierus* thinks they were now guilty of: And therefore in a parallel Place to this, 1 *Chron.* x. 11. there is no mention made of this *burning*: Either becauſe it was an unwonted Practice, or unworthy to be remembred.

Ver. 13. *And they took their Bodies, and buried them under a Tree in Jabeſh.*] In this alſo there ſeems to be ſome of the Superſtition of the *Gentiles*; among whom Trees were accounted ſacred Things.

And faſted ſeven days.] Expreſſed great Sorrow; of which this was a Token. *Lucian* ſaith in his Book *De Luctu*, that the *Greeks* were wont in their Funerals neither to eat nor drink for three Days. But this is not to be ſo underſtood; but that they faſted for ſeven Days together till the Evening (as the manner of faſting was among the *Jews*) and eat nothing all day.



M.I^{de} Gucht Sculp.

A COMMENTARY UPON THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMUEL.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs after the Death of Saul, when David was returned from the Slaughter of the Amalekites.*] The Fight between *Saul* and the *Philiſtines* fell out, when *David* was in purſuit of the *Amalekites*.

And David had abode about two days in Ziklag.] Which it ſeems the *Amalekites* had not quite burnt; contenting themſelves with the Spoil.

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs on the third day.*] After his coming into *Ziklag*.

That behold a Man came out of the Camp from Saul, with his Clothes rent, and Earth upon his Head.] As the manner of deep Mourners was. See 1 *Sam.* iv. 4.

And ſo it was, when he came to David, that he fell on the Earth, and did Obeyſance.] Honoured him as his King.

Ver. 3. *And David ſaid, From whence comeſt thou? and he ſaid, Out of the Camp of Iſrael am I eſcaped.*] Some of the *Jews* have a Conceit, that this was *Doeg*'s Son: Of which, tho' there be no Proof, yet the Objection againſt it is of no Value. For *Doeg* was an *Edomite*, and this Perſon an *Amalekite*, which ſeems inconſiſtent with his being the Son of *Doeg*. But it is to be conſidered that all *Amalekites* were alſo *Edomites*: Tho' all *Edomites* were not *Amalekites*. For *Amalek* was *Eſau*'s Grandſon by his Son *Eliphaz*, Gen. xxxvi. 15, 16.

Ver. 4. *And David ſaid, How went the matter? I pray thee tell me. And he anſwered, that the People were fled from the Battel; and many of the People are alſo fallen and dead; and Saul and Jonathan his Son are dead alſo.*] He relates the Matter very orderly; that firſt the *Iſraelites* were routed and fled; and then in the Purſuit of them many were ſlain; and in concluſion, *Saul* and *Jonathan* his Son. Which two he only mentions; thinking that *David* was principally concerned in them.

Ver. 5. *And David ſaid unto the young Man that told him, How knoweſt thou that Saul and Jonathan are dead?*] He might eaſily know that

the *Iſraelites* were beaten; but not ſo eaſily that theſe were in the number of the Slain.

Ver. 6. *And the young Man that told him, ſaid, As I happened by chance upon Mount Gilboa.*] One would think by this, that he was not a Soldier, but a Countryman, who had occaſion to go that way.

Behold, Saul leaned upon his Spear.] Endeavouring to run it through his Body.

And lo, the Chariots and Horſemen followed hard after him.] So that he feared he ſhould fall into their hands, before he could diſpatch himſelf.

Ver. 7. *And when he looked behind him, he ſaw me, and called unto me; and I anſwered, Here am I.*] He looked round about him, to ſee if there were any near him of his Servants.

Ver. 8. *And he ſaid unto me, Who art thou? and I anſwered, I am an Amalekite.*] He did not diſſemble his Country, tho' he knew *Saul* had no reaſon to be a Friend to it.

Ver. 9. *And he ſaid unto me again, Stand I pray thee upon me, and ſlay me.*] He would have him lean ſo hard upon him, with the whole Weight of his Body, that the Spear might run through him; which he had not Strength to make it do. This is not a likely Story: For *Saul*, in all Probability, would have been as unwilling to be killed by an *Amalekite*, as by a *Philiſtine*.

For Anguiſh is come upon me.] The *Hebrew* word *Schabatz* is variouſly tranſlated. By ſome *trembling*; by others, *Convulſions*; by the LXX, σκότος, *Darkneſs*. *Kimchi* ſaith it was a Diſeaſe, which ſome ſay was the *Cramp*: But in Scripture, as *Braunius* obſerves (Lib. 1. *de Veſtitu Sacerd. Hebr.* Cap. 17. Sect. 9.) it never ſignifies any one of theſe Things, but ſome Ornament in a Garment. And therefore our marginal Tranſlation is better, *my embroidered Coat* hinders the Spear from going far into my Body: Or his *Coat of Mail*, as *Diodate* tranſlates it. For it conſiſted of little Rings one within another, which made it hard to penetrate. And thus *Ralbag* among the *Jews* underſtands it.

Becauſe my Life is yet whole within me.] He was not mortally wounded.

Ver. 10. *So I ſtood upon him and ſlew him, becauſe I was ſure he could not live, after he was fallen.*] This is contrary to what *Saul* ſaid juſt before, that *his Life was whole within him* (unleſs he meant that the *Philiſtines* would inſtantly come upon him and kill him) and it was as falſe that he ſlew him; for it appears by the foregoing Relation, that *Saul* killed himſelf: And that not with a Spear, but with his Sword, xxxi. 4. But this the young Man ſaid to excuſe himſelf, if *David* did not approve the Fact.

And I took the Crown that was on his Head, and the Bracelets that were on his Arms; and have brought them hither unto my Lord.] *Saul* was the firſt that had the Enſigns of Royal Authority; for the *Judges* had none: But were mere Miniſters of God (during his Pleaſure) who was their King and Governour. And it is not likely that *Saul* wore his Crown when he was in the Fight (for that had been to ſet out himſelf a Mark for the *Philiſtines* to ſhoot at) but it was carried along with him into the Field, by ſome that attended him; to be ready to put on, if he had gotten the Victory, and triumphed. The *Jews* think that *Doeg* his Armour-bearer had it in his Cuſtody: Who before he killed himſelf gave it to his Son (this young *Amalekite*) and bade him carry it to *David*: Hoping he might thereby ingratiate himſelf with him.

Ver. 11. *And David took hold of his Clothes and rent them; and likewiſe all the Men that were with him.*] That is, all his Attendants. Every one knows that this was a Token of very great Sorrow, and of a violent Paſſion: Which all Nations uſed, as we learn from *Homer*, *Herodotus*, *Virgil*, and other ancient Authors.

Ver. 12. *And they mourned and wept.*] The whole Company made great Lamentations, and ſhed many Tears.

And faſted until Even.] Till the Evening Sacrifice was offered: Tho' *Buxtorf* (in his *Synag. Judaica*) thinks they abſtained from all Meat and Drink, till the Stars appeared.

For Saul, and for Jonathan his Son, and for the People of the LORD, and for the Houſe of Iſrael; becauſe they were fallen by the Sword.] He had great reaſon to mourn for *Jonathan*, who was his great Friend; but ſome think he ſhould have rejoiced to hear of *Saul*'s Death, who was his bitter Enemy. But there were many Reaſons for his bewailing his Death, as a publick Perſon, who was lately reconciled to him; and might poſſibly have returned to a better Mind, if he had lived longer. However, the Manner of his Death very much affected him; and the more, becauſe he heard perhaps of his being juſt before to conſult a Witch, and gave no Tokens of his Repentance. The *Jews* ſay, in both the *Talmuds*, that he mourned for *Saul*, as the *Prince of the great Sanhedrim*; and for *Jonathan*, as *the Father of it*. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *de Synedr.* Cap. 16. Sect. 4.

Ver. 13. *And David ſaid unto the young Man that told him, Whence art thou? and he ſaid, I am the Son of a Stranger; an Amalekite.* He had told *David* once before who he was, in the Relation he made of his Diſcourſe with *Saul*, *ver.* 8. But being aſtoniſhed at the News, he did not attend unto that Circumſtance, or had forgot it. Beſides, a good Judge ought to examine Things ſtrictly, and not to truſt unto the firſt Anſwer.

Ver. 14. *And David ſaid, How waſt thou not afraid to ſtretch forth thy hand, to deſtroy the LORD's Anointed?*] Who, it is poſſible, might have recovered, and been carried off by ſome of his own Men: The *Philiſtines*, by ſome extraordinary Providence of God, being diverted from their Purſuit. And it was the greater Preſumption of this young Man to do it; ſince one of *Saul*'s own Servants durſt not venture upon ſuch a Fact.

Ver. 15. *And David called one of the young Men.*] One of the Guards of his Body.

And ſaid unto him, Go near and fall upon him. And he ſmote him, that he died.] There was a known Law, that no Man ſhould be condemned out of the Mouth of one Witneſs: And the *Jews* tell us, that no Judge was to ſit alone, but to have ſome other

joined with him: And that no Man's Teſtimony was to be taken againſt himſelf. But this was the ſingular Prerogative of their Kings, that they might alone hear any Man's Cauſe, and condemn him; and that out of the Mouth of one Witneſs, or from his own Confeſſion. Of which *Maimonides* gives this Caſe of the *Amalekite* as an Inſtance: Which he looks upon as an extraordinary Example, and as the King's Proceſs. See *Schickhard, de Jure Regis*, Cap. 4. Theorem 14. and my Notes upon *Joſh.* vii. 25. But after all, it looks ſomething hard, that a Man ſhould be put to death for doing what *Saul* himſelf deſired, and when he was ſure (if this Man ſaid true) that he could not live. *Abarbinel* therefore thinks, that this Man being an *Amalekite*, *David* ſuppoſed he might kill *Saul* out of Revenge, for the Slaughter he had made of his People.

Ver. 16. *And David ſaid unto him, Thy Blood be upon thy Head: for thy Mouth hath teſtified againſt thee, ſaying, I have ſlain the* LORD's *Anointed.*] That is, thou art the Cauſe of thine own Death; or the Blood thou haſt ſhed, is the Reaſon of thy Death.

Ver. 17. *And David lamented with this Lamentation over Saul, and over Jonathan his Son.*] He and his Servants had lamented them before, *ver.* 12. but now *David* compoſed a Song for a publick and univerſal Lamentation.

Ver. 18. *Alſo he bad them teach the Children of Judah.*] Among whom he now was; and over whom he firſt reigned. This comes in as a *Parentheſis* between the former Verſe and what follows; to ſhew his early Endeavours to promote the Good of the People.

The uſe of the Bow.] While he made Lamentation for the Dead, he did not neglect the Care of the Living: That they might be provided with better Means to defend themſelves. For they now looking upon him, as the King God deſigned ſhould rule over them, he ordered they ſhould immediately learn the Skill of uſing Bows and Arrows, in which the *Philiſtines* excelled them. See what I have noted, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 3. Some indeed make this the Title of the following Song, which they were to ſing among their military Exerciſes: But the former ſeems a more natural Interpretation; which *Conradus Pellicanus* propoſed in the Beginning of the Reformation. The *Jews*, ſaith he, hitherto uſed only Slings and Swords; but now were taught to ſhoot with Bows and Arrows: For it did not misbecome them to learn the Art of defending themſelves from Infidels. And indeed the Benefit of having good Archers in an Army is ſo great, that *Cato* took the pains to deſcribe it in his Book of *Military Diſcipline*, as *Vegetius* tells us. Who ſays, that *Scipio* hoped for no Succeſs in *Africa* againſt the *Numantines*, *niſi in omnibus centuriis lectos ſagittarios miſcuiſſet*, unleſs he had mingled ſome choice Archers with every Company of Soldiers, commanded by a *Centurion*, Lib. 1. Cap. 15. And as this was done among the Footmen, ſo in the next Book he makes it the Qualification of a Captain of Horſe, *ſagittas doctiſſime mittere*,, to ſhoot Arrows moſt ſkilfully, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 14.

Behold, it is written in the Book of Jaſher,] That is, this Order for teaching the Children of *Judah* the Uſe of the Bow, was more largely recorded there. But what Book this was, is very uncertain: Yet *Victorinus Strigelius* adventures to ſay, *Haud dubie fuit Hiſtoria Eccleſiaſtica, qualis nunc eſt Euſebiana, aut Theodoretica:* Without doubt it was an Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, like that which we have now of *Euſebius*, or *Theodoret*. See my Notes upon *Joſh.* x. 13. I ſhould rather ſay, that *Jaſher* ſignifying *right*, it was a Book concerning the right Art of making War: Upon which Subject the ancient *Romans* wrote many Books; particularly *Cato*, *Cornelius Celſus*, *Frontinus* and *Paternus*; which were abridged, as he himſelf tells us, by *Vegetius de Re Militari*, Lib. 1. Cap. 8. *Procopius Gazæus* thinks theſe Words declare, *Hanc hiſtoriam ex multis libris collectam eſſe*; that this Hiſtory was gathered out of many prophetical Books.

Ver. 19. *The Beauty of Iſrael is ſlain upon thy high places.*] The Flower of the Nation; their choice young Men: Together with *Saul* and his Sons.

How are the Mighty fallen!] What a Slaughter is made among the valiant Men!

Ver. 20. *Tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in the Streets of Askelon.*] The City *Gath* ſeems to have been the *Metropolis* of the *Philiſtines* Country; and *Askelon* next to it. Where it was in vain to wiſh this might not be publiſhed: For it was done already. Therefore theſe are only Expreſſions of great Sadneſs and Sorrow, that this Overthrow ſhould be publiſhed, which he could not but wiſh had never been heard of.

Leſt the Daughters of the Philiſtines rejoice, leſt the Daughters of the Uncircumciſed triumph.] According to the manner of thoſe Countries; where the Women celebrated with Songs and Dances, the Victory of the Men over their Enemies. See *Exod.* xv. 1, *&c. Judges* xi. 34.

Ver. 21. *Ye Mountains of Gilboa, let there be no Dew, neither let there be Rain upon you, nor Fields of Offerings.*] Fruitful Fields, from whence Offerings might be brought to the Houſe of God. Theſe are Poetical Expreſſions, from the common Language of Mankind: Who are wont to ſpeak with abhorrence of thoſe Places, and to curſe them, where any Calamity hath befallen their Friends.

There the Shield of the Mighty is vilely caſt away.] They were forced to throw away their Shields, that they might run the faſter away; which was a great Diſgrace to them.

The Shield of Saul, as tho' he had not been anointed with Oil.] As if he had been a common Soldier. So theſe Words are generally interpreted as ſpoken of *Saul*. But the Words, *as though he had*, are not in the *Hebrew*; where there is only, *not anointed with Oil:* Which may as well relate to the *Shield*, as the *Jews* interpret it, and thus explain it. By the holy Oil, Men were ſet apart for ſome great Office; as that of Prieſts, and ſometimes Kings. Now when any Perſon, in a ſudden Danger of the State, was choſen to be Captain-General of their Army, they were wont to anoint him: That by this Sight he might be animated to fight the LORD's Battels courageouſly. And ſuch a Perſon was called,

called, *The Anointed of War:* Nay, ſometimes (they ſay) their Armour was anointed, to increaſe their Confidence; juſt as the Veſſels of the Tabernacle were, which the Prieſts uſed: Unto which they think *David* alludes in theſe Words. See *Guil. Schichardus*, Cap. 1. *Theorem* 4. of his *Jus Regium:* Where *Carpzovius* obſerves, that theſe Words *Iſaiah* xxi. 9. favour this Interpretation: And is alledged by *Raſi* and *Ralbag*, as parallel to this Place. But he confeſſes he can find no where, that their Shields, or other warlike Inſtruments were anointed with holy Oil, to make them fight with greater Boldneſs.

Ver. 22. *From the Blood of the ſlain, from the Fat of the mighty, the Bow of Jonathan turned not back.*] By this it appears, that *Jonathan* was a very ſkilful Archer (as perhaps ſome other great Men were) though the common People were not trained up to the Uſe of the Bow: Which *Jonathan* ſo well managed, that as he always hit his Mark, ſo his Arrows pierced into the very Entrails of the moſt mighty Men.

And the Sword of Saul returned not empty.] Always did great Execution (as we now ſpeak) upon thoſe whom he fought withal.

Ver. 23. *Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleaſant in their Lives.*] Courteous and kind to their People: Which is a great Virtue in Princes. To *David* indeed *Saul* expreſſed a great deal of Ill-nature: But that proceeded from *Saul*'s Jealouſy, and Fear that he would ſupplant his Family, and place himſelf in the Throne. And this highly advances the Glory of *David*, that he commends his greateſt Enemy for what was praiſe-worthy in him: As *Cæſar*, they ſay, could not but ſhed ſome Tears when *Pompey*'s Head was brought to him, though we read of nothing that he ſpake in his praiſe.

And in their Death they were not divided.] *Jonathan* ſtuck cloſe to his Father in the Battel; and demonſtrated he was engaged in no Conſpiracy againſt him, as he had ſometime charged him.

They were ſwifter than Eagles.] In purſuing their Enemies. For this I have often obſerved, was a requiſite Quality in an excellent Warrior: Therefore in the Choice of Soldiers, *Vegetius* ſaith, *Et velocitas requirenda eſt & robur.* Both Swiftneſs and Strength were to be required, *Lib.* 1. *de Re militari*, Cap. 8. The great Advantages of being a ſwift Runner, he enumerates in the next Chapter.

They were ſtronger than Lions.] In overthrowing their Enemies, when they overtook them.

Ver. 24. *Ye Daughters of Iſrael weep over Saul, who cloathed you in Scarlet, with other delights, and put Ornaments of Gold upon your Apparel.*] He would have the Women bear a Part in this Lamentation over *Saul*, who adorned them with the rich Spoils of their Enemies. The Word *other* before *delights* is not in the *Hebrew*; but the Meaning ſeems to be, that they delighted in fine Clothes, which they did not want while *Saul* lived. And *Scarlet* was every where accounted the moſt precious Colour: The Emperor's Mantle being of *Scarlet*, as *Braunius* obſerves, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 15. *de Veſtitu Sacerd. Hebr.*

Ver. 25. *How are the Mighty fallen in the midſt of the Battel! O Jonathan thou waſt ſlain in thy high places!*] Of his own Country, which he valiantly defended.

Ver. 26. *I am diſtreſſed for thee, my Brother Jonathan: very pleaſant haſt thou been unto me.*] His Grief was as great for his Death, as the Pleaſure had been, which he took in his Company, while he lived.

Thy Love to me was wonderful, paſſing the Love of Women.] No leſs ardent, ſincere and ſweet, than the higheſt Conjugal Affection. Which ought to be (as *Strigelius* here gloſſes) ardent without Simulation, ſincere without any Suſpicions, and ſweet without Moroſity or Diſdain.

Ver. 27. *How are the Mighty fallen.*] This is repeated three times in this Song: Being an interlocutory Verſe.

And the Weapons of War periſhed!] All Military Glory gone from *Iſrael.*

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs, that after this, David enquired of the LORD.*] By *Abiathar* the High-Prieſt, as he had often done before, 1 *Sam.* xxvi. 9. and other Places.

Saying, Shall I go up into any of the Cities of Judah?] Which was his own Tribe, where he had moſt Friends; and therefore it was proper, he thought, to addreſs himſelf to them, who were beſt affected to him. But though he had a Right to the Kingdom by God's Deſignation, yet he would not enter into Poſſeſſion, nor take upon him the Adminiſtration of Affairs, without God's Advice and Direction.

And the LORD ſaid, Go up.] He approved of his going up into that Tribe; and thereby gave him hope of Succeſs.

And he ſaid, Whither ſhall I go up?] He aſked theſe Queſtions diſtinctly, as the *Jews* ſay the Manner was to do, and not two Queſtions at once. See upon 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 11. And ſee what I have further noted, xxx. 8.

And he ſaid, Unto Hebron.] Which was a principal City in that Tribe; and in the Middle of it: Where the People might more conveniently and eaſily reſort to him, than in *Ziklag:* Which was his own Town by the Gift of *Achiſh*, and at firſt in the Lot of *Judah.* See 1 *Sam.* xxvii. 6.

Ver. 2. *So David went up thither, he and his two Wives, Ahinoam the Jezerelite, and Abigail Nabal's Wife the Carmelite.*] Who being hitherto Companions in his Troubles, were now advanced to be Partakers of his Proſperity. This *Theogena* the Wife of *Agathocles* (as *Strigelius* obſerves) made the Character of a good Wife, who in Marriage enters into Society with a Husband, in all Things, both Good and Evil.

Ver. 3. *And his Men that were with him, did David bring up every Man with his Houſhold.*] He took care to provide for his Followers, and their Families, according to every one's Merit. But this, it is likely, was not done till he was ſettled: For to go up with ſo many armed Men, had been to frighten them into Compliance.

And

And they dwelt in the Cities of Hebron.] Which was given to the Prieſts to be a City of Refuge (*Joſh.* xxi. 11, 12.) and therefore could not contain all *David's* Followers: But only him and his Court. The reſt were diſpoſed of in the Cities depending upon *Hebron*.

Ver. 4. *And the Men of Judah came.*] The principal Perſons who repreſented the reſt.

And there they anointed David King.] Who had been anointed privately by *Samuel*, ſome time ago; but that was only a Deſignation of him to the Kingdom; into which he was now ſolemnly inaugurated by this publick Unction.

Over the Houſe of Judah.] Who would not preſume to know the Senſe of all *Iſrael*: Tho' they hoped they would follow their Example; as they afterwards did, and anointed him again, *chap.* v. *ver.* 3.

And they told David, that the Men of Jabeſh-Gilead were they who had buried Saul.] Which it ſeems he had not heard of, while he was in *Ziklag*; but now (by ſome Diſcourſe about *Saul*'s Death) that Noble Action was related to him; which he recorded to their honour, in 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 11, 12, 13.

Ver. 5. *And David ſent Meſſengers to the Men of Jabeſh-Gilead, ſaying, Bleſſed be ye of the LORD, that ye have ſhewed this kindneſs unto your Lord, even unto Saul, and have buried him.*] This demonſtrates, both the great Piety, and the great Prudence of *David*. For he teſtified the true Kindneſs he had for *Saul*, though his virulent Enemy: And by wiſhing ſo heartily the Men of *Jabeſh* might be rewarded for what they had done, he invited them (who were *Iſraelites* on the other ſide of *Jordan*) to own him for their King.

Ver. 6. *Now the LORD ſhew Kindneſs and Truth unto you: and I alſo will requite you this Kindneſs, becauſe ye have done this Thing.*] He doth not content himſelf merely with praying God to reward them (which he repeats again) but promiſes that he would take care of them, by defending them from the *Philiſtines*; if they ſhould offer to invade them, for entring their Country without leave, and taking from thence the Trophies of their Victory.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore let your Hands be ſtrong, and be ye valiant.*] As they had been to an high degree, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 12.

For your Maſter Saul is dead.] Or, *though your Maſter Saul be dead.*

And alſo the Houſe of Judah have anointed me King over them.] He would not have them diſcouraged, becauſe they wanted one to head them; for he being inveſted with the Royal Dignity by the Tribe of *Judah*, would look upon himſelf as bound to protect them alſo: Tho' they had not owned him for their Sovereign.

Ver. 8. *But Abner the Son of Ner, Captain of Saul's Hoſt.*] A Man of the greateſt Authority in *Iſrael*, after *Saul* was dead; being General of all their Forces.

Took Iſhboſheth the Son of Saul.] Called *Eth-Baal*, 1 *Chron.* viii. 31. as there are ſeveral other Names, which end indifferently, either in *Boſheth* or *Baal*. For inſtance, *Gideon* is called *Jerubaal*, *Judges* ix. 1. and *Jerubbeſheth*, 2 *Sam.* xi. 21. And *Mephiboſheth* is called *Meribbaal*, 1 *Chron.* viii. 34. For *Boſheth* ſignifies Shame and Confuſion; and *Baal* being an infamous Idol, the holy Scripture makes theſe Names end promiſcuouſly either in *Baal*, or *Boſheth*, or *Beſheth*.

And brought him over] The River *Jordan*.

To Mahanaim.] A Place in the Tribe of *Gad*, *Joſh.* xiii. 26. So called from the Appearance of an Hoſt of Angels to *Jacob*, as he came to *Padan-Aram*, with his Houſhold, *Gen.* xxxii. 1. Here *Abner* thought he might moſt ſecurely do what follows, being at a diſtance from *David*, under whom he could not promiſe himſelf that Command and Authority, which he hoped to maintain under *Iſhboſheth*.

Ver. 9. *And he made him King over Gilead.*] Over all the Tribes on the other ſide of *Jordan*: Which are comprehended under this Name.

And over the Aſhurites.] The *Chaldee* Paraphraſt underſtands hereby, the Tribe of *Aſher*: Who tho' remote from *Mahanaim*, were forward to acknowledge him.

And over Jezreel.] A large and noble Valley, on the Borders of *Zebulon*, *Iſſachar*, and *Naphtali*: Who are all comprehended under this Word.

And over Ephraim, and over Benjamin.] Under whom the *Simeonites* are comprehended.

And over all Iſrael.] All the Tribes on this ſide *Jordan*, ſave the Tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 10. *Iſhboſheth Saul's Son was forty years old, when he began to reign.*] Therefore he was born in that very Year in which *Saul* was made King: For he reigned *forty* Years, as St. *Paul* tells us, *Acts* xiii. 21.

And reigned two Years.] Before there was any Hoſtility between him and *David*. So *Ralbag* expounds it, who makes this cohere with *ver.* 12. it being a mere Fancy of the *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba*, that the Throne was vacant, and there was no King in *Iſrael* for *five* Years. *Victorinus Strigelius* his Conjecture is far better: who, after he had given the foregoing Interpretation of *Ralbag*, adds, that after the War broke out between *David* and *Iſhboſheth*, and *David* waxed ſtronger and ſtronger (iii. 1.) *Iſhboſheth* being an unactive Prince, and unfit to command, *Abner* took the Adminiſtration of the Government upon himſelf, and managed the War the other *five* Years which paſſed before *David* came to the Throne of *Iſrael*. Theſe five Years the Scripture doth not reckon as a Part of *Iſhboſheth*'s Reign; becauſe he had the meer Name of a King, but no Authority at all.

But the Houſe of Judah followed David.] Stuck cloſe to him, and were entirely at his Command.

Ver. 11. *And the time that David was King in Hebron over the Houſe of Judah, was ſeven years and ſix months.*] So long therefore *Iſhboſheth* reigned over *Iſrael*. Unleſs we will ſuppoſe, either that the *Iſraelites* were five Years deliberating whether he or *Mephiboſheth* ſhould be King (whoſe Right it was by the Laws of Succeſſion) or that he reigning two Years immediately after the Death of *Saul*, they were five Years deliberating whether they ſhould own *David* or no; neither of which is probable, as *Ralbag* thinks; who judiciouſly obſerves, that thoſe Words, *he reigned two years*, are to be joined with *ver.* 12. *and Abner the Son of Ner went out*,

out, &c. That is, ſaith he, The two firſt Years of his Reign there was no War between the Houſe of *Saul* and *David*: And then there had been no open War, if *Abner* had not been the Author of it, &c.

Ver. 12. *And Abner, the Son of Ner, and the Servants of Iſhboſheth the Son of Saul.*] The principal Officers about the King.

Went out from Mahanaim to Gibeon.] They paſſed over *Jordan*, into the Country of *Benjamin*, where *Gibeon* was (*Joſh.* xviii. 25.) to fight with *Judah*, and to bring them into the Obedience of *Saul*'s Son. It is obſervable, that *David* did not begin any Hoſtility: But waited to ſee how God would diſpoſe Things in his favour.

Ver. 13. *And Joab the Son of Zeruiah, and the Servants of David went out.*] To oppoſe the Deſigns of the *Iſraelites*: For *Joab* was the chief Commander of *David*'s Forces; whom the principal Officers of his Houſhold attended.

And they met togother at the Pool of Gibeon: and they ſat down, the one on one ſide of the Pool, and the other on the other ſide of the Pool.] The two Armies faced one another (as we now ſpeak) being parted only by the Pool that was between them.

Ver. 14. *And Abner ſaid unto Joab.*] I ſuppoſe *David* had commanded *Joab* not to begin the Quarrel, but only ſtand upon his Defence. For he had ſworn to *Saul*, that he would not cut off his Seed: And therefore would not willingly engage againſt *Iſhboſheth*, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 21.

Let the young Men ariſe, and play before us.] He deſires that ſome Soldiers might be pick'd out from the reſt; and make the two Armies ſport, as the *Gladiators* were wont to do in after-times among the *Romans*. Whereby alſo they might make a Trial of their Courage and Strength. So *Joſephus* ſaith, *Abner* was deſirous to learn πότερος αὐτῶν ἀνδρειατέρους στρατιώτας ἔχῃ, *which of the two had the braveſt Soldiers.*

Ver. 15. *Then there aroſe and went over.*] The Pool of *Gibeon*.

Twelve of Benjamin, which pertained to Iſhboſheth the Son of Saul.] They ſtill were forward to begin the Hoſtility: And *Abner* choſe this Number out of *Benjamin*, for the Honour (I ſuppoſe) of his own Tribe, and becauſe they were a valiant Sort of People; as appears by the Story in *Judges* xx.

And twelve of the Servants of David.] Whoſe Valour, no doubt, had been tried in other Exploits.

Ver. 16. *And they caught every Man his Fellow.*] That is, the Servants of *David*, laſt mentioned, caught each of them every one of the *Benjamites* that was his oppoſite.

By the Head.] That is, by the Hair of his Head, which they wore very long in thoſe Days.

And thruſt his Sword in his Fellow's ſide.] That is, *David*'s Men killed every one of the *Benjamites* with whom he was engaged: So ſome ſay *Joſephus* underſtood it; though I can find no ſuch Thing in him.

So they fell down together.] All the twelve Men of *Benjamin* fell down dead together.

Therefore was the place called Helkath-hazzurim, which is in Gibeon.] The *Hebrew* Words ſignify, *the Field of ſtrong Men*; as hard and firm as a Rock.

Ver. 17. *And there was a very ſore Battel that day.*] The Men of *Iſrael*, enraged at the Loſs of their valiant Men, maintained a furious Fight the reſt of that day.

And Abner was beaten, and the Men of Iſrael, before the Servants of David.] But ſtill Succeſs followed the Men of *Judah*.

Ver. 18. *And there were three Sons of Zeruiah there.*] She was *David's* Siſter: And therefore theſe were his Nephews.

Joab, Abiſhai, and Aſahel.] All three very valiant Men, and great Commanders, as appears from 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 7. where the laſt of them is mentioned as one of *David*'s twelve Captains over four and twenty thouſand Men. See alſo Chapter xi. 26. of that Book.

And Aſahel was as light of Foot as a wild Roe.] I noted in the foregoing Chapter, and in other Places, that to be ſwift of Foot, to purſue an Enemy, was a Quality highly eſteemed in Warriors. And therefore *Plato*, I remember, would have this to be one of the Exerciſes wherein Youth ſhould be trained up, *viz. Racing*; Ἐστιγὼν πάντων πολεμικώτατον ἡ σώματος ὀξύτης πάντως· ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ποδῶν, ἡ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν, &c. Lib. 8. *De Legibus*, p. 852. *Edit. Serrani.*

Ver. 19. *And Aſahel purſued after Abner.*] Being deſirous of the Glory, either of taking or killing the greateſt Man in *Iſrael*.

And in going he turned not to the right hand, or to the left, from following Abner.] Nothing could turn him aſide to purſue any other Deſign: But he went right forward, having *Abner* only in his eye.

Ver. 20. *Then Abner looked behind him, and ſaid, Art thou Aſahel? and he anſwered I am.*] He ſpeaks to him civilly, having no mind to kill him.

Ver. 21. *And Abner ſaid unto him, Turn thee aſide to the right hand or to the left, and lay thee hold on one of the young Men, and take his Armour.*] That he might not return without ſome Spoil, he bids him take one of his Attendants, his Arms and all; and be content with this Glory of carrying away ſuch a Priſoner. Thus *Kimchi* expounds it. Others think he bids him try his Valour upon one of his Servants, and diſarm him; and not venture to encounter him, who was an old Soldier.

But Aſahel would not turn aſide from following him.] Being poſſeſſed with a vain Deſire, of more Glory than it was reaſonable to expect.

Ver. 22. *And Abner ſaid again to Aſahel, Turn thee aſide from following me: wherefore ſhould I ſmite thee to the ground? how ſhall I hold up my Face to Joab thy Brother?*] Who was a fierce Man, and he knew would ſtudy Revenge.

Ver. 23. *Howbeit he refuſed to turn aſide: ſo Abner, with the hinder end of his Spear, ſmote him under the fifth Rib, that the Spear came out behind him.*] Pierced quite through his Liver and Bowels. See xx. 10. So *R. Johannes*, in the *Gemarah Sanhedrim*, Cap. vi. Sect. 7. ſaith the fifth Rib is the Place where the Liver and the Gall are ſeated.

And he fell down there, and died in the ſame place.] He died immediately upon the ſpot (as we ſpeak)

not being able to go, ſo much as one Step further. So dangerous it is to confide in a Man's own natural Strength; or to refuſe Offers of Peace; or deſpiſe a flying Enemy, as *Pellicanus* here obſerves. The old Saying was, *If an Enemy fly, make way for him.*

And it came to paſs, that as many as came to the place where Aſahel fell down and died, ſtood ſtill.] Ceaſed the Purſuit: Fearing perhaps the ſame Fate; or that *Aſahel*'s Body ſhould be expoſed to any Indignity.

Ver. 24. *Joab alſo and Abiſhai purſued after Abner: and the Sun went down, when they were come to the Hill of Ammah, that lieth towards Giath, by the way of the Wilderneſs of Gibeon.*] They were not ſo nimble as *Aſahel*, and therefore could not overtake *Abner*: Yet ſo furious, that the Death of *Aſahel* could not ſtop them, till they came to this Place.

Ver. 25. *And the Children of Benjamin gathered them together to Abner, and became one Troop, and ſtood on the top of a Hill.*] Some of this Tribe, of which *Abner* was, and who were valiant People, as I obſerved before, rallied, as we now ſpeak; and ſtood in a Body, as if they would renew the Fight.

Ver. 26. *And Abner called to Joab,*] Who was on the Top of another Hill, *ver.* 24.

And ſaid, Shall the Sword devour for ever?] There ought to be a Meaſure ſet to our Anger: Which ought to go down with the Sun, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks.

Knoweſt thou not that it muſt be Bitterneſs in the end?] In civil Wars, as *Cicero* ſpeaks (in his fourth Book of his Familiar *Epiſtles*) all Things are miſerable, and nothing more miſerable than Victory itſelf: Which makes the Conqueror do many things againſt his Will, to ſatisfy thoſe by whom he conquers. Therefore he ſaith in another Place, *Extremum omnium malorum eſt belli civilis victoria*; Victory in a Civil War is the greateſt of all Evils. Such was this; as he puts him in mind in the next Words, that they who killed one another were Brethren.

How long ſhall it be, e'er thou bid the People return from following their Brethren?] They were all deſcended from one common Father; and all worſhipped one and the ſame God.

Ver. 27. *And Joab ſaid, as God liveth, unleſs thou hadſt ſpoken, ſurely then in the Morning, the People had gone up every one from following his Brother.*] He wiſhes he had been of this Mind in the Morning; for then there had been no fighting at all, if he had not deſired it, *ver.* 14. So Dr. *Lightfoot* paraphraſes this Verſe, *If thou hadſt not ſaid what thou didſt in the Morning*, (Let the young Men ariſe, and play before us) *ſurely the People had gone every one from his Brother: and there had been never a blow ſtruck, but that thou didſt provoke it.*

Ver. 28. *So Joab blew the Trumpet,*] Cauſed a Retreat to be ſounded.

And all the People ſtood ſtill, and followed after Iſrael no more, neither fought they any more.] Neither at that time, nor any other.

Ver. 29. *And Abner and his Men walked all that Night through the Plain, and paſſed over Jordan.*] They made all the haſte they could home: Being fearful to truſt themſelves near to the Army that had beaten them.

And went through all Bithron, and they came to Mahanaim.] Some think by *Bithron* is meant the Mountain of *Bethor*, mentioned *Cantic.* ii. 15.

Ver. 30. *And Joab returned from following Abner: and when he had gathered all the People together,*] Returning from the Purſuit, every one reſorted to the Company to which he belonged.

There lacked of the Servants of David nineteen Men, and Aſahel.] This is an Argument that the twelve Men of *Judah*, who began the Fight in a Combat with as many of *Benjamin*, were not killed: For if they were, then there would have been no more than ſeven Men killed in the Battel; which is not probable.

Ver. 31. *And the Servants of David had ſmitten of Benjamin, and of Abner's Men, ſo that three hundred and threeſcore Men died.*] This Loſs was not great in itſelf: For it is likely *David* had given order, his Men ſhould be as ſparing as they could, in killing their Brethren; who were, he knew, to be his Subjects.

Ver. 32. *And they took up Aſahel, and buried him in the Sepulchre of his Father, which was in Bethlehem.*] I think *Joſephus* takes this right; who ſaith, *Joab* and his Men lodged all Night in the Place of Battel, and buried their Dead; and then next Morning carried *Aſahel* to be buried among his Anceſtors.

And Joab and his Men went all night,] Having buried *Aſahel*, they marched all the next Night towards *Hebron*.

And they came to Hebron at Break of Day.] Where they gave *David* an account of all this Action.

CHAP. III.

Verſe 1. *NOW there was long War between the Houſe of Saul, and the Houſe of David.*] Their Enmity continuing throughout the whole Reign of *Iſhboſheth*, it is likely there were many Bickerings and Skirmiſhes between *Iſrael* and *Judah*; but no pitch'd Battel that we read of. The contrary rather ſeems to be affirmed in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 28.

But David waxed ſtronger and ſtronger, and the Houſe of Saul weaker and weaker.] In all their Rencounters (as we now ſpeak) *David* had the better: And it is likely many of the *Iſraelites* fell off to him; which very much added to his Strength, and weakened the Houſe of *Saul*.

Ver. 2. *And unto David were Sons born in Hebron.*] He had no Children, it ſeems, during his Exile: Or, if he had, they were Daughters.

His firſt-born was Amnon of Ahinoam the Jezreelite.] She was his Wife before *Abigail*, and brought forth his firſt-born Son; who proved a great Affliction to him.

Ver. 3. *And his ſecond, Chileab of Abigail the Wife of Nabal the Carmelite.*] Of whom we have no further Account any where: Only he is called *Daniel* in 1 *Chron.* iii. 1. And the *Hebrew* Doctors give this Reaſon of both Names. He called him, ſay they, when he was born, *Daniel*, (which was his *Fundamental*, that is, his primary Name) becauſe, ſaid he, *God hath judged*, or *vindicated* me from *Nabal*. And afterwards he called him *Chileab*, as much as to ſay, *like to his*

his Father: Becauſe in his Countenance he reſembled *David*. And this he did, for this Reaſon, to ſilence the Mockers of that Age; who ſaid *Abigail* had conceived by *Nabal*, whoſe Son this was. For the confuting of which Calumny, God was pleaſed to order that the Faſhion of his Face ſhould be perfectly like to *David*'s.

And the third Abſalom, the Son of Maacah, the Daughter of Talmai, King of Geſhur.] We read of the *Geſhurites* in the foregoing Book, xxvii. 8. upon whom it is there ſaid *David* made an Inroad; and brought away this fair Captive, a little before *Saul*'s Death. And when he came to *Hebron*, and ſhe was ſufficiently inſtructed and prepared to be a Proſelyte, he made her his Wife. Thus the *Jews* tell the Story: Which doth not ſeem to be true, becauſe it is ſaid in that Invaſion, he ſlew all the Women. We muſt look therefore for other *Geſhurites*, whom we find in the North, as the forenamed were in the South. See *Deut.* iii. 14. *Joſh.* xii. 5. How *David* came by the Daughter of the King of theſe People, it is not eaſy to tell. Perhaps he thought it Policy to make a Friend of the King of *Geſhur*, who lay near to *Iſhboſheth*, and might be a Curb to him, and give him a Diverſion, if he attempted any thing againſt *Judah*: And therefore married his Daughter.

Ver. 4. *The fourth, Adonijah, the Son of Haggith: the fifth, Shephatiah the Son of Abital.*] Of the former of theſe, we read in the beginning of the next Book, how his Ambition led him to Deſtruction (as *Abſalom*'s did) but nothing of the other.

Ver. 5. *The ſixth, Ithream, by Eglah, David's Wife.*] This only being called his Wife (though the reſt were ſo likewiſe) hath led the *Jews* into an Opinion, that *Michal* who was his firſt Wife is here called *Eglah*; becauſe ſhe was a lovely Woman, in whom he much delighted, when he firſt married her. It is ſaid indeed in vi. 23. *ſhe had no Child unto the day of her Death*: But the Meaning of that is, ſhe was barren after ſhe had taunted *David* for dancing before the Ark; not that ſhe never had a Child before that time.

Theſe were born to David in Hebron.] During the ſix Years and a half that he reigned there. I do not know what Weight there is in the Obſervation of *Conradus Pellicanus* on this Place, but leave it to the Judgment of the Reader. God ſo diſpenſed Things, that Men in thoſe days, of many Wives, ſeldom produced many Children, *quaſi natura reclamante rei indignitatem*, as if Nature abhorred the Indignity of the Thing, and approved the Conjunction of one Man with one Woman. He did well to ſay *ſeldom*; for we read of one who had threeſcore and ten Sons by many Wives (viz. *Gideon*) though they came to nothing.

Ver. 6. *And it came to paſs, while there was War between the Houſe of Saul and the Houſe of David, that Abner made himſelf ſtrong for the Houſe of Saul.*] Went up and down through all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, to ſtrengthen his Intereſt, and confirm them in their Allegiance to *Iſhboſheth*: As the ſame *Pellicanus* expounds it.

Ver. 7. *And Saul had a Concubine, whoſe Name was Rizpah, the Daughter of Ajah.*] By whom he had two Sons, xxi. 8.

And Iſhboſheth ſaid to Abner, Why haſt thou gone in to my Father's Concubine?] The *Jews* look upon it as a very great Crime, for any Man, tho' never ſo great, to marry the Widow of the King: For it was eſteemed an Affectation of the Kingdom; as appears in the Caſe of *Adonijah*. Therefore *Iſhboſheth* had reaſon to be angry with *Abner*, though he was ſo unſeaſonably.

Ver. 8. *Then was Abner very wroth for the Words of Iſhboſheth.*] He was grown ſo haughty, and thought his Merits ſo great; that he thought he might do any thing, without Reprehenſion.

And ſaid, Am I a Dog's Head,] He thought *Iſhboſheth* uſed him not as a Captain of the Hoſt of *Iſrael*, but as if he had been a Keeper of Dogs. So the word *Head* ſignifies, as the *Jews* generally explain it. *Raſi*, for inſtance; *I am treated as if I was a Commander that hath only the Cuſtody of Dogs.* To the ſame purpoſe *Kimchi*: And *R. Eſaias* more largely (as *Bochart* obſerves) *When I am a Leader of all Iſrael, thou haſt caſt Contempt upon me, as if I was only ſet over a Company of Dogs.* So the *Syriack* here tranſlates *Dog* in the Plural: *Captain of a Pack of Dogs.* Which was a vile Employment, becauſe a Dog is generally accounted the vileſt Animal, *Hierozoicon, P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 56.

Which againſt Judah do ſhew kindneſs this day to the Houſe of Saul thy Father, to his Brethren, and to his Friends, and have not delivered thee into the hand of David,] He inſolently reckons up his great Services to him, and to his Family: When he could have ruined him, if he had pleaſed; by making *David* King, as eaſily as he had done him.

That thou chargeſt me with a Fault concerning this Woman?] He upbraids him with Ingratitude, in taking notice of ſuch a ſmall Fault (as he accounted it) of lying with *Rizpah*. For as *Peter Martyr* thinks, he did not intend to have her for his Wife; but uſed her as his Harlot.

Ver. 9. *So do God to Abner, and more alſo, except as the* LORD *hath ſworn to David, even ſo do I to him.*] Theſe Words ſhew he knew very well God had unalterably reſolved to beſtow the Kingdom of *Iſrael* upon *David*: And yet his Ambition led him hitherto, to oppoſe not only *David*, but the LORD himſelf.

Ver. 10. *To tranſlate the Kingdom from the Houſe of Saul, and to ſet up the Throne of David over Iſrael and over Judah, from Dan even to Beerſheba.*] A wonderful Change! which the Study of Revenge wrought in him: That he who lately went about the Country, confirming the *Iſraelites* in their Oppoſition to *David*, now reſolved to bring them all over to him. *Such is the Genius of many great Courtiers, who are irritated upon ſlight Occaſions: and rather rule over Kings, than are ruled by them.* They are the Words of *Conradus Pellicanus*.

Ver. 11. *And he could not anſwer Abner again, becauſe he feared him.*] He was afraid to provoke him to a higher Degree, by anſwering him again: And therefore now was ſilent, when it was too late.

Ver. 12. *And Abner ſent Meſſengers to David on his behalf.*] Having thus incenſed his Maſter, he

he thought it not ſafe to delay the Execution of what he had threatned. Yet, thought it neither ſafe nor prudent to go himſelf to *David*, till he tried his Inclinations by Meſſengers, whom he privately ſent to treat with him.

Saying, Whoſe is the Land?] This was as much as to ſay, that he owned him to be Lord of all the Country, by God's ſpecial Gift.

Saying alſo, Make thy League with me; and behold my Hand ſhall be with thee, to bring about all Iſrael to thee.] He deſires all Enmities might be forgotten, and that *David* would make a League of Friendſhip with him: And then he undertook, having a great Power over *Iſrael*, to make them all his Subjects.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid, Well, I will make a League with thee.*] He ſoon agreed to the Motion; with which he could not but be well pleaſed. But ſome think he did ill, to make a League with ſuch a wicked Man; eſpecially ſince he did not enquire of God, whether he ſhould do it or no. But this is more than any body can tell; for many things were done, that are not recorded.

But one thing I require of thee; that is, thou ſhalt not ſee my Face, except thou firſt bring Michal Saul's Daughter, when thou comeſt to ſee my Face.] This was a very reaſonable Condition, if *Abner* was able to effect it; both upon *David*'s own account, and her's: For ſhe was his firſt and beloved Wife; and ſhe was by force given to another Man: who could not lawfully enjoy her; *David* having given her no Bill of Divorce. And therefore *Phalti*, the *Jews* think, being a good Man, never knew her, (as I obſerved on the foregoing Book, xxv. 44.) So that ſhe lived unhappy, in a double State of Separation; from *David*, and from her preſent Huſband. There was ſomething of Policy alſo in this Demand; that he might ingratiate himſelf with the *Iſraelites*, by ſhowing great Love to the Houſe of *Saul*.

Ver. 14. *And David ſent Meſſengers to Iſhboſheth, Saul's Son, ſaying,*] We do not read what Anſwer *Abner* gave to *David*, when he required the forenamed Condition of him. But it is probable he let *David* know, as the Truth was, that it was not in his power to bring *Michal* without *Iſhboſheth*'s Conſent, whoſe Siſter as well as Subject ſhe was: At leaſt, it was not ſafe to attempt it; and therefore he adviſed him to ſend to her Brother, who could not eaſily deny what he deſired: Which *Abner* alſo, it is likely, undertook to repreſent, as a moſt juſt Demand.

This Counſel of *Abner*, *David* followed, and it had the Succeſs he wiſhed.

Deliver me my Wife Michal, which I eſpouſed to me, for an hundred Foreſkins of the Philiſtines.] Whom he purchaſed of *Saul* with the Hazard of his Life.

Ver. 15. *And Iſhboſheth ſent, and took her from her Husband,*] He is called *her Husband*, ſays the *Gemara Sanhedrim* (*Cap.* 7. *Sect.* 2.) becauſe he loved her with a Conjugal Affection: Tho' he did not enjoy her. This was an honourable Action of *Iſhboſheth*, to reſtore *David* his lawful Wife: Like to which *Strigelius* here notes in ſeveral great Men. Particularly in the famous *Scipio*, who reſtored *Allucius*'s Wife to him, who had been taken by his *Soldiers*. And *Pauſanias* General of the *Lacedæmonians*; who after the Fight at *Platea*, ſent *Coa*, who was a Captive, unto her Relations.

Even from Phaltiel the Son of Laiſh.] Called *Phalti* in 1 *Sam.* xxv. 44. The Word *El* is here added, ſay the *Jews*, becauſe *God* interpoſed all the time he had her, to keep them from Sin. For he put a Sword between *Michal* and him, when he went to bed to her; ſignifying he ſhould be cut off if he lay with her. *Kimchi* and *Ralbag* follow this Fancy of the *Talmudiſts*: But others diſlike it, and think that *David* had given her a Bill of Divorce. Unto which he being compelled by *Saul*'s Violence, and not doing it willingly, they think it was null; and that *David* might lawfully take her again; tho' *Phalti* had enjoyed her. But *Abarbinel* confutes both theſe Opinions: And thinks that *Saul* was not ſo impious as to take a Wife from her Huſband, and give her to another: Nor *David* in ſuch need of a Wife, as to ſend for *Michal*, if ſhe had lived in Wedlock with another Man. And therefore he obſerves, that *Saul* is not ſaid (in 1 *Sam.* xxv. 44.) to *give her to wife* unto *Phalti*, but only *to give her*: That is, to commit her to his Care and Cuſtody in the Abſence of her Huſband; that ſhe might live virtuouſly, and not follow after *David*. For he ſuppoſes *Phalti* to have been an old, grave, and pious Man, who might be truſted with her, as he was with the Children of *Merab*, the other Daughter of *Saul*; who ſent them to *Phalti* to be educated, and to bear *Michal* Company. As for his being called *her Husband* (in this Verſe and the next) he obſerves the Word is not *Baalah*, but only *Iſhah*; which is uſed, he ſaith, for one that is the Keeper and Overſeer of another Perſon.

Ver. 16. *And her Husband went with her along weeping behind her to Bahurim.*] Being very loth to part with her Company; which was delightful to him.

Then ſaid Abner unto him, Return; and he returned.] *Abner* intended to have the Honour of preſenting her to the King: And would not have the old Man appear, to diſturb their meeting with his Tears.

Ver. 17. *And Abner*] Having ſeen *David*, and given him Aſſurance of his Fidelity, as *David* him of his Friendſhip.

Had communication with the Elders of Iſrael, ſaying,] Went back to perſuade all, to do as he had done: And by bringing over the great Men to *David*, he doubted not the Multitude would follow.

Ye ſought for David in time paſt, to be King over you.] For after the Slaughter of *Goliath*, he was very gracious in the Eyes of all the People, and was much beloved by them, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 5, 16. And when he was forced to fly, a great many of *Iſrael* came over to him, while he dwelt at *Ziklag*: Of the *Benjamites*, 1 *Chron.* xii. 2, &c. and the *Gadites*, ver. 8, 9, &c. and the *Manaſſites*, ver. 19, &c. and after he came to *Hebron*, more went over to him out of all the Tribes of *Iſrael*, ver. 23. and the following Part of that Chapter. And it is highly probable, that as ſoon as *Saul* and *Jonathan* were dead, they all generally inclin'd to make *David* their

their King: If *Abner*, by his great Authority, had not ſet up one of the Family of *Saul*.

Ver. 18. *Now then do it.*] Fulfil your own Deſires and Intentions.

For the LORD hath ſpoken of David, ſaying, By the hand of my Servant David I will ſave my People Iſrael out of the hand of the Philiſtines, and out of the hand of all their Enemies.] We no where read theſe Words recorded; but, it is likely, *Samuel* had often ſpoken them: If not at length, yet they are included in the Words of God to *Samuel*, when he commanded him to anoint *David* King over *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.* x. 1, 12. for this was the Intention of giving them a King, that he might fight their Battels, 1 *Sam.* viii. 29.

Ver. 19. *And Abner alſo ſpake in the ears of Benjamin.*] Where he had more Intereſt than among the reſt; being of that Tribe: Whom it was neceſſary to take ſome pains withal, to gain their Affection to *David*. Therefore he ſeems to have ſpoken, not only with their *Elders*, but to have gone through the ſeveral Families in the Tribe: Who were much devoted to the Houſe of *Saul*, and had ſtuck cloſe to it; and were the firſt that attempted any thing againſt *David*, ii. 15.

And Abner went alſo to ſpeak in the ears of David in Hebron, all that ſeemed good to Iſrael,] He went, and reported to *David* privately, the Senſe of all the People.

And that ſeemed good to the whole Houſe of Benjamin.] Particularly he related how all *Benjamin* ſtood affected to him: Whom he brought over ſo effectually, that they never forſook the Houſe of *David*, when all the reſt of the Tribes did.

Ver. 20. *And Abner came to David in Hebron, and twenty Men with him.*] Now he appeared publickly, and declared himſelf for *David*.

And David made Abner, and the Men that were with him, a Feaſt.] Not merely as a Token of Kindneſs; but to make a League with him (as he had deſired, and *David* promiſed, *viz.* 12, 13.) Into which it had been an ancient Cuſtom to enter by eating and drinking together, *Gen.* xxvi. 30. xxxi. 44. and other Places.

Ver. 21. *And Abner ſaid, I will ariſe and go, and will gather all Iſrael together unto my Lord the King: that they may make a League with thee,*] He intended to bring all the chief Men of *Iſrael* to own him for their King, as he had done; and promiſe to be his faithful Subjects: Which he knew he could effect, becauſe they had already declared their Mind, in the private Conferences he had had with them, *ver.* 17, &c.

That thou mayeſt reign over all that thy Heart deſireth.] That is, over all the Tribes of *Iſrael*.

And David ſent Abner away, and he went in peace.] They parted as good Friends do; with wiſhes of all Happineſs on both ſides.

Ver. 22. *And behold the Servants of David and Joab came from purſuing a Troop: and brought a great Spoil with them.*] In thoſe times of Diſtraction between *Judah* and *Iſrael*, we may well think their Neighbours, who were Enemies to both, the *Philiſtines*, *Edomites*, *Moabites*, and others, made many Inroads upon the Country to get Spoil. When *Joab* and the great Men about *David* watched, and at this Time had overtaken them, in their return home, and recovered a great Booty from them.

But Abner was not with David in Hebron; for he had ſent him away, and he was gone in peace.] Though *Abner* was not there when *Joab* returned victorious, yet he ſeems to be but juſt gone, a little way out of the City, *ver.* 26.

Ver. 23. *And when Joab and all the Hoſt that were with him, were come,*] That is, the Captains of the Hoſt, or principal Officers were come to give an account of their Succeſs.

They told Joab, ſaying, Abner came to the King, and he hath ſent him away, and he is gone in peace.] Some officious Courtiers informed him of what had paſſed in his Abſence; as it is likely, they were wont to do of all that the King did. For he that commanded all the Forces, had in effect every body elſe at his command.

Ver. 24. *Then Joab came to the King, and ſaid, What haſt thou done? behold Abner came unto thee, why is it that thou haſt ſent him away, and he is quite gone?*] He chides the King, as if he did not underſtand his own Intereſt; but was to be taught by him. Which high Preſumption he was conſtrained to endure, becauſe of his great Power with the Military Men.

Ver. 25. *Thou knoweſt Abner the Son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in; and to know all that thou doeſt.*] It is likely that *Joab* himſelf did not believe, that *Abner* came with a deſign only to learn how *David*'s Affairs ſtood, and to make his advantage of it: But he would have *David* believe ſo, that he might have the better Colour for his wicked Deſign of diſpatching *Abner*.

Ver. 26. *And when Joab was gone out from David,*] He ſeems to have gone out in an Huff; not ſtaying for an Anſwer.

He ſent Meſſengers after Abner,] In the King's Name, I ſuppoſe, as if he had ſomething further to communicate to him: For otherwiſe it is not credible that *Abner* would have returned.

And brought him back from the Well of Sirah.] It is not certain where this Well was: But, it is probable, not far from *Hebron*. *Joſephus* ſaith twenty Furlongs diſtant from thence.

But David knew it not.] Gave him no ſuch Order, as he pretended.

Ver. 27. *And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab*] Who waited for him at the Entrance of the City.

Took him aſide in the Gate] Which being a publick Place, where Men met to do Buſineſs, and where the Courts of Judgment ſate, it made *Abner* ſuſpect no Danger.

To ſpeak with him quietly;] Eſpecialy ſince he took him by the Hand in a friendly manner, to have ſome Diſcourſe with him.

And ſmote him under the fifth Rib, that he died,] Immediately, without ſpeaking a Word. See the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 23.

For the Blood of Aſahel his Brother.] This was one Reaſon, but the chief was, his Fear that *Abner* would overtop him, if he brought *Iſrael* to ſubmit to *David*: Being a Man longer verſed in Military Affairs than himſelf; and who had governed *Iſrael* in the time of *Saul*'s Diſtraction, and ſince *Iſhboſheth* was made King by him. So *Joſephus*: He was afraid leſt *Abner*

ner ſhould receive from *David*, πρώτην τάξιν, the higheſt Place above himſelf. Upon which he makes this Reflection, ὁσαχὶ πηλίκα, &c. *What will not Men dare to do, who are covetous, ambitious, and will be inferior to none, for to obtain what they deſire? They will commit a thouſand Crimes: and rather than loſe what they have got, they will not fear ſtill to commit greater Wickednesſes.*

Ver. 28. *And afterwards when David heard it, he ſaid, I and my Kingdom are guiltleſs before the* LORD *for ever, from the Blood of Abner the Son of Ner:*] He lift up his Hands to God (as *Joſephus* explains it) and with a loud Voice cried out publickly, that God knew he was innocent in this matter: And therefore truſted he would not let him and his Kingdom ſuffer for it.

Ver. 29. *Let it reſt on the head of Joab,*] The Guilt and Puniſhment lie upon him; who was the ſole Committer of this Murder.

And on all his Father's Houſe,] His Indignation at the Fact, ſeems to have tranſported him too far; making him wiſh all *Joab*'s Family might ſuffer for it: Which was againſt the Law of God (*Deut.* xxiv. 16.) that Children ſhould not ſuffer for their Father's Sin. It may be looked upon therefore, as a Prophetical Prediction, rather than as a private Imprecation: Or as Words ſpoken in a great Paſſion; which made him think the Puniſhment could not be too ſore, or too laſting, for ſo horrid a Crime. In the Guilt of which *Joab* endeavoured to involve the King, by ſending for *Abner* back in the King's Name (as *Joſephus* takes it) and ſo might be thought to have killed him by his Order.

And let there not fail from the Houſe of Joab, one that hath an Iſſue,] Which was ſuch a very noiſome Diſeaſe, that by the Law of the *Jews*, it made the very Bed on which a Man, that had it, lay, or the Seat on which he ſat, unclean. In ſhort, he was no leſs abominable among them, than a menſtruous Woman. See *Levit.* xv.

Or that is a Leper,] How filthy he was accounted, ſee *Levit.* xiii. where by the Law he was ſecluded from all Society.

Or that leaneth on a Staff,] By reaſon of ſome great Weakneſs, or Lameneſs: Having the Gout, as *Pellicanus* takes it.

Or that falleth on the Sword,] This, in our Language, ſignifies *that maketh away himſelf.*

Or that lacketh Bread.] Is a Beggar, and ready to ſtarve.

Ver. 30. *So Joab and Abiſhai his Brother ſlew Abner, becauſe he had ſlain their Brother Aſahel at Gibeon in the Battel.*] It ſeems *Abiſhai* was near at hand, ready to aſſiſt in the Murder; if there had been any need of his Help.

Ver. 31. *And David ſaid to Joab, and to all the People that were with him,*] To the whole Court.

Rend your Clothes, and gird you with Sackcloth, and mourn before Abner.] Theſe were all outward Expreſſions of very great Sorrow; which *Joab* himſelf was forced to make a Shew of.

And David himſelf followed the Bier.] Was the chief Mourner. In which the *Jews* think *David*'s Paſſion made him again exceed his Bounds: For *Maimonides* ſaith, it was not lawful, by their Conſtitutions, for the King to accompany a dead Corpſe to the Grave; but he ought to mourn at home. This is their Doctrine in *Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. Sect. 13. and the *Gemara* there, Cap. 2. N. 5. See *Cocceius* his Annotations. But a famous Writer among them, *Mikotzi*, ſaith it was indifferent; the King might do as *David* did, if he pleaſed: For which he quotes *R. Jehuda.* Therefore, tho' perhaps it was not commonly done, yet *David*, to purge himſelf from all Suſpicion of this Crime, and to ſhew his extream great Grief for it, thought fit to do *Abner* this publick Honour. See *Guil. Schickardus* in his *Jus Regium*, Cap. 4. Theor. 13.

The Word we here tranſlate, *the Bier*, is in the Original, *the Bed:* On which Perſons of Quality were wont to be carried forth to their Graves, as ordinary People were upon that which we call a *Bier.* And Kings were ſometimes carried out upon Beds very richly adorned, as *Joſephus* tells us *Herod* was, in the latter end of his firſt Book of the *Jewiſh Wars*, Κλίνη μὲν ὁλόχρυσος, &c. The Bed was all gilded, ſet with precious Stones, and a purple Cover curiouſly wrought, *&c.*

It is but a Fancy that they were wont to follow the *Bier*, and not to go before it: To ſignify that they look'd upon their dead Friends not as loſt, but only gone before them; *Præmiſſi, non amiſſi*, as *Seneca* ſpeaks.

Ver. 32. *And they buried Abner in Hebron; and the King lift up his Voice, and wept at the Grave of Abner, and all the People wept.*] By this it appears he was buried in Pomp, and with a long Train of People attending his Corpſe, as there did the Widow's Son in *Luke* vii. 14. When they came to the Grave, and laid the Corpſe there, it was the Cuſtom to make great and loud Lamentations; which are ſometimes called *Howlings* in the Prophetical Language. And commonly before the Word *weeping*, there is mention in Scripture of *lifting up the Voice*, in doleful Cries. This is as ancient as *Abraham*'s Time, *Gen.* xxi. 16. and we find *Joſeph* weeping ſo loud, upon a different Occaſion, that all the Houſe of *Pharaoh* heard him, *Gen.* xlv. 2, 14, 15. The Forms of Lamentation are noted by the Prophets, *Jerem.* xxii. 18. *Micah* v. 16.

Ver. 33. *And the King lamented over Abner, ſaying,*] *Joſephus* looks upon what follows as a kind of *Epitaph* upon *Abner*, whom *David* buried magnificently, as he ſpeaks, Θάψας δ' αὐτὸν μεγαλοπρεπῶς καὶ ἐπιταφίους συγγραψάμενος θρήνους, &c.

Died Abner as a Fool dieth?] By a *Fool* in Scripture is often meant a wicked Man, a Malefactor; and ſo the Senſe, according to this Tranſlation, is, Did he die by the Hand of Juſtice, for ſome notorious Crime committed by him? or did he die by his own Folly? No ſuch matter. But the Words may be tranſlated out of the *Hebrew*, *How like a Fool died Abner?* Or, *Should Abner have died like a Fool?* That is, what pity is it, that ſuch a valiant Man ſhould die on this faſhion! By Treachery; without any Power to defend himſelf.

Ver. 34. *Thy Hands were not bound, nor thy Feet put into Fetters.*] He was not a Priſoner, but had both Hands and Feet at liberty; and yet

yet could make no uſe of them for his own Preſervation. *Victorinus Strigelius* thinks that *David*, in theſe words, diſtinguiſhes him from thoſe Criminals, whoſe Hands being tied behind them, are carried to Execution; and from thoſe idle Soldiers, who being taken captive in War, have Fetters clapt upon their Legs, to keep them from running away. He was none of theſe; neither a notorious Offender, nor a Coward: But perfidiouſly murdered by one, in ſeeming Friendſhip with him. But the plain Meaning ſeems to be; that if his Enemy had ſet upon him openly, he had been able to make his part good with him.

But as a Man falleth before wicked Men, ſo felleſt thou.] That is, before a ſecret Murderer.

And all the People wept again over him.] Upon this Speech of the King, which was mournfully ſpoken, they were ſo affected, that it drew Tears more plentifully from them.

Ver. 35. *And when all the People came to cauſe David to eat Meat, while it was yet day,*] This was a Cuſtom among the *Hebrews*; whoſe Friends were wont to come, after the Funeral was over, to comfort thoſe who had buried their Dead, and ſend in Proviſions to make a Feaſt. It being ſuppoſed, that they themſelves were ſo ſorrowful, as not to be able to think of their neceſſary Food. See *Jerem.* xvi. 5, 7, 8. and *Ezek.* xxiv. 17. and *Grotius* upon that Place.

David ſware, ſaying, God do ſo to me and more alſo, if I taſte Bread, or ought elſe, till the Sun be down.] He reſolved to keep a ſtrict and rigid Faſt, which did not end till the Sun was ſet. Hence it appears that they buried their Dead in the Day-time.

Ver. 36. *And all the People took notice of it.*] Of his great Grief.

And it pleaſed them: for whatſoever the King did, pleaſed all the People.] They were pleaſed with the Honour he had done this great Man: Whereby he ſo ingratiated himſelf with the People, that they were diſpoſed to put a kind Conſtruction upon all his Actions; as wiſe, and well becoming him.

Ver. 37. *For all the People,*] Of *Judah*; or, all thoſe that were about the King.

And all Iſrael underſtood that day, that it was not of the King to ſlay Abner the Son of Ner.] That he neither ordered it, nor conſented to it, nor any way approved it; but was heartily grieved for his Death.

Ver. 38. *And the King ſaid unto his Servants,*] Who perhaps were not ſenſible enough of this Loſs; or, thought he bewailed it too much.

Know ye not, that there is a Prince, and a great Man fallen this day in Iſrael?] He bids them conſider his Birth, and his Power, Authority, and Valour, with all his other excellent Qualities: And they would not think it ſtrange that he buried him with ſo much Pomp, and mourned ſo heavily for him.

Ver. 39. *And I am this day weak,*] In the *Hebrew* it is *tender*, that is, his Kingdom was young (as we ſpeak) and not ſettled and confirmed.

Though anointed King.] Or as the Words may be tranſlated, *and anointed King*. That is, not born to a Kingdom, but newly called to it, without any hereditary Right to the Authority; which made it more ſlender, than if it had been of long ſtanding. This ſeems to have been the Reaſon why he did not puniſh *Joab* for this Murder, becauſe he himſelf was not well eſtabliſhed. He had alſo been very faithful, and ſtuck cloſe to him in his Adverſity; and had a mighty Power among the Military Men, (as I ſaid before) and was alſo an excellent Soldier himſelf; which made him very neceſſary to *David* in the time of Civil War and Diſcord between *Judah* and *Iſrael*. Therefore Prudence made him defer his Puniſhment, till a better Opportunity. As God himſelf ordinarily doth not call Men to an Account immediately for their Sins, but takes a time to do it more ſeverely, than if it were done preſently.

And theſe Men, the Sons of Zeruiah, are too hard for me.] He and his Brother had got ſuch an Intereſt in the Soldiery, and among the People both in the Court and Country, that he knew not how to deal with them. Yet he not only ſufficiently ſhewed that he deteſted their Actions; but that he did not ſtand in awe of them. For he commanded *Joab* to attend *Abner*'s Funeral, with his Clothes rent, and in Sackcloth: And to his face commended *Abner* highly, and condemned his Murder of him (*ver.* 31, 33, 34.) which was a great Mortification to him; and a kind of Penance which he made him do for his Crime.

The LORD ſhall reward the Doer of evil, according to his Wickedneſs.] He was confident God would puniſh him, as he deſerved; if he could not do it himſelf. And this may be look'd upon as a Prayer, that God would not ſuffer him to eſcape his Vengeance.

CHAP. IV.

Verſe 1. *AND when Saul's Son heard that Abner was dead in Hebron, his Hands were feeble.*] Having loſt his Supporter and Defender; and hearing he was gone over to *David*, as appeared by his dying in *Hebron*.

And all the Iſraelites were troubled.] Becauſe by his Death the Treaty with *David* was broke off; or there was none to manage it with ſuch Authority and Prudence as *Abner* had: And they foreſaw ſome great Change (which they knew not how it would end) by the Loſs of this great Man. For ſo *Plato* obſerves from long Experience, Ὅταν μέλλει κακῶς πράτ]ειν πόλιν, ἔξειλε τῦς ἀγαθῦς ἄνδρας ἐκ]αύτης τῆς πόλεως ὁ Θεός, *When any Calamity is to befall a City, God is wont to take away excellent Men out of that City.*

Ver. 2. *And Saul's Son had two Men that were Captains of Bands.*] Captains, perhaps, of two Companies of Guards about the King.

The Name of the one was Baanah, and the Name of the other Rechab, the Sons of Rimmon a Beerothite, of the Tribe of Benjamin.] The King's own Tribe, which made him repoſe the greateſt Truſt and Confidence in them.

For Beeroth alſo was reckoned to Benjamin.] Tho' it was now in the hand of the *Philiſtines*, yet it belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*. *Joſh.* xviii. 25.

Ver.

Ver. 3. *And the Beerothites fled to Gittaim.*] When *Saul* was ſlain, ſeveral *Iſraelites* left their Cities and fled, and the *Philiſtines* took poſſeſſion of them: among which, this City, it ſeems, was once forſaken by its Inhabitants, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 7. There was a Place called *Gittaim* in the ſame Tribe of *Benjamin*, *Nahum* xi. 53. But it is not likely that was the Place here mentioned: For the *Beerothites* would, in all probability, fly further off from the *Philiſtines*.

And were Sojourners there to this very day.] When this Book was written, they were not returned to their own Country: Being commodiouſly ſettled, I ſuppoſe, in the other Place. Why this is here related, it is hard to ſay: Perhaps it was to ſhow that theſe were two Soldiers of Fortune (as we now ſpeak) whoſe Neceſſity forced them to ſeek for a Support: Which they met withal at the Court of *Iſhboſheth*; where they came to Preferment.

Ver. 4. *And Jonathan, Saul's Son, had a Son that was lame of his Feet, and was five years old when the Tidings came of Saul and Jonathan,*] That is, the Tidings of their Death, mentioned 1 *Sam.* xxxi.

And his Nurſe took him up and fled: and it came to paſs as ſhe made haſte to flee.] Being in a very great Fright.

He fell, and became lame; and his Name was Mephiboſheth.] This ſeems to be related, to ſhow what it was that emboldened theſe Captains to do what follows: Becauſe he who was the next Avenger of Blood was very young; and beſides was lame and unable to purſue them.

Ver. 5. *And the Sons of Rimmon the Beerothite, Rechab and Baanah, went, and came about the heat of the day to the Houſe of Iſhboſheth, who lay on a Bed at Noon.*] As the Manner was, and ſtill continues in hot Countries.

Ver. 6. *And they came thither into the midſt of the Houſe, as tho' they would have fetched Wheat.*] In the *Hebrew*, *carrying Wheat*. Which they either brought into the King's Granaries, for the Uſe of his Houſhold; or carried forth for the Supply of their Soldiers, who were maintained at the King's Charge.

And they ſmote him under the fifth Rib; and Rechab and Baanah his Brother eſcaped.] They gave him a mortal Wound: and no body ſuſpecting them, they eaſily made their Eſcape.

Ver. 7. *For when they came into the Houſe, he lay on his Bed in his Bed-chamber.*] In a private Room; into which he was wont to retire from Company, when he had a mind to repoſe himſelf.

And they ſmote him, and ſlew him, and beheaded him, and took his Head.] The Privacy of the Place gave them the Opportunity to do all this, without Diſcovery.

And gat them away through the Plain all night.] From *Mahanaim* to *Hebron*, it was for the moſt part a flat Country, till they came to aſcend the Mountain, on whoſe ſide *Hebron* ſtood.

Ver. 8. *And they brought the Head of Iſhboſheth unto David, to Hebron, and ſaid to the King, Behold the Head of Iſhboſheth the Son of Saul thine Enemy, which ſought thy Life; and the* LORD *hath avenged my Lord the King this day of Saul and of his Seed.*] For they were all now extinguiſhed, except his Grandſon *Mephiboſheth*; who was of no account, becauſe of his Lameneſs.

Ver. 9. *And David anſwered Rechab and Baanah his Brother, the Sons of Rimmon the Beerothite.*] One of them only ſpake to the King, but related what they both had done, and therefore he directed his Speech to them both.

And ſaid unto them, as the LORD *liveth, who hath delivered my Soul out of all Adverſity.*] Together with this thankful Acknowledgment of God's Care of him hitherto, in all his Straits; he ſuggeſts to them, that he needed not the Help of ſuch Men as they, for his future Preſervation and Preferment by wicked Acts.

Ver. 10. *When one told me, ſaying, behold Saul is dead (thinking to have brought good Tidings) I took hold of him, and ſlew him in Ziklag, who thought I would have given him a Reward for his Tidings.*] He put them in mind of the Story of the *Amalekite* (*Chap.* i. of this Book) which they could not but have heard, and thereby might have learnt what Reception they were likely to find with *David*.

Ver. 11. *How much more, when wicked Men have ſlain a righteous Perſon,*] For ſo *Iſhboſheth* was, in reſpect of them: to whom he had done no wrong; but preferred them to a Place of Truſt and Honour.

In his own Houſe, upon his Bed?] This aggravated his Crime; and made it vaſtly different from that of the *Amalekite*.

Shall I not therefore require his Blood at your hand, and take you away from the earth?] As Perſons unworthy to live; who had ſlain their Maſter, and he a King, in his own Houſe, when he was taking his Repoſe under their Safeguard.

Ver. 12. *And David commanded his young Men.*] Who were of his Guard; ready at hand to execute his Commands.

And they ſlew them, and cut off their Hands and their Feet.] By *David*'s Order, no doubt; they having ſlain their Maſter with their *Hands*, and made their eſcape from Juſtice with their *Feet*.

And hanged them up, over the Pool in Hebron.] Expoſed them in an open, publick Place.

But he took the Head of Iſhboſheth, and buried it in the Sepulchre of Abner in Hebron.] It ſeems *David* had done *Abner* the Honour to make him a particular Sepulchre: Where he privately interred the Head of *Iſhboſheth*. Whoſe Body, no queſtion, was buried by the *Iſraelites*, with ſuch Honours as were ſuitable to his Dignity.

CHAP. V.

Verſe 1. *THen came all the Tribes of Iſrael to David unto Hebron.*] That is, Embaſſadors were ſent from every Tribe, by a common Agreement among them.

And ſpake, ſaying, We are thy Bone and thy Fleſh.] They were not overcome by the Arms, but by the Piety and Juſtice of *David*, to acknowledge him their King: For which they gave ſeveral Reaſons. The firſt is general; that he was qualified by the Law of God (*Deut.* xvii. 15.) which required they ſhould chooſe one of their Brethren, and not a Stranger. Now he

he was of the ſame Blood with them, being deſcended from the ſame common Father, *Iſrael*.

Ver. 2. *Alſo in time paſt, when Saul was King, thou waſt he that led out, and brought in Iſrael:*] They were induced alſo by his Valour and Conduct, which he had ſhewn, they well remembred, in the Reign of *Saul:* When he was ſo ſucceſsful in many Expeditions, that he became the Darling of all the People, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 5, 15, 16, 30.

And the LORD ſaid to thee, thou ſhalt feed my People Iſrael, and thou ſhalt be Captain over Iſrael.] This was the chiefeſt Argument of all; that God they knew had deſign'd him long ago to be their King: Having ſaid by the Prophet *Samuel*, that he ſhould *feed*, that is, rule and govern them, and fight their Battels. We do not read theſe Words any where recorded before now: But *Samuel* having anointed him, no doubt frequently ſpake of his Office, under the Name of the *Paſtor of the People*.

And it is the firſt time we find a Governour deſcribed by this Name in Scripture: Though much uſed afterward by the Prophets, who ſpeak in this Language; particularly *Ezekiel* xxxiv. 23. and many other Places. Whence our Lord Chriſt is called the *good Shepherd*, and *the great Shepherd*; that is, Ruler of his People: And both the *Greeks* and the *Romans* have borrowed this Word, to expreſs a ſupreme Governour. And truly ſuch Rulers as take care of their People, as a Shepherd doth of his Flock, are divine Bleſſings: Whom *Iſaiah* calls *Nurſing Fathers*, xlix. 23. On the contrary, they who lay heavy Burdens on their People, fleecing, or rather fleaing them by cruel Oppreſſions, are called by the Prophets, *roaring Lions*, *hungry Bears* and *devouring Wolves*, *Ezek.* xix. 2. xxii. 27. *Nahum* ii. 11, 12. *Habak.* i. 8. *Zephan.* iii. 3. *Prov.* xxvii. 15. *Companions of Thieves*, *Iſa.* i. 23. *Whales*, *Dragons*, or rather *Crocodiles*, *Ezek.* xxix. 3. *Pſal.* lxxiv. 13, 14. *Leopards*, *Jerem.* v. 6. and ſuch like odious Names.

Ver. 3. *So all the Elders of Iſrael came to the King in Hebron.*] He gave the Meſſengers ſuch a kind Reception, and ſo thankfully declared his Acceptance of the Offer they made him, that upon their return with his Anſwer, the *Elders* of *Iſrael* came to wait upon him. By whom ſome underſtand the Senators of the great *Sanhedrim:* But that's a Fancy which I have often confuted. The plain Meaning is, that the chief Perſons of Authority, in every Tribe, came in the Name of the reſt of that Tribe, whom they repreſented.

And King David made a League with them in Hebron.] It is not ſaid what the Contents of this League, or Contract was. The *Jews* think it was principally, that there ſhould be an Act of Oblivion of all the Injuries which the People of *Iſrael* had done to *Judah*, or they to them, in the Reign of *Iſhboſheth*. But this is too narrow a Senſe: It is more probable, that he aſſured them he would govern them juſtly and kindly, according to the Law of God; and they promiſed to obey him ſincerely and faithfully, according to the ſame Law.

Before the LORD:] The Ark of God's Preſence was not in *Hebron*; and therefore it is a Queſtion how it could be ſaid, that he made a League *before the LORD.* But ſee what I have ſaid of this, *Judges* xx. 1.

And they anointed David King over Iſrael.] They deſired the High-Prieſt to anoint him, whoſe Office it was: And thereby expreſſed their Conſent he ſhould reign over them. So *Procopius Gazæus* interprets theſe Words (as he doth ii. 4.) *Iterum ſuffragiis*, &c. All the Tribes again choſe him by their Votes, to be their King. He was anointed three times; *firſt* by *Samuel* in his Father's Houſe (1 *Sam.* xvi. 13.) Then when the Tribe of *Judah* owned him for their King (Chap. *Second* of this Book, *ver.* 4.) and now when all *Iſrael* did the ſame. For which *Abarbinel* gives this Reaſon; *David's Unction was repeated ſo often, that it might be the Foundation, and Root, and Principle of all his Poſterity:* Who needed no Unction, being anointed in him; unleſs there was any Controverſy about the Succeſſion.

Ver. 4. *David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years.*] It is uncertain how old he was when he was firſt anointed by *Samuel*; and how long after he came to the Court of *Saul*; and how long he was in Exile from it. About which Men's Opinions are very different: For ſome think, as the *Jews* do in *Seder Olam Rabba*, that he was near *Nine and Twenty Years old* when *Samuel* firſt anointed him: And conſequently but one Year in Exile. Others (which is the truer Opinion) that he was *Twenty Years* old at his firſt Unction, and ſo almoſt ten Years in Exile. But it is ſufficient for us to know, what we are here told, that he was thirty Years old at his ſecond Unction in *Hebron*, immediately after *Saul's* Death.

Ver. 5. *In Hebron he reigned over Judah ſeven Years and ſix Months; and in Jeruſalem he reigned thirty and three Years over all Iſrael and Judah.*] By this it appears, that immediately after his third Unction, he made his Attempt upon *Jeruſalem*; as it here follows: Otherwiſe he could not have reigned there ſo long.

Ver. 6. *And the King and his Men went to Jeruſalem.*] His firſt warlike Enterprize, after he was their King, was againſt *Jeruſalem:* Which he reſolved to reduce out of the hands of the *Jebuſites*; who hitherto poſſeſſed a noble Part of it, *viz.* the Fort of *Zion*, which they held, though the *Iſraelites* dwelt in the other Part of the City.

The Jebuſites the Inhabiters of the Land:] That is, of that Part of the Land. See *Joſh.* xv. 63. *Judges* i. 21. xix. 10, 11.

Which ſpake unto David,] When he came to ſet down his Army againſt the Fortreſs.

Saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou ſhalt not come in hither: thinking David cannot come in hither.] They imagined their Fortreſs to be ſo impregnable, that by way of Contempt and Scorn, they told him the Blind and the Lame were able to defend it againſt him, and all his Forces. So *Bochartus* tranſlates theſe Words, *Non huc accedes*, &c. *Thou ſhalt not come up hither, but the blind and the lame will drive thee away*; i. e. the moſt Feeble and Cowardly among us. Which he thinks is ſo plain a Senſe, that he wonders Men of great Learning ſhould ſeek for any other. *Lib.* 4. *Phaleg. Cap.* 36.

But ſo it is, a great many by *the Blind and the Lame* underſtand the Images of their Gods (particularly our learned *Gregory* hath a whole Diſſertation about it.) As if they had ſaid, our Gods whom ye call blind and lame, that have Eyes and ſee not, Feet and walk not (as it is *Pſal.* cxv.) they ſhall defend us: And you muſt overcome them, before you overcome us. *Luther* himſelf thus explains the Senſe; *Theſe Blind and Lame*, ſaith he, *were the Idols of the Jebuſites; which, to irritate David, they ſet upon their Walls, as their Patrons and Defenders: And they did as good as ſay, thou doſt not fight with us, but with our Gods, who will eaſily repel thee.* As for the Fancy of *R. Elieſer* in his *Pirke*, Cap. 36. it is altogether groundleſs; which is, that when *Abraham* bought the Burying-place in *Macpela* of the Children of *Heth*, he ſealed a Covenant with them, that when his Seed ſhould poſſeſs the Land of *Canaan*, (as they believed they would) they ſhould not poſſeſs the City of *Jebus*. Which Covenant they now engraved upon brazen Statues, and ſet them upon their Walls; ſaying, thou canſt not enter here, unleſs thou break the Oath of *Abraham*. See alſo *Bartoloccius* in his *Kirjath Sepher*, Pars 2. p. 89, &c.

Ver. 7. *Nevertheleſs, David took the Stronghold of Zion; the ſame is the City of David.*] Their Taunts and Jeers did not diſcourage *David*, but he aſſaulted the Fort and took it; and made it his Royal Seat.

Ver. 8. *And David ſaid on that day,*] When the Aſſault was made.

Whoſoever getteth up into the Gutter, and ſmiteth the Jebuſites, &c.] i. e. *Cuts off their Pipes of Water*, or their Ciſterns into which the Water fell: For the *Hebrew* Word *Tzinnor*, which we tranſlate *Gutter*, is no where found but in this Place, and in *Pſalm* xlii. 7. and by St. *Hierom* is tranſlated *Fiſtulæ*. But I know not how we come to tranſpoſe the Words, *he that ſmiteth the Jebuſites*, behind the other, which in the *Hebrew* are firſt. *He that ſmiteth the Jebuſites, let him throw down into the Ditch* (which was by the Wall) *both the Blind and the Lame, which David extreamly hates.* Thus *Bochart* tranſlates the Words, in the Place above-named: Which if it be admitted, there is no need to add thoſe Words (out of 1 *Chron.* xi. 6.) to make out the Senſe, *he ſhall be Chief and Captain:* For the Senſe is compleat without them.

Wherefore he ſaid, the Blind and the Lame ſhall not enter into the Houſe.] Or, as it is in the Margin, *becauſe they had ſaid, even the Blind and the Lame, he ſhall not come into the Houſe.* That is, becauſe they had taunted him with the Blind and Lame, as if they could defend the Fort, and hinder him from coming into it; therefore he was highly provoked to wiſh they might be thrown down headlong from their Walls into the *Ditch*. And then by *the Houſe* is meant, neither the Houſe of *David*, nor the Houſe of the LORD (as many take it) but that very Fort wherein the *Jebuſites* had dwelt; from which hereafter they were excluded. And indeed it is a very large Word in the *Hebrew*, ſignifying any Place. If we could admit the Fancy of *R. Elieſer*, that the *Jebuſites* engraved the Oath of *Abraham* upon brazen Statues, whereby they pretended that Fort was ſecured to them and their Poſterity, ſuch an abominable Forgery muſt needs highly incenſe *David*; whoſe Soul hated ſuch impudent Frauds.

Ver. 9. *So David dwelt in the Fort, and called it the City of David; and David built round about from Millo and inward.*] The Fort was not wide enough to contain the whole Court, and all his Guards, and others that had occaſion to come hither: And therefore he built round about it, from *Millo*. Which ſome take for that low Place which lay between the Fort and the City: Which was now filled with People, and thence called *Millo*.

Ver. 10. *And David went on, and grew great.*] He proceeded to enlarge his Dominions, as well as his Royal City.

And the LORD God of Hoſts was with him.] This was the Cauſe of his great Proſperity, that God, who commands all the Armies of Heaven and Earth, directed and bleſſed him in all his Enterprizes.

Ver. 11. *And Hiram King of Tyre ſent Meſſengers unto David.*] To compliment him upon his Succeſſion to the Throne, and taking *Jeruſalem*. Which was a great Honour; for *Hiram* was a potent Prince, and yet courted *David's* Friendſhip; becauſe he ſaw how proſperous he was. And this Friendſhip continued all *David's* days, unto the Reign of *Solomon*. When his Son, of the ſame Name, expreſſed the ſame Affection to him, that his Father had done to *David*.

And Cedar Trees, and Carpenters and Maſons; and they built David an Houſe.] Hearing *David* intended to ſettle in the Fort he had taken; *Hiram* ſent him both Materials and Artificers to build him a Palace. For the *Jews* being given to feeding Cattle, and Husbandry, were not very skilful in Manufactures.

Ver. 12. *And David perceived that the LORD had eſtabliſhed him King over Iſrael.*] For he had both ſubdued his Enemies, and raiſed him up Friends.

And that he had exalted his Kingdom for his People Iſrael's ſake.] It is an excellent Reflection which *Conradus Pellicanus* made long ago upon theſe Words: *This is the greateſt Grace of a King, that he certainly believes himſelf to be made a King by God, for the ſake of the People: And let him often call to mind, the People were not created or ordained by God for the King.*

Ver. 13. *And David took him more Concubines and Wives out of Jeruſalem, after he came from Hebron:*] The Difference between a Wife and a Concubine, the *Talmudiſts* generally ſay was, that the latter had neither Dowry ſettled upon her, nor was taken with all the Rites and Solemnities of Marriage: Yet was a Wife of a lower Rank, as well as the former which had both. See *Selden* Lib. *de Succeſſionibus*, Cap. 3. and what I have already noted, *Gen.* xxii. 24. and elſewhere. How many *David* had of both ſorts, it is not certain: But we read of *ſix Wives* he had before, iii. 2, &c. And the *Jews*, after their Way, endeavour to prove from xi. 8. of this Book, that he had *eighteen* in all: Which number it was not lawful for the King to exceed; unleſs he divorced any of them, and took others in their room. See *Schickard*

de Jure Nep. Cap. 3. Theorem 9. and *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 2. Cap. 5. Sect. 9. and my Notes on *Deut.* xvii. 17.

And there were yet Sons and Daughters born to David.] It was looked upon as a Piece of political Wiſdom in Princes, to endeavour to have many Children; that by matching them into many potent Families, they might ſtrengthen their Intereſt, and have the more Supporters of their Authority.

Ver. 14. *And theſe be the Names of them that were born to him in Jeruſalem; Shammuah, Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon.*] Theſe are the very ſame Names with thoſe in 1 *Chron.* iii. 5. only a little Variation in the firſt.

Ver. 15. *Ibhar alſo, and Eliſhua, and Nepheg, and Japhia,*

Ver. 16. *And Eliſhamah, and Eliada, and Eliphalet.*] Here are only ſeven Sons mentioned in theſe two Verſes: But in the 1 *Chron.* iii 8, *&c.* there are nine. Of which *Kimchi* gives this Account; that here he mentions only the Sons he had by his *Wives*; but there are ſome added which he had by his *Concubines:* which doth not well agree with what there follows, *ver.* 9.

Ver. 19. *But when the Philiſtines heard that they had anointed David King over Iſrael.*] So that now *Iſrael* and *Judah* were united under one Head, they thought it behoved them to beſtir themſelves: Whereas they ſeem to have been quiet while the War laſted between *Iſrael* and *Judah* in the Time of *Iſhboſheth*, hoping they might deſtroy one another.

All the Philiſtines went out to ſeek David.] They raiſed all the Forces they were able, to find out *David* and fight him, before he was ſettled in his new Kingdom. The Friendſhip between him and King *Achiſh* was ſo great, that one would have thought they ſhould have lived in peace. But either *Achiſh* was dead, or the Lords of the *Philiſtines*, who were very powerful, over-ruled him, as they did when they forced him to ſend *David* out of their Army, 1 *Sam.* xxix. 6, &c.

And David heard of it, and went down to the Hold.] Intelligence being brought him of their Motions, he went from the Fort of *Sion*, to ſome other ſtrong Place below; where his Army might conveniently have their Rendezvous.

Ver. 18. *The Philiſtines alſo came and ſpread themſelves in the Valley of Rephaim.*] Which in *Joſh.* xv. 8. we tranſlate the *Valley of Giants*, lying weſtward of *Jeruſalem*; which perhaps they thought to aſſault.

Ver. 19. *And David enquired of the LORD, ſaying, Shall I go up to the Philiſtines? wilt thou deliver them into my hand?*] Though *David* went into a Strong-hold, he did not truſt to that, nor intend merely to ſtand upon his Defence: Yet would not give them Battel, till he was encouraged by God to do it.

And the LORD ſaid, Go up, for I will doubtleſs deliver the Philiſtines into thy hand.] A full Aſſurance of Victory took away all Fear of their great Numbers, which is expreſſed by their *ſpreading* themſelves in the forenamed Valley.

Ver. 20. *And David came to Baal-Perazim.*] For thither the *Philiſtines* marched from *Rephaim*, where they firſt pitched: As appears from 1 *Chron.* xiv. 11.

And David ſmote them there.] Routed their Army, and ſlew a great many of them in that Place.

And ſaid, The LORD hath broken forth upon mine Enemies before me, as the Breach of Waters.] Overpowered and ſcattered them; as Waters, when they make a Breach in a Bank, overflow and carry all before them.

Therefore he called the Name of that Place Baal-Perazim.] That it might put him and his Poſterity in mind of God's great Power and Goodneſs, which he ſhewed in this Place: Where the *Philiſtines* were put into ſuch a Conſternation, that they forgat, when they fled, to carrry away their Gods with them; as it here follows.

Ver. 21. *And there they left their Images.*] Which they had brought into the Field with them; to be carried before their Hoſt, as a Token of the Preſence of their Gods with them. Thus we read in 2 *Chron.* xxv. 14. that the *Edomites* had their Gods along with them, when they fought with *Amaziah*. And perhaps they learnt this from the *Iſraelites*, who carried the Ark (the Symbol of God's Preſence) in their Army, when they went to fight with theſe *Philiſtines*; who ſaw it, and took it, as the *Iſraelites* now did their Images. 1 *Sam.* iv. 4, 5, &c. But behold here the Difference between the Ark and theſe Images. For when the Ark fell into the hands of the *Philiſtines*, it ſorely plagued them, as we read in the foregoing Book: But their Images had no power to hurt the *Iſraelites*, nor ſecure themſelves from being burnt by them, as it here follows.

And David and his Men burnt them.] According to the Command of God, *Deut.* vii. 5.

Ver. 22. *And the Philiſtines came up again, and ſpread themſelves in the Valley of Rephaim.*] They ſaw that their All lay at ſtake, and therefore they muſtered up their whole Strength; and perhaps procured the Aſſiſtance of other People, to try their Fortune (as we now ſpeak) in another Battel. So *Joſephus* relates, that the *Syrians* and *Phœnicians* joined them, and came up τριπλασίῳ στρατῷ with an Army three times as big as the former.

Ver. 23. *And when David enquired of the LORD.*] Tho' he had been ſo ſucceſsful, yet he would attempt nothing without God's direction; to whom, he knew he owed the former Victory.

He ſaid, thou ſhalt not go up.] That is, not directly: To fight in a pitch'd Battle, as they did before. So the following Words explain it.

But fetch a compaſs behind them.] Where they ſuſpected no Danger.

And come upon them over-againſt the Mulberry Trees.] A Place well known to *David:* Who was taught by God himſelf, not to expect Victory always by main Strength; but ſometimes to make uſe of Stratagems.

Ver. 24. *And let it be, when thou heareſt the ſound of a going, in the tops of the Mulberry Trees.*] In the *Hebrew* it is *Beroſhe*, which ſhould not be rendered *in the tops* (for Men do not walk on the tops of Trees) but *in the beginnings*; in the very Entrance of the Place, where the Mulberry Trees

Trees were planted: Where God intended to make a Sound, as if a vaſt Number of Men were marching to fall upon the *Philiſtines*. There is no doubt but the *Hebrew* Word *Roſch*, ſignifies not only the *Head*, but the Beginning of any thing. So *Bochart* obſerves in his *Phaleg. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 22. as in *Nahum* iii. 10. *the top* (as we tranſlate it) *the head of every Street*, is the Beginning of thoſe Streets. And *Iſaiah* li. 20. *Jer.* xxii. 6. *Gilead* is called *the head of Libanus*, becauſe *Libanus* begins where *Gilead* ends.

Then beſtir thy ſelf.] Fall upon the *Philiſtines*.

For then ſhall the LORD *go out before thee, to ſmite the Hoſt of the Philiſtines.* By making ſuch a noiſe of a mighty Hoſt coming to aſſault them; that they ſhould be amazed, and have no Apprehenſion of *David*'s Army coming behind them.

Ver. 25. *And David did ſo, as the* LORD *commanded him, and ſmote the Philiſtines from Geba, until thou come to Gazer.*] He purſued them to the very Confines of their own Land; for *Joſephus* ſaith concerning *Gazer*, ἥδε ἔστιν ὅρος αὐτῶν τῆς χώρας, *that it was the Border of their Country.*

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *AGain David gathered together all the choſen Men of Iſrael, thirty thouſand.*] Having defeated the *Philiſtines*, and enjoying ſome Peace, he thought it a ſeaſonable Time, to fetch up the Ark, and ſettle it in an honourable Place: And for that End ſummoned the principal Perſons in *Iſrael* to attend it. Or, as others will have it, the moſt mighty Men in all *Iſrael*, to the Number of *thirty thouſand*; to be a Guard to it, in caſe any of their Enemies ſhould attempt to diſturb the Solemnity he intended.

Ver. 2. *And David aroſe, and went with all the People that were with him.*] Not only thoſe thirty thouſand, but a vaſt Number of the common People, as we learn from 1 *Chron.* xiii. 2, 5.

From Baale of Judah.] Which is the ſame with *Kirjath-jearim*, 1 *Chron.* xiii. 6. called *Baalah*, *Joſh.* xv. 9. and *Kirjath-Baal*, *Joſh.* xv. 60. xviii. 14. and here *Baale of Judah*, becauſe (as this Place ſhews) it belonged to that Tribe. But ſome think there is a great Difficulty here, where it is ſaid they went *from Baale*, when in the 1 *Chron.* xiii. 6. it is ſaid they went *to Baale*. But there is no Diſagreement in theſe two Places: For they muſt go *to it*, before they could come *from it*: And here he ſpeaks of their Motion from thence, after they had gone to it.

And brought from thence the Ark of God.] Where it had been a long time in the Houſe of *Abinadab*, whoſe Son was ſanctified to attend it. See 1 *Sam.* vii. 1.

Whoſe Name is called by the Name of the LORD *of Hoſts.*] Or, *becauſe of which the Name is proclaimed the Name of the* LORD *of Hoſts.* For by reaſon of the mighty Miracles which were done before the Ark, the Name of the LORD was highly extolled and magnified, not only among the *Iſraelites*, but the *Philiſtines*. And by this, ſaith *Abarbinel*, it was made known, that God dwelt among the *Iſraelites*: So that not only the *Philiſtines* were affrighted when this Ark of God's Preſence came among them, 1 *Sam.* iv. 7, 8. but the Men of *Bethſhemeſh* alſo, vi. 20.

That dwelleth between the Cherubims.] The learned *Lud. de Dieu* thinks the moſt ſimple and genuine Conſtruction of all theſe Words to be, by referring the Word *aſcher (which)* not to the Ark, but unto God, and tranſlating them thus: *Who is called the Name, the Name of the* LORD *of Hoſts, ſitting on the Cherubims, upon it.* Which, ſaith he, is an egregious Commendation of the Ark, that it is the Ark of that God, who being incomprehenſible and unbounded in his Eſſence, is called abſolutely *the Name*, (ſee *Levit.* xxiv. 11, 16.) even the Name of the LORD of Hoſts, who ſitteth on the Cherubims over the Ark.

Ver. 3.] *And they ſet the Ark of God upon a new Cart.*] Which ought to have been carried upon the Shoulders of the *Kohathites*, *Numb.* vii. 9. for which reaſon no Waggons were allowed to them, as there were to the reſt of the *Levites*, to carry ſeveral Parts of the Tabernacle. And ſo *David* himſelf ſaith afterward, it ought to be carried, 1 *Chron.* xv. 2, 15. And ſo, after the following Miſcarriage, it is plain from the 13th Verſe of this Chapter it was ſo carried. How they came to forget themſelves now, ſo as to put it upon a Cart, one can but conjecture. They ſeem to have imitated the Cuſtom of other Nations, who were wont to carry their Myſteries in a Cheſt upon a Cart, drawn by Oxen or Kine, as the *Philiſtines* did the Ark itſelf, 1 *Sam.* vi. 7, 8. Who not being puniſhed for putting it upon a *new Cart*, the *Iſraelites* followed their Example the more ſecurely. And that they were wont alſo to carry their Myſteries in a great deal of Pomp (as *David* here did, *ver.* 5.) is manifeſt from abundance of Authors. *Sanchoniathon* mentions an Image in a Shrine in *Phœnicia*, drawn after the ſame manner; in *Euſebius*'s *Præpar. Evangel. Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 15. See our very learned Dr. *Spencer*, *p.* 816. But that they learnt this from the *Jews*, not the *Jews* from them, ſeems to me moſt probable: Though I can give no Account how they came to put the Ark now upon a *new Cart*, unleſs it were in imitation of the *Philiſtines*.

And brought it out of the Houſe of Abinadab that was in Gibeah.] Or, on the Hill, as we read, 1 *Sam.* vii. 1.

And Uzza and Ahio, the Sons of Abinadab, drave the new Cart.] It ſeems *Eleazer* (who was ſanctified to take care of the Ark, as we read in the above-named Place) was dead or ſtayed at home to look after his Father, who was now grown aged: So theſe two took upon them to be the *Bubulci* (as *Bochart* calls them) who drave the Oxen.

Ver. 4. *And they brought it out of the Houſe of Abinadab, which was at Gibeah, accompanying the Ark of God.*] That is, when it was brought out of his Houſe, the People flock'd together to attend it.

And Ahio went before the Ark.] He led the Oxen, I ſuppoſe; and *Uzzah* went behind the Cart, to take care the Ark fell not out.

Ver. 5. *And David and all the Houſe of Iſrael played before the* LORD] Who was preſent where the Ark was.

On all manner of Inſtruments made of Fir-wood, even on Harps, and on Pſalteries, and on Timbrels, and on Cornets, and on Cymbals.] Where *Raſi* notes, that theſe Words *Becol Atze Beroſhim*, do not ſignify any particular Inſtrument, but (as we tranſlate it) the Wood of which the following Inſtruments are made; *viz.* either Fir or Box. As for the Inſtruments themſelves, it will be to no purpoſe to deſcribe them. The learned Reader may ſee an Account of every one of them, in *Bartoloccius*'s *Kirjath-Sepher*, *Tom.* 2. *p.* 190, &c.

Ver. 6. *And when they came to Nachon's threſhing Floor,*] It is commonly thought that *Nachon* was the Name of a Man: But *Bochartus* thinks it rather the Name of a Place; ſo called by Anticipation, for the Stroke upon *Uzzah*. For *Nacha* ſignifies to ſmite, and *Nachon* ſignifies Percuſſion: So this Floor was called ever after *the Floor of Percuſſion*; becauſe God ſmote *Uzzah* in this Place. And accordingly in the 1 *Chron.* xiii. 9. it is called *the Floor of Chidon*; which is the very ſame: For *Chid* ſignifies *Deſtruction*.

Uzzah put forth his Hand to the Ark of God, and took hold of it; for the Oxen ſhook it.] There is no greater Difference, among Interpreters, about the Signification of any Word, than this Word *Sametu*, which we tranſlate *ſhook it*. That which is neareſt to the Truth, *Bochartus* thinks, is our Marginal Tranſlation, *they ſtumbled*. Yet this is mere gueſſing, for it hath no Foundation either in the *Hebrew*, or the neighbouring Languages. But from the *Arabick* he takes this to be the Senſe; that the Oxen coming into a dirty Place, ſtuck in the Mire; and could not get out their Feet. Which *Uzzah* ſeeing, and fearing the King and the People, by this Accident, might be ſtopt too long in their Proceſſion, *took hold of the Ark*: Intending perhaps to carry it, together with his Brethren, to Mount *Zion*, which was not far off: But this ſhould have been done at firſt; and becauſe he did it not, he was puniſhed by God.

Ver. 7. *And the anger of the* LORD *was kindled againſt Uzzah, and God ſmote him there for his error.*] Or, *for his Raſhneſs*, in touching the Ark: Some think it was becauſe he was not a *Levite*, and therefore ſhould not have touched it. But it is pretty plain that he was; being the Brother of *Eleazer*, who was conſecrated to look after the Ark: Which was the Office of a *Levite*, 1 *Sam.* vii. 1. But being a *Levite*, he was guilty of a double Error: *Firſt*, In not carrying the Ark upon his Shoulders, together with his Brethren; and *ſecondly*, In touching it; which he ought not ſo much as to have ſeen: But it being cover'd by the Prieſts, the Levites were to take hold of the Staves, and carry it, *Numb.* iv. 15.

And there he died by the Ark of God.] Or, *before the* LORD, as it is expreſſed, 1 *Chron.* xiii. 10. becauſe the Ark was the Symbol of God's ſpecial Preſence. Some think he was ſuddenly choaked; others that his Arm and his Shoulder, upon which he ſhould have carried the Ark, were dried up; others, that he was blaſted with Lightning. But all theſe, and the like Conjectures, are uncertain: It is enough to know, that he died ſuddenly, not from any natural Cauſe, but ſtruck by the Hand of God. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *L.* 2. *Cap.* 13. who truly obſerves, that though his Intention, perhaps, was good, yet that would not excuſe an Offence againſt the expreſs Law of God. *Abarbinel* alſo adds this as a Cauſe of his Puniſhment, that he wanted Faith in God: Who would not have ſuffered his Ark to fall into the Dirt, but ſupported it himſelf, without *Uzzah*'s help.

Ver. 8. *And David was diſpleaſed, becauſe the* LORD *had made a breach upon Uzzah.*] He took it very heavily: And was angry (as the Word ſignifies) that there was any Cauſe for ſuch a Breach, that is ſuch a Deſtruction. For it detracted much from his Authority and Eſteem, to have ſuch an Accident in the beginning of his Reign, and at ſuch a Solemnity of great Joy: Which was hereby diſturbed and interrupted. Perhaps, he was troubled, being afraid that he alſo might ſuffer, for taking no better care about the carrying of the Ark.

And he called the Name of the place Perez Uzzah, to this day.] In memory of this dreadful Stroke: Whereby the *Levites* and all others might be admoniſhed of their Duty.

Ver. 9. *And David was afraid of the* LORD *that day, and ſaid, How ſhall the Ark of the* LORD *come to me?*] By this it appears, he had ſome Fear, that he himſelf was in danger: And therefore durſt not bring the Ark into his City. Either thinking, in great Humility, that he was unworthy to have it ſo near him; or that he did not ſufficiently underſtand how to treat it. Which he underſtood better afterward, as we learn from 1 *Chron.* xv. 2, 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 10. *So David would not remove the Ark of the* LORD *unto him, into the City of David: but David carried it aſide into the Houſe of Obed-Edom the Gittite.*] He is not called a *Gittite* from his being born, or dwelling in *Gath* (which was a City of the *Philiſtines*) but from *Gath-rimmon* a Levitical City, *Joſh.* xxi. 24, 25. For it is certain *Obed-Edom* was a *Levite*, 1 *Chron.* xv. 18, 21, 24.---xvi. 5. Who, I ſuppoſe, was willing to entertain the Ark: Reſolving to treat it with ſuch Reverence, that he might not offend the Divine Majeſty.

Ver. 11. *And the Ark of the* LORD *continued in the Houſe of Obed-Edom three Months.*] A ſhort time, in compariſon with that which it continued at *Kirjath-jearim*. But all this time it was without the Tabernacle. Which from *Gilgal* being removed to *Shiloh*, after the Death of *Eli*, was carried to *Nob*; and after the Death of *Samuel* to *Gibeon*: Where it remained till *Solomon*'s Temple was built, and then carried thither, as we read, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 39. and 2 *Chron.* i. 3.

And the LORD *bleſſed Obed-Edom, and his Houſhold.*] Made them exceeding proſperous in all their Affairs.

Ver. 12. *And it was told David, ſaying, The* LORD *hath bleſſed the Houſe of Obed-Edom, and all that pertaineth to him, becauſe of the Ark of God.*] They could not tell to what to impute

pute the extraordinary Happineſs that attended him, but to his religious Care about the Ark.

So David went and brought up the Ark of God from the Houſe of Obed-Edom, into the City of David,] Hoping God would bleſs him and his City, as he had done *Obed-Edom*, and his Houſe.

With gladneſs.] All the People, I ſuppoſe, again accompanied him, playing on all manner of muſical Inſtruments, as they did before, *ver.* 5.

Ver. 13. *And it was ſo, that when they that bare the Ark, had gone ſix paces,*] Without any Mark of God's Diſpleaſure, as before, *ver.* 7.

He ſacrificed Oxen and Fatlings.] As a Thankſgiving to God for his Goodneſs, upon an Altar erected on purpoſe, on this extraordinary Occaſion. Some think he repeated theſe Sacrifices ſeven times, at the end of every ſix paces. The Word we tranſlate *Fatlings*, is in the *Hebrew*, *Meri:* Whoſe Signification is uncertain. For ſome take it for a *Lamb*, others for a *Ram*, and others put a different Meaning on it. But *Bochartus*, with great Probability, thinks it was a kind of Ox, being commonly joined with Oxen in Scripture, not only here, but in 1 *Kings* i. 9, 19, 25. *Iſa.* i. 11.-----xi. 6. Nor doth 1 *Chron.* xv. 26. contradict this, where it is ſaid, they offered *Bullocks and Rams.* For thoſe are not the ſame Sacrifices with theſe, which were offered by *David*; whereas thoſe in the *Chronicles* were offered by the *Levites.* See his *Hierozoicon. P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 19.

Ver. 14. *And David danced before the LORD with all his might; and David was girded with a Linen Ephod.*] He laid aſide his Royal Ornaments, and was girded only with a ſimple Ephod: Which was, I obſerved upon 1 *Sam.* ii. 18. an honorary Garment, uſed by thoſe who were no Prieſts. He is ſaid to dance *before the LORD*, becauſe the Ark was the Symbol of the Divine Preſence. And from hence, it is probable, the Heathen learnt to dance before their Gods: As *Callimachus* mentions the *Chori* and Dancings of Youth at the Altar of *Apollo.* And as there were παίδικοι χόροι, ſo there were alſo ἀνδρικοι, and among the *Lacedemonians* of old, Men alſo. And *Plato* obſerves, that among the *Egyptians* all kinds of Muſick, and Songs and Dances were conſecrated to their Gods, *Lib.* 3. *de legibus, p.* 799. See that great Man *Ezek. Spanhemius*'s Obſervations on *Callim. Hymn. in Apollinem*, ver. 8.

Ver. 15. *So David and all the Houſe of Iſrael brought up the Ark of the LORD with ſhouting, and with the ſound of the Trumpet.*] Such Ὁλολυγμοὶ, as the *Greeks* call them, were uſed before their Gods: Of which the great Man now mentioned gives a large Account in his Obſervations upon *Callimachus* his Hymn *ad Delum*, ver. 258. Where he obſerves, that ὀλολύζειν anciently ſignified to ſhout for Joy: And in like manner the *Latin* Word *ululare* is uſed by *Statius* for *exultare.* And this ſort of Rejoicing is at this Day uſed by the *Abyſſines*, in the Evening of our LORD's Reſurrection; when Men and Women ſhout and clap their Hands, and dance to ſeveral Inſtruments of Muſick, till Morning Light: And all this in their Churches. Which in all likelihood came from the *Jews*, who ſtill dance in ſome of their Feſtivals. See *Ludolphus* in his Comment upon his *Hiſtoria Æthiopica. Pag.* 381. where he obſerves that *David*, in all probability, did not now dance alone, but in company.

Ver. 16. *And as the Ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul's Daughter, looked out through a Window, and ſaw King David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and ſhe deſpiſed him in her heart.*] Imagining that he debaſed himſelf, by ſtripping himſelf of the Ornaments of Majeſty, and dancing among the common People. But ſhe underſtood not, as *Procopius Gazæus* here gloſſes, *ardoris ſtimulos*, theſe Stings of Divine Love which *David* declared to her afterward.

Ver. 17. *And he brought in the Ark of the LORD, and ſet it in its place, in the midſt of the Tabernacle that David had pitched for it.*] The ancient Tabernacle made by *Moſes*, remained ſtill, as I obſerved before at *Gibeon:* From whence *David* did not think fit to fetch it, becauſe he intended ſhortly (as *Pellicanus* well obſerves) to build a Temple to ſettle it in. For the preſent therefore he only hung ſome Curtains round about it, after the Faſhion of the Tabernacle. See vii. 2.

And David offered Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings before the LORD.] To implore the Continuance of his Mercies to them; and to thank him for thoſe they had received.

Ver. 18. *And as ſoon as David had made an end of offering Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings, he bleſſed the People in the Name of the LORD.*] He prayed God to bleſs them; and pronounced them bleſſed in his Name.

Ver. 19. *And he dealt among the People, even among the whole Multitude of Iſrael, as well Women as Men, to every one a Cake of Bread and a good Piece of Fleſh, and a Flaggon of Wine.*] The *Talmudiſts* have a Conceit, that the *Hebrew* Word *Eſhpar*, which we tranſlate *a good Piece of Fleſh*, ſignifies the ſixth Part of a Bullock: Deriving it from three Words put into one, *viz. Echad* one, *Sheſh* ſix, and *Par* a Bullock. But every one ſees this is a very forced Fancy; and it is not in it ſelf credible, that he could among ſuch a Multitude deal a ſixth Part of a Bullock to every one; or that they could well carry it away, with the Bread and Wine. *Bochartus* more reaſonably thinks (as ſome of the *Jews* do) the Word is derived from *Shapar*, which ſignifies *decorus:* And ſo the Meaning is, as we tranſlate it, he gave to every one an handſome or decent Portion of Fleſh. See his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 18.

So all the People departed every one to his Houſe.] Well ſatisfied with their Prince's Bounty to them, and his Piety to God.

Ver. 20. *Then David returned to bleſs his Houſhold.*] As he had done the People.

And Michal the Daughter of Saul came out to meet him, and ſaid, How glorious was the King of Iſrael to-day.] This ſhe ſpake ironically, by way of Deriſion and Contempt.

Who uncovered himſelf to-day.] Stript himſelf of his Royal Robes, and put on a Linen *Ephod.* ver. 14.

In the eyes of the Handmaids of his Servants.] The Women perhaps bare a part in theſe Dances, as they did in *Exod.* xv. or at leaſt were Spectators of all the Solemnity: From which none were excluded, though ever ſo mean.

As

As one of the vain Fellows ſhameleſly uncovereth himſelf.] Throws off all his Clothes, and cares not who ſees him, nor with what Company he dances. This was ſpoken by way of Reproach, that he mixed himſelf with the Multitude; and ſeems to intimate that he had immodeſtly expoſed himſelf, as ſhameleſs Fellows do; which is not credible. But thus in a Fit of Paſſion ſhe aggravates this Action, as very mean, yea baſe, and much below himſelf. For no doubt *David* kept himſelf within the Rules of Modeſty, when he was thus jocund, being about a ſacred Buſineſs; and did according to the Command of God, who required the *Iſraelites* to rejoice in their Feaſts (*Deut.* xii. 7. xvi. 1.) not with a futilous, laſcivious, and petulant Joy, but with a pious and moderate; as having God himſelf preſent. And thus *Plato* obſerves, *Lib.* 7. *de Legibus*, that ſome Dances are ἐμελῶς, with modeſt and decent Motions of the Body: Others πλημμελῶς, immodeſt and wanton. The latter of which none can imagine *David* would be guilty of before God: But danced with compoſed and decent, not deſultorious and light Motions; ſuch as vain Fellows are wont to uſe. For as it is Joy that excites Men to leap and dance, ſo divine Joy moves them to do it after a manner becoming the divine Majeſty.

Ver. 21. *And David ſaid to Michal, It was before the LORD, which choſe me before thy Father, and before all his Houſe; and appointed me Ruler over the People of the LORD, over Iſrael: therefore will I play before the LORD.*] Who had done ſo much for him, that he thought he could not ſhow himſelf thankful enough to ſo great a Benefactor. He thought fit to take down her Pride, by putting her in mind, how God had rejected all her Family, and advanced him to the Throne of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 22. *And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be baſe in my own eyes.*] He thought nothing too mean for him to ſtoop unto; if thereby he could do any Honour unto God. Otherwiſe to dance in the Streets before all the People, had been very unbecoming the Majeſty of a King: As *Nero* (we are told by *Suetonius*) and *Caligula* were condemned for it, among the *Romans*. For among them it was not uſual, nor was it done in Honour of their Gods. Whereas in *David*'s Time the greateſt Perſons thus expreſſed their Joy and Thankfulneſs to God, by publick leaping, dancing, ſhouting and clapping their Hands.

And of the Maid-ſervants which thou haſt ſpoken of, of them ſhall I be had in honour.] The more he humbled himſelf to do honour unto God, the more he was confident he ſhould be magnified, and had in honour by his People. The Eſteem of the meaneſt of which upon that account, he valued far more than all the vainglorious Praiſes *Michal* could beſtow on him, for taking State upon him, and neglecting God's Service.

Ver. 23. *Therefore Michal the Daughter of Saul had no Child until the day of her Death.*] Which is thus explained in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. Sect. 8. She had Children before this Fact, but none after it as long as ſhe lived. See iii. 5. *David* perhaps quite left her Bed.

†

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs when the King ſat in his Houſe, and the LORD had given him reſt round about from all his Enemies.*] Enjoyed himſelf in the Palace *Hiram* had built for him (v. 11.) having no diſturbance from the *Philiſtines*, or other neighbouring Nations.

Ver. 2. *That the King ſaid unto Nathan the Prophet; See how I dwell in a Houſe of Cedar; but the Ark of God dwelleth within Curtains.*] Like a religious Prince, he ſpent much of his Time in pious Meditations: And among other things reflected upon the Meanneſs of God's Habitation, in compariſon with the Splendor of his own. Which he thought ought not to be endured, and therefore reſolved to build a ſtately Houſe for God to dwell in.

Ver. 3. *And Nathan ſaid unto the King, Go, do all that is in thine heart: for the LORD is with thee.*] He ſpake that as a prudent Man, not as a Prophet. For (as *Procopius Gazæus* here obſerves) the Prophets did not ſee all Things; but thoſe only which the divine Grace revealed to them: As *Samuel* was ignorant which of *Jeſſe* his Sons was to be anointed, till God told him. But *Nathan* had great reaſon for what he ſaid, becauſe he obſerved that the LORD had an extraordinary Kindneſs for *David*, and proſpered him in all that he went about. And *David* withal being a Prophet as well as himſelf, he might preſume this Intention was ſuggeſted to him from God.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs that Night, that the Word of the LORD came to Nathan, ſaying,*] God would not ſuffer him long to remain in an Error; but corrected it the very next Night.

Ver. 5. *Go and tell my Servant David.*] He ſpeaks very kindly of him; tho' he did not approve of his Deſign.

Thus ſaith the LORD, Shalt thou build me an Houſe for me to dwell in?] The Meaning is, he ſhould not build one. But this Manner of Speech declared his Mind ſomething ſharply: To reprove him for his Forwardneſs (without asking God's Conſent) not only in deſigning, but in making a Vow, that he would forthwith build God an Houſe. For it is probable, that upon *Nathan*'s approving his Intention, he made that Vow mentioned *Pſalm* cxxxii. 3, 4, 5. *Surely I will not go up to my Bed, nor give ſleep to mine Eyes, &c. till I have found out a place for the LORD, an Habitation for the mighty God of Jacob.*

Ver. 6. *Whereas I have not dwelt in any Houſe ſince the time I brought up the Children of Iſrael out of Egypt, until this day.*] As much as to ſay, how comeſt thou to deſign me a fixed Houſe, ſince neither I, nor any one elſe thought of one from the Time you have been a People?

But have walked in a Tent, and a Tabernacle.] Contented my ſelf with a moveable Houſe, conſiſting of a Tent and a Tabernacle: In which I was always preſent to conduct and lead my People from Place to Place. By a *Tent* is meant the inward Hangings of the Houſe, which were of curious Work: And by *the Tabernacle*

bernacle, the Boards to which they were faſtned; and the Badgers Skins, *&c.* wherewith all was covered.

Ver. 7. *In all the Places wherein I have walked with all the Children of Iſrael, ſpake I a Word with any of the Tribes of Iſrael.*] That is, *of the Judges of Iſrael*, as it is interpreted, 1 *Chron.* xvii. 6. For the word *Shibte* ſignifies not only *Tribes*, but *Scepters*; and conſequently ſupreme Governors, and Rulers: Such as the Judges were, who had the ſupreme Authority in *Iſrael*. And ſo the following Words explain it.

Whom I commanded to feed my People Iſrael.] He did not command the *Tribes*, but the ſupreme Governors of them, to *feed*, that is, to rule his People, and take care of their Happineſs. Here again, *feeding* is governing (as I obſerved, v. 2.) and the *Hebrew* Word for *feed* being *raga*, as ſome pronounce it (in the *Syriack*, *rega*) very learned Men thence derive the *Latin* Words, *regere* and *reges*: Kings being deſigned by God to be the Paſtors of their People.

Saying, Why build ye me not an Houſe of Cedar?] God was the propereſt Judge what Houſe was agreeable to him, and he never ſignified that he diſliked his preſent, and deſired a more ſtately Habitation.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore, ſo ſhalt thou ſay unto my Servant David.*] He would not have him think he took it ill, that he ſhould deſign what he never ſignified to be his Deſire; but owned him to be his faithful Servant; and therefore accepted his pious Intentions: As we read expreſly 1 *Kings* viii. 18. which is ſignified in this Meſſage.

Thus ſaith the LORD of Hoſts, I took thee from the Sheep-cote, from following the Sheep, to be Ruler over my People Iſrael.] Therefore he needed not to make any doubt, but that God accepted his Gratitude, in deſigning to make him an Houſe.

Ver. 9. *And I was with thee whitherſoever thou wenteſt.*] In the Time of his Baniſhment, when he was remarkably preſerved by God.

And have cut off all thine Enemies out of thy ſight.] Both thoſe in *Iſrael*, and thoſe in the neighbouring Countries.

And have made thee a great Name, like to the Name of the great Men that are in the Earth.] Famed in all the Countries round about, as a potent Prince, and a mighty Warriour: And perhaps, as an holy Prophet greatly beloved of God, and of all his People.

Ver. 10. *Moreover, I will appoint a Place for my People Iſrael.*] Or, *I have conſtituted* (or eſtabliſhed) *a Place for my People*; viz. the Land of *Canaan*.

And will plant them,] Make them take root there.

That they may dwell in a Place of their own, and not move any more.] No longer wander, as they did in the Wilderneſs.

Neither ſhall the Children of Wickedneſs] The Idolatrous People round about them.

Afflict them any more, as before time.] When they were in the Land of *Egypt*.

Ver. 11. *And as ſince the time that I commanded Judges to be over my People Iſrael.*] In whoſe Days they were ſorely afflicted by the *Moabites*, *Canaanites*, *Midianites*, and other People.

And have cauſed thee to reſt from all thine Enemies.] Given him a quiet Poſſeſſion of the whole Kingdom of *Iſrael*; which never was in ſo happy a Condition as now. A flouriſhing People is a great Bleſſing to the King that governs them; and therefore mentioned in this Verſe, as God's Kindneſs to *David*. But this Promiſe was with ſome Exceptions, in caſe they became diſobedient: Which provoked God to chaſtiſe them.

Alſo the LORD telleth thee, that he will make thee an Houſe.] A Family, or Royal Off-ſpring, that ſhall reign for many Generations: Which was a ſpecial Favour of God to *David*; there being none of the *Roman* Emperors, till the Time of *Antoninus*, whoſe Children from the Reign of *Julius Cæſar* ſucceeded them in the Empire, but only *Veſpaſian*.

Ver. 12. *And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou ſhalt ſleep with thy Fathers; I will ſet up thy Seed after thee.*] To ſit upon his Throne.

Which ſhall proceed out of thy Bowels.] This ſhews that he ſpeaks of one, who was not yet born, *viz. Solomon*: And that *Abſalom*, *Adonijah*, and the reſt who pretended to the Kingdom, were not deſigned for it: Being already proceeded from him.

And I will eſtabliſh his Kingdom.] He reigned a long time himſelf; and ſo did his Poſterity after him.

Ver. 13. *He ſhall build me an Houſe for my Name, and I will eſtabliſh the Throne of his Kingdom for ever.*] The latter part of this Verſe can belong to none but the *Meſſiah*; if the Words *for ever* be taken in their full extent.

Ver. 14. *And I will be his Father, and he ſhall be my Son.*] This the Apoſtle ſhews is meant of Chriſt, *Hebr.* i. 5. For tho' *Solomon* was called *Iedidiah*, in token that he was beloved of God, yet in the compleat Senſe of the Words, Chriſt only is intended; who *is God's beloved Son in whom he is well pleaſed.*

If he commit iniquity, I will chaſten him with the Rod of Men, and with the Stripes of the Children of Men.] This is a mixt Prophecy, ſome part of which belongs to Chriſt, and the other Part to *Solomon*, and his Succeſſors in the Kingdom of *Iſrael*: Who, it is plain, is ſolely intended in theſe Words. And by *the Rod of Men, and Stripes of the Children of Men*, is meant gentle Correction; ſuch as Parents give their Children.

Ver. 15. *But my Mercy ſhall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.*] He promiſed not to tranſlate the Kingdom into another Family; as he took it from *Saul* to give it to *David*: But the Kingdom ſhall continue in his Line.

Ver. 16. *And thy Houſe and thy Kingdom ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever before thee: thy Throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever.*] That is, ſaith *Kimchi*, for a long time, between four and five hundred Years, which was a rare Thing, and ſeldom known, that the King's Authority continued in any one Family ſo long. But this is chiefly intended of the Kingdom of Chriſt, as *Procopius Gazæus* here obſerves: From whence the

Jews ſaid, *John* xii. 34. *We have heard out of the Law, that Chriſt abideth for ever.* This is confirmed by the Rule which *Maimonides* lays down in his *More Nevochim*, that though *Olam* alone doth not neceſſarily ſignify eternally, yet when it is joined with *ath* either before or after it, it doth ſo ſignify. And that is the Caſe here; this Kingdom is ſaid to be eſtabliſhed *ath Olam:* Which can belong to none but Chriſt; for *David*'s Kingdom had an End, but Chriſt's hath none. *Pars* 2. *Cap.* 28.

Ver. 17. *According to all theſe Words, and according to this Viſion; ſo Nathan ſpake unto David.*] This ſhows the Integrity of the Prophet; who was not aſhamed to retract his own Words when he was better taught of God. And as *Dionyſius* obſerves in an Epiſtle to *Novatus*, μεῖζον ἔσται τῦ σφάλματος τὸ κατόρθωμα, the Correction of his Fault was more eminent and remarkable than the Fault itſelf.

Ver. 18. *Then went King David in, and ſat before the* LORD.] That is, before the Ark; which, as I have often ſaid, was the Symbol of his Divine Preſence. *Sitting* among the Heathens, was thought a Poſture proper enough in the Divine Service; as *Voſſius* hath obſerved, *Lib.* 2. *de Orig. & Progreſſu Idolat. Cap.* 34. *Quippe index animi magis compoſiti, & hoc agentis*, being an Indication of a more compoſed Mind, and attending to what they were about. But among the *Iſraelites* none were allowed to ſit in the Temple, except the King: Unto whom this was indulged, if we can believe the *Talmudiſts*; whoſe general Maxim was this, *It was not lawful for any one to ſit in the Court of the Houſe of God; but only for the King of the Houſe of David.* See *Selden Lib.* 2. *de Synedriis*, Cap. 13. Sect. 4. But they have framed this Notion, merely from this ſingle Paſſage: There being no other Place in the whole Scripture to ſupport this Aſſertion, that the King might ſit at Prayer: But on the contrary, on the Sabbath, and on feſtival Days when he came to the Temple, he ſtood by the exterior Pillar of the inward Court of the Houſe of God; as may be learnt from *Ezek.* xlvi. 1, 2. (compared with 2 *Kings* xi. 14. and 2 *Chron.* xxiii. 13.) Nor is there any other Poſture of Worſhip mentioned in Scripture, but ſtanding, or kneeling, or falling on the Face. And therefore *Abarbinel* ingenuouſly confeſſes, that this is not the Opinion of all their Doctors, ſeveral of which in this forſake the *Talmudiſts*; and alledge a weighty Reaſon for it; becauſe the Angels themſelves, who are higher than Kings, are not permitted to ſit before the LORD: But *Iſaiah* ſaith, vi. 2. that the *Seraphim ſtood about the Throne*; and *Micaiah* ſaith, he ſaw the Hoſt of Heaven *ſtand before the* LORD, 1 *Kings* xxii. 19. and ſee *Zachariah* iii. 7. From which they conclude, if there be no ſitting allowed above, by what Right was it granted to the Kings of *David*'s Family here below? Many great Men therefore tranſlate the *Hebrew* Word *Jaſhab* not *ſat*, but *remained* before the LORD: Particularly *Vatablus* upon 1 *Chron.* xvii. 16. And others, who allow the King might ſit in the Temple, yet confeſs he might not ſit at Prayer: And therefore expound this Place thus; *He took his Seat in the Tabernacle before the Ark:* And then he made the following Prayer, ſtanding up, as the Manner was, when they worſhipped God.

And he ſaid, What am I, O LORD God; and what is my Houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?] He begins his Addreſs to God in a very becoming manner; with a moſt profound Debaſement of himſelf, and Confeſſion of his own Unworthineſs, to receive ſuch Bleſſings as God had already beſtowed upon him.

Ver. 19. *And this was yet a ſmall thing in thy ſight, O LORD God; but thou haſt ſpoken of thy Servant's Houſe, for a great while to come.*] Next, he magnifies the Loving-kindneſs of God, who did not think it enough that he had made him a great King; but promiſed his Poſterity, and at laſt the LORD Chriſt, ſhould ſit upon his Throne. So *Abarbinel* himſelf expounds theſe Words *a great while to come:* Intimating, ſaith he, the *Meſſiah*, the Son of *David.*

And is this the manner of Men, O LORD God?] He acknowledges there was no Example of ſuch Kindneſs to be found in this World: Where Kingdoms are not perpetuated, as *Abarbinel* obſerves; but this is the Manner of Angels, who always continue in their Dignity.

Ver. 20. *And can David ſay more unto thee?*] There was nothing he could deſire beyond this. See 1 *Chron.* xvii. 18.

For thou LORD God knoweſt thy Servant.] But he thought he might leave all to God, who loved him and took care of him (for that is, to *know him*) as his faithful Servant.

Ver. 21. *For thy Word's ſake, and according to thine own Heart, haſt thou done all theſe great things.*] For God, he knew would fulfil his own Promiſe made by *Samuel* and by *Nathan*: To the making of which he had no other Motive, but his own good Will; from whence alone all the great Things proceeded, which he had done for him.

To make thy Servant know them.] That *David* might know how much God loved him, by what he did for him.

Ver. 22. *Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God.*] He could not therefore but acknowledge his omnipotent Power, and the Greatneſs of his Goodneſs, which beſtows ſuch Benefits upon unworthy Creatures.

For there is none like the LORD, *neither is there any God beſide thee.*] According to what *Hannah* had ſaid in her Song, wherein ſhe propheſied of him, 1 *Sam.* ii. 2.

According to all that we have heard with our Ears.] Which their Forefathers had reported of the Wonders he had done; by *Moſes* and *Joſhua*, and in the time of the *Judges.*

Ver. 23. *And what one Nation in the Earth is like thy People, even like Iſrael, whom God went to redeem for a People unto himſelf,*] He ſeems to imitate the Words of *Moſes*, in *Deut.* iv. 7, 34.

And to make him a Name,] That all the World might know how powerful he was.

And to do for you great things, and terrible for thy Land,] To introduce them into the Land of *Canaan.*

Before thy People, which thou redeemeſt to thee from Egypt, and from the Nations and their Gods?] Some underſtand by *Gods*, their Rulers: But their Gods were no more able to ſave the Nations

tions whom he drove out, than their Kings and Rulers were.

Ver. 24. *For thou haſt confirmed to thy ſelf thy People Iſrael to be a People unto thee for ever: and thou, LORD, art become their God.*] This is the Sum of the Covenant (as *P. Martyr* obſerves) between God and them: That they ſhould be his obedient People, and he would bleſs them, and beſtow all manner of good things upon them.

Ver. 25. *And now, O LORD God, the Word that thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy Servant, and concerning his Houſe, eſtabliſh it for ever: and do as thou haſt ſaid.*] After his thankful Acknowledgments, he makes his humble Prayer to God, that he would perform his Promiſe to him. For though he did not doubt of it; yet it became him to make it his Requeſt.

Ver. 26. *And let thy Name be magnified for ever, ſaying, The LORD of Hoſts is the God over Iſrael; and let the Houſe of thy Servant David be eſtabliſhed before thee.*] Yet he did not deſire it merely for his own ſake; but that God might be glorified in what he did for him: And Men might always acknowledge, that the God of *Iſrael* was the LORD of Heaven and Earth; and faithful in his Promiſe to the Houſe of *David*.

Ver. 27. *For thou, O LORD of Hoſts, God of Iſrael, haſt revealed to thy Servant, ſaying, I will build thee an Houſe: therefore hath thy Servant found in his heart to pray this Prayer unto thee.*] That he might not be thought too bold in his Requeſt, he profeſſes he ſhould not have taken this Confidence, if God himſelf had not encouraged it, by his own moſt gracious Promiſe to him.

Ver. 28. *And now, O LORD God, thou art that God, and thy Words be true, and thou haſt promiſed this Goodneſs unto thy Servant.*] He profeſſes his Belief of the Unchangeableneſs of God's Nature, and of the Truth of all that he ſaid: Upon which he relied with an unſhaken Faith.

Ver. 29. *Therefore now let it pleaſe thee to bleſs the Houſe of thy Servant, that it may continue before thee for ever: for thou, O LORD God, haſt ſpoken it, and with thy Bleſſing let the Houſe of thy Servant be bleſſed for ever.*] Since God has been ſo gracious as to make ſuch Promiſes, and his Word could not fail; he grows more confident to repeat his Petition, which he had made before. Which is not the vain Repetition, condemned by our Saviour: But proceeded from the abundant Affection of an Heart devoutly affected; which could not ſufficiently acknowledge the Goodneſs of God, and expreſs his full Aſſurance that he would fulfil his Word. To this purpoſe *Abarbinel*; *David* did not multiply Prayer for want of Faith, becauſe he diſtruſted the Power of God; or thought his Will was mutable; or that he doubted of his Prophecy concerning him: But rather, this ſhows that he ſtedfaſtly reſted aſſured of all this.

CHAP. VIII.

Verſe 1. *AND after this it came to paſs, that David ſmote the Philiſtines, and ſubdued them.*] In the Beginning of his Reign they invaded him twice, v. 17, 22. But now *David* invaded their Country, and made a Conqueſt of it; and brought it in ſubjection to the *Iſraelites*.

And David took Metheg-Ammah out of the hand of the Philiſtines.] That is, the famous City of *Gath*, and the Territories thereof (as it is expounded, 1 *Chron.* xviii. 1.) which is called *Metheg-Ammah*; becauſe it ſtood upon Mount *Ammah*: And was as a Bridle to the whole Country, whereby it was kept in obedience. So our Tranſlators underſtand the word *Metheg* in the Margin of our Bibles. But *R. Solomon* takes it for a Goad, or a Staff; this City domineering over the *Philiſtines*. For we read of no King in any of their other Cities: Either in *Gaza*, or *Aſhdod*, or *Ekron*, or *Aſcalon*; but only in this: where *Achiſh* formerly reigned, but, it's likely, was dead. There are ſeveral other Interpretations in *Bochart* his *Hierozoicon*, *L.* 2. *Cap.* 18. *P.* 1.

Ver. 2. *And he ſmote Moab,*] Now was fulfilled the Prophecy of *Baalim*, *Numb.* xxiv. 17.

And meaſured them with a Line,] Having conquered the whole Country, he took an exact Survey of every Part of it.

Caſting them to the ground.] Laying level their ſtrong Holds and fortified Places.

And with two Lines meaſured he, to put to death.] He divided the Country into three equal Parts; condemning two of them to be deſtroyed.

And with one Line he ſaved alive.] A third Part he preſerved, that he might not be quite diſpeopled. This Severity, the *Jews* ſay, he exerciſed becauſe they had ſlain his Parents, and his Brethren, whom he committed to the Cuſtody of the King of *Moab*, during his Exile, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 3, 4. But in truth, becauſe the *Moabites* had always been implacable Enemies to the *Iſraelites*; their Kindneſs to *David*, before-mentioned, proceeding from their Hatred to *Saul*.

And ſo the Moabites became David's Servants, and brought Gifts.] And paid *David* a conſtant Tribute, which continued all his Days, and in the Reign of *Solomon*: And after the Kingdom was divided, it was paid to the Kings of *Iſrael*; till after the Death of *Ahab* they refuſed to pay it, as we read 2 *Kings* iii. 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *And David ſmote alſo Hadadezer the Son of Rehob,*] Who is called alſo *Hadarezer*: For the change of theſe two Letters, *Daleth* and *Reſh*, is very frequent, as *Bochartus* hath ſhown in many Inſtances, *P.* 2. *Hierozoicon*, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 7. *Nicolaus Damaſcenus* in a Fragment of his recorded by *Joſephus* (*L.* 7. *Antiq. Cap.* 6.) ſimply calls him *Adad*; which was a common Name of the Kings of *Syria*: Who according to the manner of the Eaſtern Princes, took their Titles from the Celeſtial Bodies, as Sir *John Marſham* obſerves; and *Adad* was the Name of the moſt glorious of them, *viz.* the Sun, as *Macrobius* tells us: Who truly ſaith, it ſignifies *unus*, one.

King of Zobah,] *Zobah* was a part of *Syria*, whoſe Eaſtern Border was *Euphrates*, as the Weſtern was the Land of *Canaan*, and the Kingdom of *Damaſcus*. It is frequently called *Aram-Zobah* in Scripture; of which *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 7. where he obſerves the Nearneſs of *Zobah* to *Judæa*, from the frequent Wars the *Iſraelites* had with that People, in the Days of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* xiv. 47. and *David*,

Chap. x. of this Book; and *Solomon*, 2 *Chron.* viii. 3. and they of *Damaſcus* came to help them, which is a ſign they were near them, (ver. 5. of this Chapter) and *Rezin* fled from thence to *Damaſcus*, 1 *Kings* xi. 24. And eſpecially he obſerves that the Cities *Solomon* built in the Wilderneſs, *viz. Palmyrene*, and others (1 *Kings* ix. 17, 18.) are ſaid to be in *Hamath*, 2 *Chron.* viii. 4. which ſhows the Situation of *Zobah*.

As he went to recover his Border at the River Euphrates.] That is, as *David* went to extend the Limits of his Kingdom (according to the ancient Prophecy, *Gen.* xv. 18.) towards the River *Euphrates*, he ſmote this King, who came out perhaps to oppoſe him. See 1 *Chron.* xviii. 3. where it is ſaid, *he went to eſtabliſh his Dominions by the River Euphrates:* Which ſeems to relate to *David*, not to *Hadadezer*.

Ver. 4. *And David took from him a thouſand Chariots,*] The Word *Chariot* is not in the *Hebrew:* But it is well ſupplied by our Tranſlators, out of 1 *Chron.* xvi. 4. in which Book many things are explained, which are briefly related here.

And ſeven hundred Horſemen,] Here again is an *Ellipſis*, as in the foregoing Words: For in 1 *Chron.* xviii. 4. it is ſaid ſeven thouſand. But as after a *thouſand* ſomething is to be underſtood, *viz. Chariots*; ſo after ſeven hundred ſomething is to be underſtood, *viz. Captains* (as *Abarbinel* explains it) under whom a great many others ſerved; ſo that Commanders and Soldiers made, in all, ſeven thouſand. Such an *Ellipſis* is obſerved in this very Book, v. 8. *whoſoever ſmites the Jebuſites, and the Blind and the Lame*, &c. It is not ſaid what ſhall be their Reward; which is plainly mentioned, 1 *Chron.* xi. 6. where it is ſaid, *he ſhall be chief*. See *L'Empereur* on *Bava Kama*, Cap. 7. Sect. 7.

And twenty thouſand Footmen, and David houghed all their Chariot-Horſes,] Here again is the ſame *Ellipſis*, for there is no Word in the *Hebrew* for *Horſes*. Yet the Meaning can be nothing elſe, but that he cut the Hamſtrings of the Horſes that drew their Chariots, and made them unſerviceable hereafter. See *Joſh.* xi. 9. Thus in x. 18. *David* is ſaid to have ſlain ſeven hundred Chariots, that is, the Horſes of ſo many Chariots: And in *Pſalm* lxviii. 18. by *the Chariots of the LORD*, ſome underſtood *Horſemen:* And lxxvi. 6. *the Chariot and Horſe*, &c. That is, as well the Horſes that drew the Chariot, as they that rode in it. See *Bochartus* in his *Hieroz. P.* 1. *L.* 2. *Cap.* 6.

But reſerved of them for an hundred Chariots.] For his Guard, I ſuppoſe, not for War: God having commanded them not to multiply Horſes, *Deut.* xvii. 16. See there.

Ver. 5. *And when the Syrians of Damaſcus came to ſuccour Hadadezer King of Zobah,*] For they were Neighbours to him, as I obſerved on *ver.* 3.

David ſlew of the Syrians of Damaſcus twenty thouſand Men.] Which facilitated the Conqueſt of their Country: Which follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 6. *Then David put Gariſons in Syria of Damaſcus.*] *Aram Damaſek*, which we tranſlate *Syria of Damaſcus*, was that Part of *Syria* which lay between *Libanus* and *Antilibanus*; whoſe chief City was *Damaſcus*, ſituated in a Valley called by ſeveral Names in Scripture, as *Bochartus* notes, *viz. Hoba*, *Gen.* xiv. 15. the Valley of *Aven*, and *Beth-eden*, i. e. the Place of Pleaſure, *Amos* i. 5. and *Hadrach*, *Zachar.* ix. 1. It was watered by five Rivers; the two principal of which deſcended from Mount *Hermon*, viz. *Abana*, and *Pharphar*, (2 *Kings* v. 12.) The laſt of which ran by the Walls of *Damaſcus*; the other ran through it, and divided the City into two Parts.

And the Syrians became Servants to David, and brought Gifts.] In token of their Subjection to him.

And the LORD preſerved David whitherſoever he went.] Kept him from all the Dangers to which he was expoſed in theſe Wars.

Ver. 7. *And David took the Shields of Gold that were on the Servants of Hadadezer, and brought them to Jeruſalem.*] The *Hebrew* Particle *El*, which we tranſlate *on*, may better be tranſlated *with*, that is, in the Cuſtody of *Hadadezer*'s Servants, who were Officers in his Treaſury: for it is not likely they brought them into the Field of Battel.

Ver. 8. *And from Bera, and from Berothai, Cities of Hadadezer, David took exceeding much Braſs.*] Theſe two Cities are called by very different Names in 1 *Chron.* xviii. 6. tho' perhaps of the ſame Signification in the Language of that Country, with theſe in the *Hebrew* Language. Or there were four Cities, perhaps, from whence he took much Braſs; two here mentioned, and two in the Book of *Chronicles*. It is the Opinion of ſome learned Men, that theſe Cities were ſituated at the foot of the Mount *Libanus*, between *Emath* and *Damaſcus:* Which Mount, they ſay, abounded with Braſs. But *Bochartus* could find no mention of the Braſs of *Libanus* in any ancient or modern Writer. And the Kingdom of *Zobah* lying about *Palmyra*, he takes the City called *Berothai* to be the ſame with that which *Ptolemy* calls Βαράθημα in *Arabia deſerta*; which is very remote from *Libanus*, *P.* 2. *Hierozoicon*, *Lib.* 6. *Cap. ult.*

Ver. 9. *When Toi King of Hamath had heard that David had ſmitten all the Hoſt of Hadadezer,*] This City was alſo in *Syria*, and was called afterwards *Epiphania*, as St. *Hierom* ſays, and lay North of *Judæa*. See *Bochart* in his *Phaleg. Lib.* 4. *Cap.* 37.

Ver. 10. *Then Toi ſent Joram his Son*] Called *Hadoram*, 1 *Chron.* xviii. 10.

Unto King David,] At *Jeruſalem*, I ſuppoſe.

To ſalute him, and bleſs him,] To congratulate his good Succeſs in the War with *Hadadezer*; and to wiſh him continued Proſperity.

Becauſe he had fought againſt Hadadezer, and ſmitten him: For Hadadezer had Wars with Toki.] And was too hard for him.

And Joram brought with him Veſſels of Silver, and Veſſels of Gold, and Veſſels of Braſs.] As a Preſent to King *David*; whoſe Friendſhip he ſought by this Embaſſy.

Ver. 11. *Which alſo King David did dedicate unto the LORD,*] As he did what he took from *Hadadezer*.

With the Silver and Gold that he had dedicated of all People that he had ſubdued.] Theſe Words ſeem to import, that he was ſo far from multiplying

plying Silver and Gold to himself (which *Moses* forbad, *Deut.* xvii. 16.) that he put all this Spoil, or the greatest part of it, into God's Treasury: For the building of the Temple, which he designed, and his Son was to accomplish, vii. 13.

Ver. 12. *Of Syria, and of Moab, and of the Children of Ammon, and of the Philistines, and of Amalek, and of the Spoil of Hadadezer the Son of Rehob, King of Zobah.*] Here he reckons up all the Countries, besides *Hadadezer*'s, from whence he brought Spoil to the Treasury of God.

Ver. 13. *And David gat him a Name, when he returned from smiting the Syrians.*] His Victory over that People (mentioned, *ver.* 5.) when they came to succour *Hadadezer*, gained him a great Reputation, as a potent Prince, and a mighty Warrior.

In the Valley of Salt, being eighteen thousand Men.] There is nothing in the *Hebrew* answering to the word *being*: Which therefore should be translated, *in the Valley of Salt eighteen thousand Men.* That is, he slew of the *Edomites* so many, besides the two and twenty thousand of the *Syrians.* So we read expresly, 1 *Chron.* xviii. 12. and in the Title of the lxth *Psalm*, it is said, they were *Edomites*, not *Syrians*, who were slain in this Valley. Only in that Place of the *Psalms*, there is mention of no more than twelve Thousand slain: Which makes some think it speaks of a distinct Battel from this. But *Abishai*, who began the Fight, perhaps slew six Thousand, and then *Joab* coming in with his Reserve, slew twelve Thousand more; which in all make eighteen Thousand. By the *Valley of Salt*, *Epiphanius* understands the dead Sea, which was formerly a famous Valley, or rather it was a Valley near that Sea. But neither of these Opinions have any good Foundation, as *Salmasius* shews: Who takes this *Valley of Salt* to have been in the Country of *Edom*, where this Battel was fought; and to be called by this Name, either from the Salt Springs which were therein, or from the Salt that was digged up there. See his *Exercit. Plinianæ*, *Cap.* 35. *p.* 613, 614.

Ver. 14. *And he put Garisons in Edom; throughout all Edom put he Garisons.*] Having conquered the whole Country, he garisoned the strongest Places in it, with his own Men; to keep them in subjection to him. Some of the *Jews* translate these Words, *He put Captains or Commanders in Edom*, that is, great Men to govern them, and as his Deputies to keep them under and raise Tributes, *&c.*

And the LORD preserved David whithersoever he went.] God's Providence continued still over him to protect him, as formerly (*ver.* 6.) in all these Expeditions.

Ver. 15. *And David reigned over Israel,*] He had no Disturbance at home, whilst he made Wars abroad: But all *Israel* obeyed him.

And David executed Judgment and Justice to all his People.] And having finished his foreign Wars, he applied himself to the Civil Government of his People, according to the Law of God; which he executed duly by himself, or by his Judges. Or rather, while he was engaged in so many Wars abroad, he did not neglect his People at home; but took care that Justice should be administred to them. And so he performed both Parts of such a King, as the *Israelites* desired, 1 *Sam.* viii. 20.

Ver. 16. *And Joab the Son of Zeruiah was over the Host.*] According to the Promise made to that Person, who should first enter the strong Fort of *Zion*, when he assaulted it, 1 *Chron.* xi. 6.

And Jehoshaphat the Son of Ahilud was Recorder.] The *Hebrew* Word *Mazkir* importing something of keeping in memory, or bringing to remembrance, moved our Translators to render it *Recorder*, or *Remembrancer*: As if he wrote the Acts of every Day; which afterwards were digested into *Annals.* But this sure was not so considerable an Employment as to make him that had it; the prime Civil Officer in the Kingdom, as *Joab* was the Military. Therefore *Victorinus Strigelius* takes him to have been the *Chancellor* of the Kingdom: Which is more likely than their Opinion, who take him for the *Master of Requests*, who presented Petitions, and put the King in mind of them.

Ver. 17. *And Zadok the Son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech the Son of Abiathar were the Priests.*] These two were the chief of the Family of Priests; next to the High-Priest, which was *Abiathar:* called *second Priests* in 2 *Kings* xxv. 18. The former was of the Family of *Eleazar* (1 *Chron.* vi. 5.) the other of *Ithamar.* And *Zadok* is put first, as more acceptable to *David* than the other: And therefore it is likely, constantly attended at Court; the Family of *Eli* now beginning to decline, as in the next Reign the other was advanced to the High-Priesthood, and *Abiathar* and his Posterity quite thrown out. See *Selden*, *Lib.* 1. *de Succeff. ad Pontific. Cap.* 4. *Cornelius Bertram* hath a peculiar Conceit, that as *Abiathar* was always acknowledged by *David* as God's High-Priest, and accordingly took care of the *Ark* at *Jerusalem*, so *Zadok* as principal Priest among the rest, was set over the *Tabernacle* at *Gibeon.* But *Abarbinel*'s Opinion is fartheft from Truth, that *Zadok* was now High-Priest, and *Abiathar* but his Vicar: Which is directly against the Scripture, which shews *Abiathar* to have been High-Priest 'till the Days of *Solomon.* Yet to justify this, he thinks fit to tell a fabulous Story out of *Joma*, and other Books, which say that *David* removed *Abiathar* from his Office, when he fled from *Absalom.* For commanding him to enquire of God for him, by *Urim* and *Thummim*, God was pleased to give him no Answer: But *Zadok* inquiring, had an Answer. Whereupon *David* concluded the Spirit of God was gone from *Abiathar*, and that it was time to fulfil the Prophecy against the House of *Eli*; and so thrust him out of his Office. For which they have no other grounds but this, that *David* spake first to *Zadok*, Chap. xv. of this Book, *ver.* 24. See *J. Wagenseil* upon *Sota*, *p.* 1068, 1069.

And Seraiah was the Scribe.] Secretary of State, as we now speak; or as others imagine, Clerk of the Council, who set down all Acts and Decrees; others, the Keeper of the publick Accounts. But the *Hebrew* word *Sopher* (which we translate *Scribe*) importing something of *Learning* (as the word *Scribe* in the New Testament doth) I take him to have been his

his prime Counſellor in the Law, who always attended him. *Conſtantine L'Empereur* thinks there were two ſorts of *Scribes*, an Eccleſiaſtical and a Civil; and here underſtands the latter: And would have him ſignify no more than the *Muſter-Maſter* of the Army. See his Annot. on *Bertram. de Repub. Jud.* p. 383, &c.

Ver. 18. *And Benaiah the Son of Jehoida was over the Cerethites, and the Pelethites.*] Or, the *Crethites*, and the *Plethites*, as ſome pronounce theſe Words. What they were, is variouſly conjectured. The moſt idle Conceit is that of ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, who take them for the Members of the great *Sanhedrin*, nay, for *Urim* and *Thummim*. See *Selden, Lib.* 2. *de Synedr. Cap.* 15. *p.* 601. and *Cap.* 16. *p.* 668. Certain it is that they were Soldiers, as appears from xv. 18.----xx. 7. 1 *Kings* i. 34. Where they are mentioned as preſent at the proclaiming King *Solomon* againſt *Adonijah:* Which could not have been done ſafely, without ſome armed Force; and if they were not the Perſons, there were none. Yet they were not common Soldiers, but the conſtant Guards of *David*'s Perſon; like the *Prætorian* Bands among the *Romans*. So *Joſephus* calls them σωματοφύλακες, *Keepers of the Body*, who never departed from the Place where the King was: As we may be ſatisfied by this, that they had a peculiar Commander, and were not under *Joab*, the Captain of the Hoſt; but are diſtinguiſhed from his Soldiers, xx. 6, 7. Some make them Men of a gigantick Stature, but I know no ground for that; though no doubt, they were proper Men, as we ſpeak, robuſt, and of tried Fidelity: who in the Rebellion againſt *David*, did not deſert *David*, but ſtuck cloſe to him, xv. 18. It is further probable, that they were ſelected out of a certain Nation, or Family. For the *Cerethites* inhabited part of *Palæſtine*, and were indeed the ſame with the *Philiſtines*, as I obſerved upon 1 *Sam.* xxx. 14. and ſee *Zephan.* ii. 5. The *Pelethites* it is likely were a Family in *Iſrael:* For we find two of the name of *Peleth* mentioned in Scripture. One of the Tribe of *Reuben*, *Numb.* xvi. 1. another of *Judah*, 1 *Chron.* ii. 33. Their Arms were Bows and Arrows, and Slings; if we may believe the *Chaldee* Interpreter, who calls them *Archers* and *Slingers:* As *Procopius Gazæus* calls them *jaculatores & ſagittarios*. Which may be confirmed by this Conjecture, that the *Philiſtines* having ſorely gauled the *Iſraelites*, in the fatal Battel with *Saul*, by their Archers, *David* took care not only to have his People inſtructed in the uſe of the Bow, but alſo procured ſome Archers from the *Cerethites*, who were a part of the *Philiſtines*, to be his Guard: As ſome Princes now get the *Switzers*. See my Notes upon 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 3. and upon the firſt Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 18. The Number of them may be probably gathered from the Targets and Shields of Gold that *Solomon* made, which were five hundred, 1 *Kings* x. 16, 17. and were for the uſe of his Guard, 2 *Chron.* xii. 9, 10, 11. and kept in the Guard-Chamber.

They that would ſee more of them, may look into a little Treatiſe of *Opitius*, which is wholly upon this Subject: And *Fortunatus Scacchus* treats largely of them in his *Myrotheſium*, iii. *Cap.* 16, 17, 18. where he hath this ſingular Opinion, *p.* 181. that the *Cerethites* were inferior to the *Pelethites:* But I think with great reaſon concludes, that they were the King's Domeſticks, and lay in his Palace, or about it, in the Night: Which he gathers from 1 *Kings* i. 33. where *David* bid *Nathan* and *Zadok* and *Benaiah* take with them the Servants of their Lord, and make *Solomon* King; and accordingly they took the *Cerethites* and the *Pelethites* with them, *ver.* 38. And from the Story of that brave Man *Uriah*, who would not go to his own Houſe to his Wife, when *Joab* and the Hoſt lay in the Field; but went and ſlept at the Door of the King's Houſe *with the Servants of his Lord*, that is, with theſe *Cerethites* and *Pelethites*, Chap. xi. of this Book, *ver.* 9.

And David's Sons were chief Rulers.] So the *Hebrew* Word *Cohen* often ſignifies, not only a *Prieſt*, but a *Prince*; as many learned Men have obſerved: particularly *Hackſpan* in his *Miſcellanea, Lib.* i. *Cap.* 5. *Sect.* 15. but eſpecially *Selden. Lib.* 2. *de Senedr. Cap.* 16. p. 671, &c. Where he ſhews that the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies any Miniſter, either of God or of Man. As in the twentieth Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 26. *Ira* the *Jairite* is ſaid to be a *Cohen*, which we tranſlate *chief Ruler* about *David*; and ſo the *Chaldee*, and the *Spaniſh* Jews, *a principal Officer*. But by the Law, neither he, nor *David*'s Sons could be Prieſts. There can be therefore no doubt of this, that they were the principal Officers in the Court of *David*, the prime Miniſters of his Houſhold: Such, as among us, are the Lord High Chamberlain, Steward, Treaſurer, *&c.* as appears from 1 *Chron.* xviii. 17. where this Matter is thus explained, *they were at the hand of the King:* Waiting on him, as chief Officers in his Court, or as *Cornelius Bertram* explains it, *publicos & primarios Miniſtros*, the publick and principal Miniſters of State. See *Bochartus, Lib.* 2. *Canaan, Cap.* 17. And this was the reaſon, they ſay, of *Abſalom*'s Diſcontent, that he was not one of theſe Αὐλάρχαι; or, had not a Place according to his mind.

CHAP. IX.

Verſe 1. *AND David ſaid, Is there yet any that is left of the Houſe of Saul, that I may ſhew him Kindneſs for Jonathan's ſake?*] Having ended his Wars, and ſettled his Kingdom and Court, now he conſiders what private Obligations he had; eſpecially to the Houſe of *Saul*, but above all to *Jonathan*. For he promiſed *Saul* with an Oath, that he would not cut off his Seed, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 21, 22. and had made a Covenant of Friendſhip with *Jonathan* and his Poſterity for ever; confirmed alſo by an Oath, 1 *Sam.* xx. 14, 15, 16, 17, 42.---xxiii. 18.

Ver. 2. *And there was of the Houſe of Saul, a Servant whoſe Name was Ziba.*] He had been employed in ſome Buſineſs in *Saul*'s Family; but being a *Canaanite* (as ſome of the *Jews* will have it) he did not recover his Liberty with the Death of *Saul*, but ſtill continued in ſervitude under *David*.

And

And when they had called him unto David, the King ſaid unto him, Art thou Ziba? And he ſaid, thy Servant is he.] He was in ſuch an inferior Station, that *David* did not know him; though ſome among his Courtiers did.

Ver. 3. *And the King ſaid, Is there yet any of the Houſe of Saul, that I may ſhew the Kindneſs of God unto him? And Ziba ſaid unto the King, Jonathan hath yet a Son, which is lame on his Feet.*] Here *David*, like a good Man and a worthy Friend, and a noble Prince, thinks how he may perform his Promiſe to *Jonathan*, 1 *Sam.* xx. 14. where he obliged himſelf to ſhew *the Kindneſs of the* LORD, that is, great Kindneſs, to his Poſterity.

Ver. 4. *And the King ſaid unto him, Where is he? And Ziba ſaid, He is in the Houſe of Machir, the Son of Ammiel, in Lo-debar.*] A Place on the other ſide *Jordan*; in Mount *Gilead*, (ſee xvii. 27.) where it is likely his Friends thought him ſafe: Being far from *David*; whom they looked upon as an Enemy. See *ver.* 7.

Ver. 5. *Then King David ſent, and fet him out of the Houſe of Machir, the Son of Ammiel, from Lo-debar.*] It is likely he ſent *Ziba* to bring him to Court, and to aſſure him of the King's Kindneſs.

Ver. 6. *Now when Mephiboſheth*] Called alſo *Merib-baal*, 1 *Chron.* viii. 34.---ix. 40.

The Son of Jonathan the Son of Saul, was come to David, he fell on his Face, and did reverence.] As the manner was when Men came into the preſence of the King, or the King's Son: For thus *David* himſelf did to *Jonathan*, 1 *Sam.* xx. 41.

And David ſaid unto him, Mephiboſheth. And he anſwered, Behold thy Servant.] The King ſpake in a very friendly manner to him: And he anſwered as humbly.

Ver. 7. *And David ſaid unto him, Fear not.*] This intimates that he had Apprehenſions *David* might have an evil eye upon him, as one that had a Pretence to the Kingdom.

For I will ſurely ſhew thee Kindneſs, for Jonathan thy Father's ſake, and will reſtore thee all the Land of Saul thy Father,] Which he had purchaſed before he was King, or acquired afterward, or was deſcended to him from his Father: but had been confiſcated (as *D. Kimchi* obſerves) to the King's Exchequer, becauſe *Iſhboſheth* and the Houſe of *Saul* had rebelled againſt *David*, who was the LORD's Anointed. And accordingly afterward *David* gave all this Land to *Ziba*, when he accuſed *Mephiboſheth* of Treaſon againſt him, xvi. 6. See *Selden de ſucceſſion. ad Leges Hebræorum*, Cap. 25. fol. 89.

And thou ſhalt eat Bread at my Table continually.] As one of his own Children, *ver.* 11.

Ver. 8. *And he bowed himſelf,*] In token of his Thankfulneſs.

And ſaid, What is thy Servant, that thou ſhouldeſt look upon ſuch a dead Dog as I am?] This is an high Expreſſion of his Unworthineſs of any Favour. For a Dog was accounted a vile and unclean Creature, and a dead Dog was of no uſe at all. See iii. 8. 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 15. Where *David* ſpake thus to *Saul*, as *Helena* (*Bochart* obſerves) did to *Hector*. There being no greater Expreſſion of Humility than this, for one to be ſo abject as to call himſelf a Dog. In like manner, he that calls another ſo (as *Abiſhai* doth *Shimei*, and *Ulyſſes* doth the Woers, to whom he calls ὦ κύνες, *Odyſſ.* 10.) expreſſes the utmoſt Contempt of them.

Ver. 9. *Then the King called to Ziba Saul's Servant, and ſaid unto him, I have given unto thy Maſter's Son all that pertained to Saul, and to all his Houſe.*] Some underſtand by his *Maſter's Son*, the Son of *Mephiboſheth* (called *Micah*, ver. 12.) becauſe *Ziba* was not to provide for *Mephiboſheth* himſelf, who was to be maintained by the King at his Royal Table. But it may as well be thought to be meant of *Mephiboſheth*, who had this Eſtate given him for ſuch uſes as he ſhould think fit to appoint.

Ver. 10. *Thou therefore, thy Sons and thy Servants ſhall till the Land for him, and thou ſhalt bring in the Fruit, that thy Maſter's Son may have Food to eat.*] This may ſeem to favour what was ſaid before, that he was to manage the Land for the Benefit of *Micah* the Son of *Mephiboſheth*, and his Houſhold, who were to be maintained out of the Product of it: But the following Words, I think, ſhew the contrary.

But Mephiboſheth thy Maſter's Son, ſhall eat Bread always at my Table.] Now he declares publickly, what he had ſaid privately to *Mephiboſheth*. Who being the Perſon here plainly called *his Maſter's Son (i. e.* the Son of *Jonathan)* it inclines me to conclude, that he is underſtood before by that Name: Whoſe Family was to be maintained by the Fruit of the Eſtate that *David* gave him; though he himſelf was to eat always with *David*.

Now Ziba had fifteen Sons and twenty Servants.] Who were ſufficient to manage a very great Eſtate.

Ver. 11. *Then ſaid Ziba unto the King, According to all that my Lord the King hath commanded his Servant, ſo will thy Servant do. As for Mephiboſheth, ſaid the King, he ſhall eat at my Table as one of the King's Sons.*] Thoſe Words, *ſaid the King*, are not in the Original Text: So that theſe Words may be thought to be *Ziba*'s; who ſaid he would keep a Table for *Mephiboſheth* alſo, if *David* pleaſed, and entertain him royally; the Land being ſufficient to afford it. But I do not ſee how he could call it *my Table*; which muſt be the Language of *David*: Who now repeated what he had ſaid before, that *Ziba* ſhould take no care of *Mephiboſheth*.

Ver. 12. *And Mephiboſheth had a young Son, whoſe Name was Micah.*] Who had many Sons, from whom iſſued a numerous Progeny, which laſted many Generations. 1 *Chron.* viii. 34, 35, &c.--- ix. 40, 41, &c.

And all that dwelt in the Houſe of Ziba, were Servants unto Mephiboſheth.] And conſequently accountable to him for all that they received out of the Eſtate: Which, it appears by this, was ſettled upon him.

Ver. 23. *So Mephiboſheth dwelt at Jeruſalem.*] *Ziba* went to take care of his Land, which was at *Gibeah* of *Benjamin*, but *Mephiboſheth* ſtaid with the King, that he might partake of his Bounty.

For he did eat Bread continually at the King's Table; and was lame on both his Feet.] Tho' he could not go, yet he was carried thither; for ſo

ſo the Words may be tranſlated, *though he was lame*, &c. This Defect and Blemiſh did not hinder him from being entertained by the King, with the greateſt Kindneſs; which procured him, though deſpicable in his Perſon, Honour from the People, as one in great Favour with their King.

CHAP. X.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs after this, that the King of the Children of Ammon died,*] Who, it appears by the next Verſe, was *Nahaſh:* To whom *Saul* gave a very great Defeat at *Jabeſh-Gilead*, 1 *Sam.* xi.

And Hanun his Son reigned in his ſtead.] For it ſeems that was an hereditary Kingdom, as moſt were in thoſe Countries and Times.

Ver. 2. *Then ſaid David, I will ſhew Kindneſs to Hanun the Son of Naaſh; for his Father ſhewed Kindneſs unto me.*] All generous Minds are full of Gratitude and Compaſſion, as *Strigelius* here obſerves out of ſeveral heathen Authors. But there is no Example of it greater than in *David*, who remembers ancient Benefits received from *Nahaſh*, and pitied his Son who had loſt ſuch a Father. What thoſe Benefits were, is uncertain. Some of the *Jews* ſay he fled to him, when he durſt not ſtay with *Achiſh*, and he received him kindly. Others that he entertained his Relations, when the King of *Moab*, to whom *David* committed them, ſlew ſome of them. But it is moſt probable, that being an Enemy to *Saul*, who had given him a great Overthrow, he proved a Friend to *David* when he was perſecuted by him; and ſent him Relief and Aſſiſtance, and perhaps offered him his Protection.

And ſent to comfort him by the hand of his Servants, for his Father.] According to the preſent Cuſtom among Princes, who ſend ſome of their Courtiers to condole the Loſs of thoſe with whom they live in Friendſhip.

And David's Servants came into the Land of the Children of Ammon.] Where they had Audience of *Hanun*, and delivered their Meſſage: Which his Court ſiniſtrouſly interpreted, as appears by the next Verſe.

Ver. 3. *And the Princes of the Children of Ammon*] Who bare a great Sway in all publick Affairs.

Said unto Hanun their Lord, Thinkeſt thou that David doth honour thy Father, that he hath ſent Comforters unto thee?] They meaſured his Affection by their own; who having no Kindneſs for *David*, imagined he had as little for them.

Hath not David rather ſent his Servants to ſearch the City, and to ſpy it out?] Nothing ſo well meant, but may be ill interpreted; and is wont to be ſo by Men who love no body but themſelves.

To overthrow it.] They perſuade him that theſe Embaſſadors came only to obſerve where the City was weakeſt, and might be moſt ſucceſsfully aſſaulted, and taken.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore Hanun took David's Servants, and ſhaved off one half of their Beards,*] He was not only very credulous, but very ill-natured; for otherwiſe, he would have civilly diſmiſſed them, whatſoever his Courtiers ſuſpected; or kept them in an honourable Cuſtody, till the Truth had been diſcovered. But this was the higheſt Diſgrace that could be put upon them: For all People thought their Hair a great Ornament; and never ſhaved their Heads or their Beards, but in caſe of mourning: which was forbid to the *Iſraelites*, *Levit.* xix. 27. *Deut.* xiv. 1. And therefore when he had cauſed one half of their Beards to be cut off, they abhorred to cut the other: Which made them look ridiculouſly. See *Iſaiah* xv. 2. *Jerem.* xli. 5.---xlviii. 37. We learn what a foul Diſgrace, yea, an heavy Puniſhment, this was in ancient Times, from *Nicolaus Damaſcenus*, mentioned by *Stobæus*, *Tit.* 42. who ſays, that among the *Indians* the King commanded the greateſt Offenders to be ſhaven, κελεύει κείρασθαι ὡς ἐσχάτης τιμωρίας, as the heavieſt Puniſhment he could inflict upon them. And *Tacitus* ſaith, that there were few Adulterers among the ancient *Germans*; whoſe Puniſhment was left to the Huſbands: And they were wont to cut off their Hair, and turn them naked out of doors, and whip them through the Streets. See *Georg. Ritterhuſius de Jure Aſylorum*, Cap. 10. And at this day, this is the greateſt Indignity that can be offered to any Man in *Perſia*, to cauſe his Beard to be ſhaved off: As *Tavernier* relates in his *Indian* Travels, *p.* 121. where he tells us the *Sophi* cauſed an Embaſſador of *Aureng-Zeb* to be thus uſed; telling him he was not worthy to wear a Beard, and thereupon commanded it to be ſhaved off. Which was juſt like this Act of *Hanun*. And *Aureng-Zeb* moſt highly reſented the Affront that was offered him in the Perſon of his Embaſſador, as *David* did this which was offered him in his.

And cut their Garments to the middle, even to their Buttocks, and ſent them away.] Long Garments down to the heels were worn in thoſe Countries, eſpecially by honourable Perſons: And therefore the King of *Ammon* ſtill put a further Indignity upon them, in cutting their Garments ſhort, even to the middle: Whereby thoſe Parts were expoſed which required to be covered. For the *Iſraelites* did not wear Breeches as we do; ſo that their long Garments being cut to the Middle, their Nakedneſs might be ſeen. See *Iſaiah* xx. 4.

Ver. 5. *And when they told it unto David, he ſent to meet them, becauſe they were greatly aſhamed.*] Therefore he ſent, no doubt, Clothes to cover them, together with the following Advice.

And the King ſaid, tarry at Jericho] Which was the firſt Place to which they came in the Land of *Canaan*; and now a private Village, where they might obſcure themſelves, till they were fit to appear in publick.

Until your Beards be grown, and then return.] For it was a Reproach in that Country to have no Beard. And though it was well known how they came to be deprived of them, yet it was not fit that Perſons of their Quality ſhould appear unlike all other Men.

Ver. 6. *And when the Children of Ammon ſaw that they ſtank before David,*] They wanted not Intelligence, how heinouſly *David* reſented the barbarous Uſage of his Embaſſadors: Which is expreſſed

expreſſed by a Phraſe, which ſignifies that they were become very odious to him. See *Gen.* xxxiv. 30.

The Children of Ammon ſent and hired the Syrians of Beth-rehob,] They diſtruſted their own Strength, and therefore hired Auxiliary Forces of their Neighbours: Particularly thoſe of *Beth-roheb*, which was a City belonging to the *Canaanites*, rather than the *Syrians* (as *Bochart* obſerves) who were only Borderers upon it.

And the Syrians of Zoba, twenty thouſand Footmen,] Concerning *Zoba*, ſee viii. 3.

And of King Maacah a thouſand Men,] *Maacah* alſo was a City in *Palæſtine*, beyond *Jordan*, in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, as *Rehob* was in the Tribe of *Aſſer* (*Joſh.* xiii. 11. xix. 26.) but the *Canaanites* kept them out of the Poſſeſſion of both, *Joſh.* xiii. 13. *Judges* i. 31. Therefore *Bochartus* confutes thoſe who think *Aram-Maacah* was the Country of *Comagena:* For though *Aram* commonly ſignifies *Syria*, which was divided into many Countries; yet the Scriptures ſhew theſe Places were not in *Syria*. But the People of them were called *Syrians*, becauſe they imitated their Manners: As the Woman in the Goſpel is called *Syro-Phœnician*, tho' ſhe was a Woman of *Canaan*, *Mat.* xv. 27. *Mark* vii. 26. See his *Phaleg. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 6. latter end.

And of Iſhtob twelve thouſand Men.]Or, of the *Men of Tob:* A Country unto which *Jephthah* fled from his unkind Brethren. See *Judges* xi. 3.

Ver. 7. *And when David heard of it, he ſent Joab and the Hoſt of the mighty Men.*] He did not think it prudent, to ſtay till they aſſaulted him in his own County; but went and invaded theirs.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Ammon came out, and put the battel in array at the entering in of the Gate.*] They drew up their Army either before *Rabbah*, the Metropolis of their Country; or before *Medeba* (in the Borders of it) where their Confederates were pitched, 1 *Chron.* xix. 7.

And the Syrians of Zoba, and of Rehob, and Iſhtob and Maacah, were by themſelves in the Field.] They kept their Mercenary Forces in the Field, and would not let them come into their Cities.

Ver. 9. *And when Joab ſaw that the Front of the battel was againſt him, before and behind,*] In the *Hebrew*, *the face of the battel*, &c. *i. e.* they had divided their Forces; the *Syrians* appearing before him, and the *Ammonites* behind him.

He choſe of all the choice Men of Iſrael, and put them in array againſt the Syrians.] He alſo, like an expert Commander, preſently divided his Army into two Bodies; and pick'd out the beſt Soldiers to engage the *Syrians*; who, it ſeems, were the ſtrongeſt, or moſt valiant

Ver. 10. *And the reſt of the People he delivered into the hand of Abiſhai his Brother, that he might put them in array againſt the Children of Ammon.*] He was alſo an experienced Captain, who ſeems to have to deal with that Body of the Enemies which was behind them, as *Joab* with thoſe before him.

Ver. 11. *And he ſaid, If the Syrians be too ſtrong for me, then thou ſhalt help me; but if the Children of Ammon be too ſtrong for thee, then I will come and help thee.*] Send a Detachment, as they now ſpeak, from the ſtrongeſt Body, to that which proved weaker.

Ver. 12. *Be of good courage, and let us play the Men, for our People, and for the Cities of our God.*] The Words were not ſpoken, I ſuppoſe, to *Abiſhai* alone; but to all the Army by their Officers; that they might not be diſheartned at the ſight of ſuch numerous Forces, as in a manner encompaſſed them: but be ſo much the more reſolute, for the Preſervation of their Country.

And the LORD do that which ſeemeth him good.] If they did their Duty, he truſted God's Providence would favour them: However, it would be ſome Comfort, that they had done their beſt.

Ver. 13. *And Joab drew nigh, and the People that were with him, unto the Battel againſt the Syrians: and they fled before him.*] He did very prudently in aſſaulting the Mercenary Army firſt; for they that are hired to fight, generally have a great Care to ſave themſelves; having no regard to the Cauſe for which they fight.

Ver. 14. *And when the Children of Ammon ſaw that the Syrians were fled,*] On whom they principally relied.

Then fled they alſo before Abiſhai, and entered into the City.] They ſeem not to have ſtruck a Stroke; but provided alſo for their Safety, in the City near to which their Army was drawn up.

And Joab returned from the Children of Ammon, and came to Jeruſalem.] Here is no Account of the Number of the Slain, which, I ſuppoſe, were few or none, becauſe they did not fight, but flee. The Year alſo ſeems to have been ſo far ſpent, that it was not a Seaſon fit for laying a Siege to the City. See the next Chapter, *ver.* 1.

Ver. 15. *And when the Syrians ſaw that they were ſmitten before Iſrael, they gathered themſelves together.*] Fearing *David* would fall upon them for aſſiſting his Enemies, they reſolved to be beforehand with him; and therefore levied a new Army to invade him.

Ver. 16. *And Hadadezer*] Who was the King of *Aram Zoba*, in *Meſopotamia*.

Sent and brought out the Syrians that were beyond the River.] i. e. Beyond *Euphrates*; which was the Bound of his Territories Eaſtward. See viii. 3.

And came to Helam.]A Place, I ſuppoſe, on the Borders of *Hadadezer*'s Country, Weſtward.

And Shobach the Captain of the Hoſt of Hadadezer went before them.] Commanded both his Forces, and theirs which came to his aſſiſtance.

Ver. 17. *And when it was told David, he gathered all Iſrael together, and paſſed over Jordan, and came to Helam.*] In this Expedition *David* ſeems to have commanded his Army, in his own Perſon.

And the Syrians ſet themſelves in array againſt David, and fought with him.] They ſeem to have begun the Fight.

Ver. 18. *And the Syrians fled before Iſrael, and David ſlew the Men of ſeven hundred Chariots*] That is, ſeven thouſand Men, who belonged to thoſe ſeven hundred Chariots, as it is explained in 1 *Chron.* xix. 18.

And forty thouſand Horſemen.] In that Place of the *Chronicles* it is ſaid forty thouſand Footmen.

Which

Which teaches us how to explain the Words here; *viz.* that they were mixed together, Horſe and Foot: And that in all there were ſlain forty thouſand of them, part Horſemen, and part Footmen.

And ſmote Shobach the Captain of their Hoſt, who died there.] Was ſlain upon the ſpot (as we ſpeak) being a valiant Man, who choſe to be killed, rather than fly.

Ver. 19. *And when all the Kings that were Servants of Hadadezer ſaw that they were ſmitten before Iſrael,*] There were ſeveral petty Kings that were ſubject to *Hadadezer*; who was the moſt powerful Prince thereabout.

They made peace with Iſrael, and ſerved them.] As, I ſuppoſe, *Hadadezer* himſelf alſo did: whereby God fulfilled his Promiſe to *Abraham* (which was renewed to *Joſhua*) of enlarging the Dominion of his Poſterity, as far as *Euphrates*. See *Gen.* xv. 18.----*Joſh.* i. 2, 3, 4.

So the Syrians feared to help the Children of Ammon any more.] But left them to ſhift for themſelves: Inſomuch that, as it follows, *David* conquered their Country.

CHAP. XI.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, that after the Year was expired,*] In the Hebrew, *at the return of the Year:* That is, in the Spring-time, he ſent forth his Armies to do that which he could not do in the Concluſion of the former Year; when the Seaſon was not fit for Action, as I obſerved upon the 15th Verſe of the foregoing Chapter. For the Year ending with the Month *Adar*, the next Year began with the Month *Niſan:* Which was a fit Time to march into the Field to make War; and ſo commonly employed, that it ſeems to have had its Name (as *Bochartus* obſerves) from *Niſim:* Which ſignifies military Enſigns, which were wont to be advanced in that Month. And, in like manner, the Month we call *March* had its Name among the *Romans* from *Mars*, their God of War; becauſe then they began their Military Expeditions. See his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 50.

At the time that Kings go forth to battel,] Theſe Words *to battel*, are added for Explication ſake: But they are not in the *Hebrew*; in which Language *to go forth* ſignifies to go forth to War. See *Gen.* x. 11. *Iſa.* xlii. 13. *Zach.* xiv. 3. and other places mentioned by the ſame great Man, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 4. *Cap.* 2.

That David ſent Joab and his Servants with him, and all Iſrael;] All his Soldiers.

And they deſtroyed the Children of Ammon.] Laid waſte their Country, and killed all the People they could meet with.

And beſieged Rabbah.] The Royal City of the *Ammonites*, *Deut.* iii. 11.

But David tarried ſtill at Jeruſalem.] He committed the Care of this War to *Joab*, and did not himſelf go out to fight: As he had done before againſt *Hadadezer*.

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs in an Evening-tide,*] In the Afternoon, when the Sun was declining.

That David roſe from his Bed,] Where he had lain down to ſleep, in the Heat of the Day; as the manner was in thoſe Countries, iv. 5.

And walked upon the Roof of his Houſe.] To take the freſh Air: For their Roofs were flat. See *Deut.* xxii. 8.

And from the Roof he ſaw a Woman waſhing her ſelf,] In her Garden, where ſhe bathed; or in her Chamber, the Caſements being open. The firſt is moſt probable: And that ſhe waſhed to cleanſe her ſelf from ſuch legal Impurities as are mentioned *Levit.* xv. 19. which is more likely, than that ſhe did it for Pleaſure, or merely to cool her ſelf in a hot Day, as ſome underſtand it. The 4th Verſe ſufficiently explains this Matter.

And the Woman was very beautiful to look upon.] Of a delicate Shape, and lovely Countenance and Complexion. Thus *Jupiter* is ſaid to have ſeen *Proſerpina* waſhing her ſelf, and expoſing her whole Body to his View: Which inflamed his Luſt after her;

Λουμένης ὅλου εἶδος ἐδέρκετο Περσεφονείης.

As *Nonnus* hath it in his *Dionyſ.* See *Spanhemius ad* Verſ. 53. *Callim. Hymn.* in *Lavacrum Palladis.*

Ver. 3. *And David ſent and enquired after her.*] That if ſhe was a ſingle Woman, he might take her for his Wife.

And one ſaid, Is not this Bathſheba the Daughter of Eliam, the Wife of Uriah the Hittite?] This ſeems to be the Anſwer of him who was ſent to enquire about her, that he need not trouble himſelf any farther, for ſhe was another Man's Wife. Who is called an *Hittite*, becauſe he was ſo by Nation, but a Proſelyte to the Jewiſh Religion: And for his Valour made one of the King's Guard among the *Cerethites* and the *Pelethites*; which was the Reaſon, perhaps, that he had a Houſe ſo near the King's.

Ver. 4. *And David ſent Meſſengers to her, and took her.*] Notwithſtanding he was informed, ſhe was another Man's Wife, he ſent Meſſengers to her to invite her to his Palace; into which he received her. This was a very great Crime, being done deliberately, and adviſedly: And is here recorded for ſeveral great Ends and Purpoſes. *Firſt*, that the beſt Men may be ſenſible, in what need they ſtand continually of the Divine Aſſiſtance: Which therefore they ought to pray for earneſtly; and watch as well as pray, that they fall not into Temptation. And we ſhould all learn from thence, that they are but Men whoſe Examples are ſet before us; and therefore they muſt live by Rule, and not merely by Example. And that we ought to take heed of Sloth and Idleneſs; being always well employed, and not giving our ſelves liberty to gaze upon Temptations.

And ſhe came in unto him, and lay with him (for ſhe was purified from her Uncleanneſs)] Which ſhows the Reaſon why ſhe conceived ſo quickly. See *Grotius*.

And ſhe returned to her Houſe.] Early in the Morning, I ſuppoſe, that ſhe might not be diſcovered. The *Talmudiſts* are ſo deſirous to excuſe their Anceſtors from all Blemiſhes, that they ſay *David* committed no Sin in lying with *Bathſheba*; but only in cauſing *Uriah* to be killed. For, when any Man went to war, he gave

gave his Wife, they pretend, a Bill of Divorce: So that if he was killed in the War, it was not Adultery in another Man, who lay with her, as ſoon as the Bill was given. This monſtrous Opinion is ſeriouſly maintained by *R. Samuel Laniado* againſt *Abarbinel*; who honeſtly acknowledges, and ſtrenuouſly proves, *David* was guilty of a very foul Adultery: Which was the more criminal, becauſe it was with the Wife of a faithful Servant of his, who then ſerved him in his Wars, See *Buxtorf* de *Sponſal. & Divort.* Sect. 43, &c. and *Selden* in his *Uxor Hæbraica*, Lib. 3. Cap. 19. p. 441.

Ver. 5. *And the Woman conceived, and ſent and told David, ſaying, I am with child.*] She was afraid of Infamy, and perhaps of the Severity of her Husband; who might cauſe her to be ſtoned: And therefore prays *David* to conſult her Honour, and her Safety.

Ver. 6. *And David ſent unto Joab, ſaying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab ſent Uriah to David.*] With an Account of the State of the War; which *David* it's likely deſir'd.

Ver. 7. *And when Uriah was come unto him, David demanded of him how Joab, and how the People did, and how the War proſpered.*] Some think (particularly *P. Martyr*) that theſe were ſuch ordinary Queſtions, as betrayed this was not the Buſineſs for which he commanded him to be ſent: But the laſt Words import, that after the common Queſtions of *Joab*'s and the People's Health, he enquired how the Siege went on, what Approaches they had made to the City; what Hopes they had of taking it; in what time; with other things of like nature, which were of importance.

Ver. 8. *And David ſaid, Go down to thy Houſe and waſh thy Feet.*] As the manner of Travellers was; this being a great Refreſhment after their Journey.

And Uriah departed out of the King's Houſe, and there followed him a Meſs of Meat from the King.] In token of his extraordinary Favour and Kindneſs to him; and that, eating freely of good Cheer, he might be the more deſirous to enjoy the Company of his Wife. *Abarbinel* thinks this was a very ſinful Contrivance of *David*, to endeavour to have his Child thought the Child of *Uriah*: Or, at leaſt, it was very much below his Dignity, he thinks, to have one of his own Progeny paſs for an ordinary Man.

Ver. 9. *But Uriah ſlept at the Door of the King's Houſe, with the Servants of his Lord, and went not down to his Houſe.*] Like a true Soldier, he lay all night in the Guard-chamber (with the *Cerethites* and *Pelethites*) and not with his Wife. By which means God's Providence ſo ordered it, that the Crime of this Prince (who had been ſo admirably inſtructed in his Duty) ſhould not be concealed, as he intended.

Ver. 10. *And when they had told David, ſaying, Uriah went not down to his Houſe,*] They that carried the Meſs of Meat after him, gave *David* this Information.

David ſaid unto Uriah, Cameſt thou not from thy Journey? wherefore then didſt thou not go down to thine Houſe?] He ſtill pretended Kindneſs to him, and great Care of him; telling him he expected no Service of him here, eſpecially after a Journey.

Ver. 11. *And Uriah ſaid unto David, the Ark, and Iſrael, and Judah, abide in Tents,*] It ſeems they ſtill continued the Cuſtom which we read of, 1 *Sam.* iv. 4. of carrying the Ark into the Field, as a Token of the Divine Preſence with them, and Favour to them: And that they might conſult the Divine Majeſty in any difficult Caſes.

And my Lord Joab, and the Servants of my Lord, are encamped in the open Field;] Where they lay upon the ground in their Tents. It is an idle Conceit of *Laniado*, before-mentioned, that *Uriah* was guilty of Treaſon, in calling *Joab*, *My Lord*, in the preſence of *David*: For which he pretends *David* might lawfully put him to death.

Shall I then go unto my Houſe, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my Wife? as thou liveſt, and as thy Soul liveth, I will not do this thing.] Theſe are not two Oaths, but the Repetition of the ſame: Which was pronounced with ſuch vehemence, that *David*'s Heart, it might have been expected, ſhould have been deeply touched, to think how he had abuſed ſo brave a Man: And made him reflect how vilely he indulged himſelf in ſinful Pleaſure, whilſt this Man and the reſt glorioufly endured all manner of Hardſhips, and refuſed the moſt innocent Pleaſure, for the Service of their Country: But he was ſo corrupted for the preſent, that he was troubled to find *Uriah* ſo true a Soldier.

Ver. 12. *And David ſaid to Uriah, Tarry here to-day alſo, and to-morrow I will let thee depart. So Uriah abode in Jeruſalem that day, and the morrow.*] He ſtill pretended more Kindneſs to him, in giving him time to reſt himſelf after his Journey; and, perhaps, pretended alſo, that he himſelf could not ſooner finiſh his Diſpatches.

Ver. 13. *And when David had called him,*] Invited him to Supper, the Night before he went away.

He did eat and drink before him, and he made him drunk: and at Even he went out to lie on his Bed, with the Servants of his Lord, and went not down to his Houſe.] The *Hebrew* Word doth not certainly ſignify, that he was quite drunk; but that he drank ſo much, that he was very merry. However *Plutarch* obſerves, that brave Men, even when they have drunk too much, preſerve their Modeſty and Gravity: Juſt as good Horſes are orderly, even when their Reins are let looſe. This was an addition to *David*'s Sin, that he endeavoured to intoxicate *Uriah*, and thereby make him forget his Oath beforementioned.

Ver. 14. *And it came to paſs in the Morning, that David wrote a Letter to Joab, and ſent it by the hand of Uriah.*] Who, if he ſuſpected any thing of the Adultery, as ſome think he did, (and therefore reſolving that it ſhould be diſcovered, would not go home to his Wife) yet was ſo truſty a Servant, he would not open the Letter, to find what was in it.

Ver. 15. *And he wrote in the Letter, ſaying, Set Uriah in the Fore-front of the hotteſt Battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be ſmitten, and die.*] Thus one Sin begets many; depriving Men of the uſe of their Underſtanding. For he might better, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, have told *Uriah* the truth, and begged his pardon; and obliged him to ſtay with him 'till the Child was

born, and then ſecretly put it out to nurſe: Whereby the matter might have been ſo managed, that it ſhould not have been commonly divulged, or not certainly believed. But his Eyes were blinded; and his very Nature was altered, and become baſe and degenerate; now he had given himſelf up to Senſuality. For he that formerly ſpared *Saul*, when he could have deſtroyed him, and have known who did it, ſeeks the Death of a faithful Servant after a moſt unworthy manner.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs when Joab obſerved the City, that he aſſigned Uriah to a Place where valiant Men were.*] Ordered him to attack a Part of the City, which he knew would be valiantly defended: Or, to make a good Breach, out of which the beſt Men they had in the City would iſſue out againſt them. *Joab* was herein alſo deeply guilty, in complying with ſuch a Command: Unleſs we ſuppoſe, that he might imagine *Uriah* had committed ſome great Crime; for which *David*, conſulting *Uriah*'s Honour, would not puniſh him openly.

Ver. 17. *And the Men of the City went out, and fought with Joab:*] They ſeem to have made a Sally out of the City upon the *Iſraelites*; when they ſaw they were preparing for an Aſſault.

And there fell ſome of the People of the Servants of David, and Uriah the Hittite died alſo.] This was a further Aggravation of *David*'s Sin, that he not only expoſed an innocent and a valiant faithful Servant to be killed, but other Perſons alſo with him, who might have lived to do good Service to their Country: For it is not to be imagined, that one Perſon alone was ſet in the Fore-front, where the Service was hotteſt (as *David* ordered, *ver.* 15.) but there was a Party of ſtout Men with *Uriah*, whom he led on.

Ver. 18. *Then Joab ſent and told David all things concerning the War:*] How it was managed, and what ill Succeſs they had in one Engagement.

Ver. 19. *And charged the Meſſenger, ſaying, When thou haſt made an end of telling the Matters of the War unto the King,*] Eſpecially this laſt Action.

Ver. 20. *And if ſo be the King's Wrath ariſe, and he ſay unto thee, wherefore approached ye ſo nigh unto the City when he did fight? knew ye not that they would ſhoot from the Wall?*] All good Kings are careful to preſerve their Subjects; and therefore it muſt be ſuppoſed *David* would be angry when he heard of this Loſs; till he reflected upon the Reaſon, why they were expoſed to ſuch Danger.

Ver. 21. *Who ſmote Abimelech the Son of Jeroboſheth?*] Theſe are ſtill the Words the King might be ſuppoſed to ſay; How came *Abimelech* to loſe his Life? Was it not by venturing too near the Wall? He calls him the Son of *Jeroboſheth*, who in the Book of *Judges* is called the Son of *Jerubaal*: Of which ſee upon the ſecond Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 8.

Did not a Woman caſt a piece of a Milſtone upon him from the Wall, that he died in Thebez? Why went ye ſo nigh the Wall?] Having ſuch an Example, to make you more cautious.

Then ſay, Thy Servant Uriah the Hittite is dead alſo.] Which he knew would ſoon pacify him.

Ver. 22. *So the Meſſenger went, and came and ſhewed David all that Joab had ſent him for.*] The whole Proceſs of the War hitherto, but more particularly the Event of the laſt Engagement, as it here follows.

Ver. 23. *And the Meſſenger ſaid unto David, Surely the Men prevailed againſt us, and came out unto us into the Field, and we were upon them even unto the entering of the Gate.*] The Account he gives of the laſt Action is this: That the *Ammonites* made a Sally, and were too hard for the *Iſraelites*, whom they put into ſome diſorder; but they, plucking up their Courage, rallied again, and beat the *Ammonites* back, following them to the very Gate of their City.

Ver. 24. *And the Shooters ſhot from off the Wall upon thy Servants, and ſome of the King's Servants be dead, and thy Servant Uriah the Hittite is dead alſo.*] Theſe *Shooters* were either Archers, or ſuch as managed the *Machines* (which perhaps they had in theſe Days, as they had afterwards among the *Romans*) out of which they ſhot Arrows and Stones. *Vitruvius* ſays, that out of their *Catapultæ* and *Scorpiones* they ſhot Arrows, and out of their *Baliſtæ* they ſhot Stones. Others ſay the quite contrary, as *Goteſchalchus Stewechius* ſhews in his learned Commentary upon the *fourth* Book of *Vegetius*, L. *De Re Militari*, p. 446, &c.

Ver. 25. *Then David ſaid unto the Meſſenger, Thus ſhalt thou ſay unto Joab, let not this thing diſpleaſe thee:*] That is, be not diſheartned by this Loſs. *David* ſhewed no ſign of Diſpleaſure, expecting to hear the News he deſired of *Uriah*'s Death.

For the Sword devoureth one as well as another:] Makes no diſtinction between good and bad.

Make thy battel more ſtrong againſt the City, and overthrow it;] He would have this Defeat make them more reſolute, to aſſault the City with greater force, till they were Maſters of it.

And incourage thou him.] i. e. *Joab* and his Soldiery.

Ver. 26. *And when the Wife of Uriah heard that her Husband was dead, ſhe mourned for her Husband.*] But not long: For then *David* could not have taken her ſoon enough into his Houſe, to cover his Adultery. The common time was ſeven Days, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 7.

Ver. 27. *And when the Mourning was paſt, David ſent, and fet her to his Houſe, and ſhe became his Wife, and bare him a Son: but the thing that David had done, diſpleaſed the LORD.*] This whole Buſineſs *was evil in the eyes* of God (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) not only his Adultery, and the Murder of *Uriah*, but alſo his taking *Bathſheba* to his Wife. For according to the *Hebrew* Doctors, it was utterly unlawful for any Man to marry the Wife of one whom he had defiled. Which hath made ſome of the *Jews* ſo laborious to excuſe *David* from the Crime of Adultery. For *Laniado* himſelf acknowledges, that if *David* had committed Adultery with *Bathſheba*, ſhe had been perpetually prohibited, and unlawful to him, as his Words are. But tho' this ought not to have been done, yet, being done, the Marriage held good; and the Children he afterwards had by her were legitimate. See *Buxtorf. de Sponſalibus & Divortiis*, Sect. 43.

CHAP. XII.

Verſe 1. *AND the LORD ſent Nathan unto David:*] To awaken him out of his Sleep; and gave him a ſight of his Sins.

And he came unto him, and ſaid unto him, There were two Men in one City; the one rich, and the other poor.] This was a prudent and reſpectful way of awakening *David*, by an appoſite Parable: Which was ſo managed, that the Prophet did not condemn *David*, but made him condemn himſelf. And many have very pertinently obſerved from hence, that there is never more uſe of Wiſdom and Diſcretion, than in the Contrivance of Reprehenſion; eſpecially of Princes and great Perſons: Whom the Miniſters of Chriſt ought to admoniſh and reprove in an humble and reverend Repreſentation of their Sins to them, not with rude Exprobations of them, and Declamations againſt them. It is not neceſſary to apply every word of this Parable to *David*'s Caſe (as the beginning of it is exactly fitted) becauſe in Parables ſeveral things are added, which ſerve only to make them decorous and handſome. Yet *Abarbinel* (as I ſhall ſhew in the Concluſion of it) hath endeavoured to give an account of every part of it.

Ver. 2. *And the rich Man had exceeding many Flocks and Herds:*] As *David* had many Wives and Concubines, with which he might have been well ſatisfied.

Ver. 3. *But the poor Man had nothing, ſave only one little Ewe-lamb,*] Perhaps *Uriah* had only one Wife, with whom he contented himſelf; or rather was highly pleaſed: She being mild and gentle as a Lamb.

Which he had bought and nouriſhed up:] They frequently purchaſed their Wives in thoſe days; giving to their Parents a Sum of Money for them. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *De Uxore Hebr.* Cap. 20.

And it grew up together with him, and with his Children; it did eat of his own Meat, and drank of his own Cup, and lay in his Boſom, and was unto him as a Daughter.] That is, was exceeding dear to him, and beloved by him. This is a Reſemblance not unlike the Truth, unto thoſe who underſtand how fond many Perſons were anciently, not only of *Lambs*, but of ſeveral other Creatures: Which they ſuffered to eat with them at their Tables, and to lie with them in their Beds; as *Bochartus* ſhews in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 43.

Ver. 4. *And there came a Traveller to the rich Man,*] This may be applied to *David*'s ſtragling Affection, which he ſuffered to wander from his own home, and to covet another Man's Wife. The *Jewiſh* Doctors ſay, it repreſents that which they call *Jetzer hara*, the evil Diſpoſition, or Deſire that is in us, which muſt be diligently watched and obſerved, when we feel its Motions. For they have this ingenious Obſervation concerning it, in *Bereſchit Rabba*, and other Books. *In the Beginning it is but a Traveller; but in time it becomes a Gueſt; and in concluſion, is the Maſter of the Houſe.* For he, ſay they, who is called a *Traveller* in the beginning of this Verſe, is called *Iſch*, a *Man*, in the concluſion of it.

And he ſpared to take of his own Flock, and his own Herd, to dreſs for the wayfaring Man that was come to him,] Wherewith he might have ſatisfied his Appetite.

But took the poor Man's Lamb, and dreſſed it for the Man that was come to him.] He touches not in this Parable upon the Murder, for that was committed to cover the Adultery, which led the way to the other Crime. And *Abarbinel* gives a Reaſon why it is not mentioned in his Explication of the Parable: Which is this. The rich Man, ſaith he, plainly ſignifies *David*; his Flocks and Herds, *David*'s Wives and Concubines: The poor Man repreſents *Uriah*, who, he thinks, was a Widower, and had ſeveral Children alive by a former Wife, when he married *Bathſheba*. Whom he compares to a Lamb which he bought, becauſe he ſolemnly eſpouſed her: And with tender Affection he cheriſhed her, and ſhe grew up with him, and with his Children, which he had by his former Wife. This Lamb being taken by the rich Man from the poor, to gratify a wanton Appetite, ſignifies *David*'s taking *Bathſheba* and lying with her. And it would have made the Reſemblance more compleat, if he had added, that the rich Man killed the poor Man, from whom he took the Lamb. But this is omitted, *Abarbinel* thinks, in the Parable, that *David* might not readily apprehend *Nathan*'s Meaning; and ſo be induced unawares to pronounce a Sentence of Condemnation upon himſelf. And then he had a fixt Opportunity to ſhew him, that if the rich Man, who took away the poor Man's Lamb, deſerved Death, according to his own Judgment, how much more did he deſerve it, who had not only taken another Man's Wife; but alſo cauſed him to be ſlain by the Enemies of *Iſrael?*

Ver. 5. *And David's Anger was greatly kindled againſt the Man; and he ſaid, As the LORD liveth, the Man that hath done this thing, ſhall ſurely die.*] Puniſhments ſometimes extended beyond the Law, becauſe of the great Atrocity of the Crime.

Ver. 6. *And he ſhall reſtore the Lamb four-fold,*] This was agreeable to the Law, *Exod.* xxii. 1.

Becauſe he did this thing, and becauſe he had no pity.] Becauſe he took away the Lamb, he condemned him to make reſtitution four-fold: And becauſe he had no pity (it being his only Lamb) he condemned him to die. *Kimchi* will have it, that the Word ſignifies twice four-fold; becauſe it is in their dual Number: So that this Puniſhment alſo is beyond the Law. But all the ancient Interpreters are againſt him. But the *Jews* here obſerve, that theſe Words were ominous: So many of *David*'s Sons periſhing, as he ſaid the rich Man ſhould reſtore Lambs, *viz.* the Child he had by *Bathſheba*, *Ammon*, *Abſalom*, and *Adonijah*. See *Bochartus* in his *Hieroz. P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 40.

Ver. 7. *And Nathan ſaid unto David, Thou art the Man.*] Who had pronounced a dreadful Sentence againſt himſelf. Tho' Reproofs of Men in Authority are to be managed very mannerly, as to the Form, wherein they are delivered; yet as to the matter they are to be plain and downright; ſo that they may be made ſenſible of their Guilt.

Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, I anointed thee King over Iſrael, and delivered thee out of the

the hand of Saul.] Who ſought to hinder his Advancement to the Kingdom, by deſtroying him. Thus he aggravates *David*'s Sin, from the Obligations he had to God; who had preferred him to the higheſt Dignity, when he was in a low, and ſometimes a deſperate Condition.

Ver. 8. *And I gave thee thy Maſter's Houſe,*] His Kingdom.

And thy Maſter's Wives into thy Boſom,] For the Wives of a King went along with his Lands and Goods unto his Succeſſor: It being unlawful for the Widow of a King to be Wife to any but a King; as appears by the Story of *Adonijah*. But this doth not ſignify that *David* married any of them; but only that they were delivered into his Poſſeſſion, as all other Things belonging unto *Saul* were. So *Maimonides:* And more than this, the *Jewiſh* Doctors ſay, no Subject might have ſo much as the Horſe of the King, no more than his Scepter and Crown: Much leſs his Widow, or one divorced by him, who was to remain a Widow to the day of her Death. So the ſame *Maimonides:* The Wife of a King is to be married to none elſe; for even the King cannot legally marry the Widow of his Predeceſſor, or one divorced by him. See *Selden*, Lib. 1. *De Uxore Hebr.* Cap. 10. and *Carpzovius* upon *Schickard's Jus Regium*, p. 441. But there are thoſe, who, to avoid all Controverſy about this Matter, interpret the Word *Naſe*, not *Wives*, but meer *Women* belonging unto *Saul*.

And gave thee the Houſe of Iſrael and of Judah;] Dominion over all the twelve Tribes.

And if that had been too little, I would moreover have given thee ſuch and ſuch things.] He need but have asked, and God would have given him all that he could reaſonably deſire: But he ought not to have taken what he pleaſed himſelf. The *Jews* refer this to the Wives he would have given him: And gather from hence, that their Kings might have eighteen Wives, and no more. See upon *Deut.* xvii. 17. But it is evident theſe Words *ſuch and ſuch things*, do not ſignify a certain Number of any thing, but indefinitely other Benefits of any kind: As *Theod. Hackſpan* obſerves out of many like Places, particularly *Iſaiah* vii. 20. See his Diſput. 4. N. 3.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore haſt thou deſpiſed the Commandment of the* LORD, *to do evil in his ſight?*] Theſe Words, and *David*'s own Confeſſion (ver. 13.) might have aſhamed the *Talmudiſts*, one would think, from framing Excuſes for *David*'s Sin, and abſolving him from any Guilt. *Bartoloccius* hath given a large Account of their lewd Prevarication in this matter in his *Kirjath Sepher*, Tom. 2. pag. 102, 103, *&c.*

Thou haſt killed Uriah the Hittite with the Sword,] For he contrived his Death, which was as bad as if he had killed him himſelf.

And haſt taken his Wife to be thy Wife.] After he had firſt committed Adultery with her.

And hath ſlain him with the Sword of the Children of Ammon.] This highly aggravated his Crime, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, that he cauſed him to be ſlain by the profeſſed Enemies of God; who triumphed in the Slaughter of ſo great a Man. And in this *Laniado* himſelf confeſſes *David* ſinned, though in nothing elſe.

Ver. 10. *Now therefore the Sword ſhall never depart from thine Houſe;*] That is, as long as he lived, there ſhould be Slaughters in his Family. Which was fulfilled in the violent Death of his Children *Ammon* and *Abſalom*, and (about the Time of his Death) *Adonijah*.

Becauſe thou haſt deſpiſed me, and haſt taken the Wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy Wife.] Which, it appears by this Repetition, was a very great Offence: But not greater than his Adultery, as *Procopius Gazæus* thinks it was.

Ver. 11. *Thus ſaith the* LORD, *behold, I will raiſe up evil againſt thee, out of thine own Houſe,*] That is, his own Family. Which was notoriouſly fulfilled in *Abſalom*'s Conſpiracy againſt him.

And I will take thy Wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy Neighbour; and he ſhall lie with thy Wives in the ſight of this Sun.] For *Abſalom* had a Tent ſpread in the Houſe-top, and there went in unto them, xvi. 21, 22. Which is ſaid to be done before *David*'s eyes; becauſe, though he did not ſee it, yet it was done ſo publickly that he could not but know it, and yet was not able to hinder it.

Ver. 12. *For thou didſt it ſecretly, but I will do this thing before all Iſrael, and before the Sun.*] For it was notorious to all, how *David* fled in haſte from his Son, and left his Concubines behind him, xv. 14, 15, 16.

Ver. 13. *And David ſaid unto Nathan, I have ſinned againſt the* LORD:] This Confeſſion was made in a few Words: But, no doubt, with many Sobs, and great Grief, Compunction and Contrition of Heart.

And Nathan ſaid unto David,] Not preſently, but after he had bewailed his Sin ſo bitterly, that his Repentance appeared to be hearty.

The LORD *alſo hath put away thy Sin, thou ſhalt not die.*] He was guilty of Death upon a double account; as an Adulterer, and as a Murderer: As *Procopius Gazæus* obſerves. But upon his Repentance, the Prophet pronounces an Abſolution to him, thus far; that he ſhould be pardoned the Guilt, and Part of the Puniſhment. That is, he ſhould not periſh eternally (as *Raſi* and others interpret the Words, *thou ſhalt not die*) nor here ſuffer the Death he had deſerved. For though when God gave them a King like other Nations, he did not intend that he ſhould be above all Law, and not be bound to the Laws he himſelf had given (as *Abarbinel* obſerves) yet he was not ſubject to the Puniſhment of the Law, which no Magiſtrate could inflict, becauſe he was the Supreme: But God reſerved his Puniſhment to himſelf, and threatens to inflict it when inferiour Officers could not. Which Threatning did not take away from him the Power of pardoning and releaſing the Puniſhment, but he left that intire to himſelf, and here uſes it. But in ſuch a manner, that he freed *David* only from the Puniſhment of Death, and the Loſs of his Kingdom: Otherwiſe he was to ſuffer a great many, and ſore Calamities, as long as he lived. See *J. Benedict. Carpzovius* upon *Schickard*'s *Jus Regium*, *Cap.* 2. *Theor.* 7. *p.* 137. Whereby it appears how falſe the Doctrine of the *Talmudiſts* is concerning the Power of the great *Sanhedrin*, who they ſay had Power to ſcourge their Kings, *&c.* Which we never find was attempted, tho' *Saul* and *David*, and eſpecially *Manaſſeh*, committed moſt henious Sins, which deſerved ſevere Correction.

Ver. 14. *Howbeit, becauſe by this Deed thou haſt given great occaſion to the Enemies of the* LORD *to blaſpheme, the Child alſo that is born unto thee, ſhall ſurely die.*] This was an additional Puniſhment, to be inflicted preſently: Becauſe his Sin was highly aggravated, in that the Nations about them might thereby be tempted to have him and his Divine Law in great contempt; which they ſaw no more regarded by the beſt Men that profeſſed it. Or, they might blaſpheme God, as a Reſpecter of Perſons, who had rejected *Saul*, and yet kept *David* on the Throne, who had done worſe than he. Or, the *Ammonites* perhaps inſulted over *Iſrael* and their God, when they had killed *Uriah* and others with him. Yet *Procopius Gazæus* here well obſerves, there was ſome Mercy mixed with this Puniſhment; for if the Child had lived, it would have been a ſtanding Monument of his Adultery. And therefore it may be thought, that in favour of *David* God took him away, that he might remove his Reproach.

But this Verſe ſuggeſts a wonderful thing to us, that *David* remained many Months inſenſible of what he had done, (ſo bewitching is ſenſual Pleaſure;) for the Child begotten in Adultery was born before *Nathan* came to rouze him out of his Lethargy.

Ver. 15. *And Nathan departed unto his Houſe: And the Lord ſtruck the Child that Uriah's Wife bare unto David, and it was very ſick.*] Of ſome ſudden ſore Diſtemper; which appeared at firſt, as if it were mortal.

Ver. 16. *David therefore beſought the* LORD *for the Child:*] He thought the Threatning might not be abſolute: The Will of God being not always manifeſted intirely at once, but he reſerves ſtill ſomething to himſelf. As when he commanded *Abraham* to offer his Son; and when he told *Hezekiah* he ſhould die.

And David faſted, and went in,] To his Cloſet, I ſuppoſe, or ſome Place of Retirement.

And lay all night upon the Earth,] Humbling himſelf greatly for his Sin, which had deſerved this, and far ſorer Puniſhment. *Salvian* (in his ſecond Book, *De Gubern. Dei*) deſcribes this admirably. He put off his Purple, ſaith he, threw away his Royal Ornaments, laid down his Diadem, wholly ſtripped himſelf of his Kingſhip, and appeared as a Penitent, in a ſqualid, rueful Garb, faſting, lying on the ground, confeſſing, mourning, repenting, deprecating, *&c.* and yet with all this Humiliation and Compunction, he could not obtain a Revocation of this Puniſhment. By this, and the Story of *Abſalom*, it appears that *David* was a great Lover of his Children; many of which proved great Afflictions to him.

Ver. 17. *And the Elders of his Houſe*] The principal Officers belonging to the Court.

Aroſe, and went to him to raiſe him up from the Earth:] By their earneſt Entreaties, to have a care of his own Health.

But he would not, neither did he eat Bread with them.] As he was wont to do at other times, when the principal Perſons of the Court ſat at Table with him. But it is not to be thought, that *David* eat nothing all the time the Child was ſick; but only after he began to deſpair of his Life: Or perhaps, all the time he eat nothing 'till the Evening; and then abſtained from all delicate Food, and contented himſelf with coarſer Fare.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs, that on the ſeventh day, the Child died:*] Either the ſeventh Day after its Birth, before it was circumciſed, or the ſeventh after it fell ſick. This was the firſt Beginning of the Divine Animadverſion upon him (as *Salvian* ſpeaks) *Fuit utique primum, ſed non ſolum*, it was indeed the Firſt, but not the Alone: For there followed a long Train of exceeding great Troubles.

And the Servants of David feared to tell him the Child was dead: for they ſaid, Behold, while the Child was yet alive we ſpake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our Voice; how will he then vex himſelf, if we tell him the Child is dead?] Thus they whiſpered and reaſoned among themſelves; ſo that he might not hear them, as appears by the next Verſe.

Ver. 19. *And when David ſaw that his Servants whiſpered, David perceived that the Child was dead:*] He gueſſed what the matter was.

Therefore David ſaid unto his Servants, Is the Child dead? And they ſaid, He is dead.] They would not acquaint him with it abruptly; for fear he ſhould fall into too great a Paſſion.

Ver. 20. *Then David roſe up from the Earth, and waſhed, and anointed himſelf, and changed his Apparel,*] Put off the Habit of a Mourner, and prepared himſelf decently to appear before God. For it is certain the *Jews* were wont to waſh before they went into the Houſe of God, either their whole Body, or their Hands; which was uſual among the *Gentiles* alſo. And ſome have imagined the *Jews* learnt it from them; becauſe we find no mention of it, as they ſay, 'till the Time of *Judith*, xii. 7. See Dr. *Spencer*, *Diſſert.* 3. *Cap.* 2. *Sect.* 11. But that is a Miſtake; it being mentioned not only here in this Place, but in the Book of *Pſalms*, xxvi. 6. For God having anciently commanded them to waſh themſelves, before they appeared in his Preſence at Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* xx. 20. they thence, it is likely, concluded it was fit to prepare themſelves for all their holy Aſſemblies, after the ſame manner.

And came into the Houſe of the LORD, *and worſhipped.*] This was done like a truly good Man, who before he would go to his own Houſe, went to God's; and there gave him Thanks, we may ſuppoſe, for the Pardon of his Sin; and not cutting him off, as he had done his Child. He acknowledged alſo the Juſtice of God, and did not complain of his Severity. He ſubmitted to his holy Will, and beſeeched him, perhaps, that the remaining Afflictions might be moderated, and made profitable to him.

Then he came to his own Houſe, and when he required, they ſet Bread before him, and he did eat.] I ſuppoſe he was in ſome retired Room of his own Houſe, where he lay upon the Earth mourning, and would not eat: From whence he would not remove to any other part of it, 'till he had been firſt at the Houſe of God, and there worſhipped.

Ver. 21. *Then ſaid his Servants to him, What is this that thou haſt done? Thou didſt faſt and weep for the Child when he was alive; but when the Child was dead, thou didſt riſe and eat Bread.*]

His

His great Officers, who ſat at the Table with him, I ſuppoſe ſaid this.

Ver. 22. *And he ſaid, While the Child was yet alive, I faſted and wept, for I ſaid, who can tell whether God will be gracious unto me, that the Child may live?*] They thought him prepoſterous, in mourning while the Child was alive, and chearing up himſelf when it was dead. But he ſhews what Reaſon he had for both: It being poſſible God might be ſo kind as to reverſe the Sentence of Death, which he had pronounced againſt the Child, upon *David*'s Humiliation, Repentance, and earneſt Prayer to him for Mercy.

Ver. 23. *But now he is dead, wherefore ſhould I faſt? Can I bring him back again? I ſhall go to him, but he ſhall not return to me.*] But now God's Will being declared to be abſolute, it was in vain to ſolicite for the Child's Life: which he could not hope to ſee reſtored by Faſting and Prayer, or any other means. But he muſt rather prepare to go to it, than think of bringing it back to him. *Maimonides* ſays, that they did not lament Infants, who died before they were *thirty* Days old; but carried them in their Arms to the Grave, with one Woman and two Men to attend them: Without ſaying the uſual Prayers over them, or the Conſolations for Mourners. But if an Infant was above *thirty* Days old when he died, they carried him out on a ſmall Bier, and ſtood over him in order, and ſaid the Prayers and Conſolations. If he was a Year old, then he was carried out upon a Bed. This Cuſtom *Gierus* thinks *David* followed, in making no Mourning for his Child, when it was dead: Though there is no ground to think ſuch Cuſtoms as *Maimonides* deſcribes, were uſed in theſe early Days. See L. *De Luctu Ebræorum*, Cap. 3.

Ver. 24. *And David comforted Bathſheba his Wife,*] Who no doubt was deeply afflicted for the Loſs of her Child: Which was a ſtrong Bond while it lived, to tie *David*'s Affection to her; but being dead, ſhe might fear he would no longer have any Concern for her: But, perhaps, divorce her, as having been the Occaſion of great Evil to him. It is obſervable, that there is not one word ſaid to *Bathſheba* in all this Relation, either concerning her Guilt, or her Puniſhment. She was puniſhed, I ſuppoſe, in the Calamities that befel *David*: Who enticed her, not ſhe him, to commit the foul Sin of Adultery; and was innocent in the Murder of *Uriah*.

And went in unto her, and lay with her;] Which it was not lawful to do, as *Maimonides* obſerves, while the Days of Mourning laſted: For then they might not ſo much as marry, tho' they did not lie together. But thoſe Days being ended, he enjoyed her Company. The ſame *Gierus* hath collected a great deal to this purpoſe, in the forenamed Book, Cap. 21.

And ſhe bare him a Son, and called his Name Solomon;] Some think his Mother firſt gave him this Name as ſoon as he was born.

And the LORD loved him.] As the LORD told him, it is likely, by *Nathan* the Prophet: Who comforted him, after his great Humiliation, with this good Hope, that notwithſtanding his Sin, God would have a Kindneſs for this Son, and make him very famous. Such is the wonderful Goodneſs of God to truly penitent Sinners; who teſtify the Sincerity of their Repentance, by humble Submiſſion to whatſoever Puniſhments God thinks fit to inflict upon them (as *David* did to the Death of the former Child) and thereby incline the divine Goodneſs to ſhew further Mercy to them.

Ver. 25. *And he ſent by the hand of Nathan the Prophet, and called his Name Jedidiah,*] But *David* hereupon ſent to give his Child another Name; ſignifying the Love which he was aſſured God had to him. But the Scripture never calls him by this Name; but always *Solomon:* Which Name the People loved, becauſe he built the Houſe of the LORD in *peaceable* Times.

Becauſe of the LORD.] Becauſe he had ſo graciouſly declared his Love to him. For the Name imports, as is noted in the Margin of the Bible, *beloved of the LORD.*

Victorinus Strigelius tranſlates the firſt Words of this Verſe thus, *Tradidit eum in manum Nathan, &c.* He committed him to the Hand of *Nathan* the Prophet; that he might educate him, and bring him up in Piety, and in the Knowledge of all things neceſſary for a Prince to be acquainted withal. For the moſt excellent Natures are apt to err in many things (as he obſerves) without Learning; and therefore though *Hercules* had a very great *Genius*, yet he was put into the hands of learned Men to inſtruct him; as appears by the Verſes of *Theocritus*, which recite his Maſters. Thus *Alexander* was bred up by *Ariſtotle* in all manner of Learning: And if *Conſtantine*, together with his Piety, had not been furniſhed with a great deal of Knowledge, he could not have managed the Cauſe of Chriſt againſt the *Arians* ſo well as he did in the Council of Biſhops.

Ver. 26. *And Joab fought againſt Rabbah of the Children of Ammon, and took the City.*] That part of the City where the Royal Palace was, which lay upon the Water that ran by the City, as the next Verſe ſeems to interpret it. It is not to be imagined, that *Joab* continued the Siege ſo long, as till *David* had two Children by *Bathſheba:* But this was done ſoon after the Death of *Uriah*, when *David* commanded them to make their Aſſault ſtronger againſt the City, xi. 25.

Ver. 27. *And Joab ſent Meſſengers to David, and ſaid, I have fought againſt Rabbah, and have taken the City of Waters.*] That part of this City which lay upon the Water: The other part, which was the Heart of the City, being yet untaken. But it being ſupplied with Water from this part, of which *Joab* had got poſſeſſion, it could not hold out long, but would be forced to ſurrender, becauſe *Joab* cut off their Water from them. So *Joſephus* underſtood it, τῶν ὑδάτων αὐτὸς ἀπολεμούμενος, *Lib. 7. Cap. 7.* And thus ſome learned Men tranſlate the laſt Words of this Verſe, by adding the Particle *Mem* before *Eth, he took from the City the Waters.*

Ver. 28. *Now therefore gather the reſt of the People together, and encamp againſt the City, and take it; leſt I take the City, and it be called by my Name.*] As from the Conqueſt of *Africa*, *Scipio* was called *Africanus*. By this it appears, that though *Joab* had many Faults, yet he

he loved his Prince, and endeavoured to raiſe his Glory.

Ver. 29. *And David gathered all the People together,*] All that were fit for War.

And went to Rabbah, and fought againſt it, and took it.] The Army being reinforced with ſuch great Recruits, they did not meerly block up the City to ſtarve it, and force it to ſurrender; but took it by Storm, and permitted the Soldiers to plunder and take the Spoil of it; as *Joſephus* writes, διαρπάσαι τοῖς στρατιώταις ἀφῆκεν.

Ver. 30. *And he took the King's Crown from off his head,*] This was the King's part of the Spoil: And the *Talmudiſts* alſo ſay, that all the Houſhold-ſtuff of the conquered King belonged to the King that was victorious. See *Grotius*, L. 3. *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 23. Sect. 24.

The Weight whereof was a Talent of Gold,] Or rather, the *Price*, or *Value* of it: As the *Hebrew* Word frequently ſignifies, and not only *Weight*. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. L. 2. Cap. 37. p. 380. And ſo it is to be taken here; for who was able to carry on his Head ſuch a Weight as a Talent, which they ſay was an hundred twenty-five Pounds?

With the precious Stones,] Which made the Value of it ſo great. *Joſephus* here ſaith, that there was one Stone of great Price, ἐν μέσῳ in the Middle of the Crown, which he calls a *Sardonyx*. The Original of which Fable *Bochartus* hath ingeniouſly conjectured in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. L. 5. Cap. 7. where he mentions other Conceits of the *Jews* about this Stone.

And he brought forth the Spoil of the City in great abundance.] This Paſſage is thus rendered by *Joſephus*, πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἄλλα σκύλα λαμπρὰ καὶ πολύτιμα εὗρεν ἐν τῇ πόλει. He found more and other Prey in the City very ſplendid, and of great Price.

Ver. 31. *And he brought forth the People that were therein, and put them under Saws, and under Harrows of Iron, and under Axes of Iron, and made them paſs through the Brick-kilns:*] Some of the Inhabitants he cauſed to be ſawn in ſunder; over others, Horſes drew Harrows with great Iron Teeth; others, were drawn over ſharp Sickles, or ſharp Stones; which perhaps he means by *Brick-kilns:* For ſo ſome Interpreters underſtand it, that he dragged them through the Place where Bricks were made; and there grated their Fleſh upon the ragged Pieces of broken Bricks. Tho' ſome will have this word *Malken* to ſignify the Place where the *Ammonites* offered their Sacrifices to their God *Moloch* or *Malcom* (as he is often called) and made the People there to paſs through the Fire. So the Vulgar tranſlates it, *Fornacem Moloch*, the Furnace of *Moloch*. This dreadful Puniſhment was to terrify other Countries from violating the Right of Nations, by abuſing publick Embaſſadors. Though many have thought it too ſevere, and looked upon it as an Argument, that *David* did this in the State of his Impenitence: When the mild and gentle Spirit of God was departed from him, and he was become cruel and furious, as well as luſtful.

And thus did he unto all the Cities of the Children of Ammon.] This will not let us think that he puniſhed ſo cruelly, only thoſe who adviſed the uſing of his Embaſſadors ſhamefully, or applauded it (as many it is likely did, that lived in *Rabbah*) for he treated all the Cities in the Country, in the ſame rigorous manner.

So David and all the People returned to Jeruſalem.] After they had brought all the Country into ſubjection to him, and ſecured the Poſſeſſion of it. For it is not likely all the Country People, Women and Children, were thus uſed: But only the military Men, who had levied War againſt *David*, and called the *Syrians* to their Aſſiſtance, and ſince put him to the trouble and charge of a long Siege of *Rabbah*.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs after this, that Abſalom the Son of David had a fair Siſter, whoſe Name was Tamar, and Amnon the Son of David loved her.*] Now begun a ſad Scene to be opened, of the Calamities which *Nathan* foretold *David* ſhould befal his Houſe, xii. 10. It is the common Opinion of the *Jews*, that in the War King *David* had with the King of *Geſhur*, he took his Daughter captive; who being very beautiful, he lay with her once (as they fancy the Law, *Deut.* xxi. 11. allows) and begat of her this Daughter. And aftewards, ſhe becoming a Proſelyte, he married her; and begat *Abſalom*. So this Daughter being begot while her Mother was a *Gentile*, they fancy ſhe was not his legal Child; and conſequently *Amnon* might have married her. See *Selden*, Lib. 5. *De Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 23. and *Cocceius* upon the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. N. 8. Annot. 7. of which more upon *ver.* 13. See there.

Ver. 2. *And Amnon was ſo vexed, that he fell ſick for his Siſter Tamar; for ſhe was a Virgin; and Amnon thought it hard to do any thing to her.*] The Paſſion of his Mind diſordered his Body, becauſe he could not compaſs his Deſires: For ſhe being a Virgin, was under a ſtrict Guard (as Virgins uſed to be) ſo that it was difficult for him to enjoy her Company. For to *do any thing to her*, ſignifies to do what he deſired: As *to do* ſignifies not only in the *Hebrew*, but in other Languages.

Ver. 3. *And Amnon had a Friend, whoſe Name was Jonadab, the Son of Shimeah David's Brother:*] That is, his Couſin German, who are often called Brothers in Scripture.

And Jonadab was a very ſubtil Man.] To find Means to compaſs an End.

Ver. 4. *And he ſaid unto him, Why art thou, being the King's Son,*] And the eldeſt Son who was next Heir to the Crown, iii. 2.

Lean from day to day?] In the *Hebrew* the Words are *Morning by Morning*. For whatſoever Diverſions he might find in the Day, he had reſtleſs Nights, which made him look pale and wan when he aroſe.

Wilt thou not tell me?] For Men are not wont to hide any thing from their Friends.

And Amnon ſaid unto him, I love Tamar my Brother Abſalom's Siſter.] From theſe Words the *Jews* are wont to argue, that *Tamar* was nothing of kin to *Amnon*; for he calls her not his Siſter, but his Brother *Abſalom*'s Siſter. But this is a very frivolous Obſervation, for in the two

two next Verſes he calls her *my Siſter*; and ver. 7. *David* calls him *her Brother*: and ſee ver. 11.

Ver. 5. *And Jonadab ſaid unto him, Lay thee down on thy bed, and make thy ſelf ſick:*] He adviſes him to feign himſelf to be ſo ill, that it conſtrained him to keep his Bed. Inſtead of doing the true Office of a Friend, he flatters his Paſſion to his utter undoing.

And when thy Father comes to ſee thee,] As he knew he would when he heard of his Sickneſs: For, as I obſerved before, he was a great Lover of his Children.

Say unto him, I pray thee, let my Siſter Tamar come and give me Meat, and dreſs the Meat in my ſight, that I may ſee it, and eat it at her hand.] He would have him pretend, that his Stomach was ſo nice and ſqueamiſh, that he could like nothing that his Servants dreſſed; and therefore defired his Siſter, who underſtood how to make delicate Diſhes, might come and prepare ſomething that he could reliſh.

Ver. 6. *And Amnon laid down, and made himſelf ſick:*] He eaſily followed bad Counſel, to attain a bad End.

And when the King was come to ſee him, Amnon ſaid unto the King, I pray thee let Tamar my Siſter come, and make me a Couple of Cakes in my ſight, that I may eat at her hand.] She was peculiarly noted, I ſuppoſe, to be very curious in making theſe *Lebiboth*, as the *Hebrew* calls them: Which the *Greeks* tranſlate κολλυρίδας, and are by Interpreters thought a delicious ſort of Cakes: Tho' ſome take κολλύρις to have been an excellent Broth, or ſome other ſupping Meat, which cannot be meant here, becauſe ſhe is ſaid, ver. 8. *to bake the Cakes.*

Ver. 7. *Then David ſent home to Tamar, ſaying, Go now to thy Brother Amnon's Houſe, and dreſs him Meat.*] He ſuſpected no Fraud; and *Jonadab* was ſo wicked as not to diſcover it, and thereby prevent the Miſchief.

Ver. 8. *So Tamar went to her Brother Amnon's Houſe, (and he was laid down) and ſhe took Flour, and kneaded it, and made Cakes in his ſight, and did bake the Cakes.*] She ſhewed her ſelf an obedient Daughter, and a kind Siſter.

Ver. 9. *And ſhe took a Pan,*] Wherein they had been baked.

And poured them out before him,] Into a Diſh.

But he refuſed to eat.] Pretending he had no Appetite.

And Amnon ſaid, Have out all Men from me: and they went out every Man from him.] He commanded all his Servants that attended, to leave him alone, that he might take ſome Reſt.

Ver. 10. *And Amnon ſaid unto Tamar, Bring the Meat into the Chamber, that I may eat of thy hand.*] He removed, I ſuppoſe, into an inner Room (where he thought he might more privately enjoy her) and pretended to be ſo refreſhed by the Change, that his Stomach was come to him.

And Tamar took the Cakes which ſhe had made, and brought them into the Chamber to Amnon her Brother.] Her Innocence made her think herſelf ſafe, eſpecially with a Brother.

Ver. 11. *And when ſhe had brought them unto him to eat, he took hold of her, and ſaid unto her, come lie with me, my Siſter.*] She ſat down, it is likely, ſuſpecting no Evil, upon his Bedſide to miniſter unto him: Which gave him the Opportunity to lay violent hands upon her.

Ver. 12. *And ſhe anſwered him, Nay, my Brother, do not force me;*] She having not Strength enough to get from him, reſiſts him with ſtrong Reaſons; praying him to conſider *firſt* that ſhe was his Siſter. Unto which relation ſhe hoped he would have ſuch a Reverence, as not to meddle with her, though ſhe were willing; much leſs offer violence to her, which was abominable to do to a Stranger.

For no ſuch thing ought to be done in Iſrael;] Whatſoever other Nations did (among whom Idols were worſhipped with filthy Luſts) ſhe prays him not to defile the Church of God, whoſe Glory was Holineſs and Purity. The Jewiſh Doctors ſay, this gave ſuch a Scandal, that the People began to ſpeak thus one to another: If the King's Daughter be thus uſed, what will become of the Children of private Men? And if Men be ſo bold with chaſte Women, what will they be with thoſe that are wantonly inclined? And at this time, they ſay, a Decree was made, that two young People ſhould not be alone together, *Gem. Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. N. 8.

Do not thou this folly.] That is, this Wickedneſs. She prays him to conſider the Foulneſs of the Sin; which would highly provoke the Divine Majeſty.

Ver. 13. *And I, whither ſhall I cauſe my ſhame to go?*] She beſeeches him, beſide the Sin againſt God, to conſider the Diſgrace it would be to her; who ſhould not be able to look any body in the face, nor would any body think of marrying her.

And as for thee, thou ſhalt be as one of the Fools in Iſrael:] Utterly loſe his Reputation; and be look'd upon as a Man void of all Senſe of Religion, Honour, or Humanity.

Now therefore, I pray thee, ſpeak unto the King; for he will not with-hold me from thee.] The *Jews* commonly fancying that ſhe being begot, as I ſaid before, of a Captive Woman before *David* married her, there was no ſuch Kindred between her and *Amnon*, but that he might lawfully have her to Wife. But others think, that ſhe being a young Woman, unacquainted with the Law, imagined, that they who had not the ſame Mother, might lawfully marry; or that the Power of the King was ſo great, that he might diſpenſe with the Law, in this caſe: Or rather, ſhe ſaid any thing that came into her Mind, which ſhe thought might deliver her from the preſent Danger. And this I take to be the trueſt Interpretation. For *Abarbinel* hath at large confuted the Opinion of her being begotten of *Maacah* before Marriage, when ſhe was a *Gentile*. For as the Scripture ſaith no ſuch thing, ſo he thinks it altogether improbable, that ſuch a Man as *David* would have any thing to do with her, 'till ſhe became a Proſelyte. And therefore, he ſaith, ſhe ſpake theſe Words, not as if ſhe thought it lawful for the King to give her to *Amnon* for his Wife; but that ſhe might get rid of his Sollicitations, by fair Speeches. For ſhe having urged him with the foregoing Arguments, *viz.* the Heinouſneſs of the Action itſelf; the Diſhonour it would be to her, and no leſs Reproach to himſelf: And he perſiſting ſtill blindly

blindly in his wicked Reſolution, ſhe adds theſe Words to give him hope, that he might have Satisfaction without acting ſo brutiſhly, if he did but aſk his Father's Conſent. As if ſhe had ſaid, If thou art ſo ſick with Love, that thou art ready to die, ſpeak to the King, unto whom thy Life is very dear, and he will preſerve it, by granting thy Deſire; for tho' by the Law thou canſt not enjoy me, yet he will rather chooſe to let me have thee, than ſee thee die. This, ſaith *Abarbinel*, is the Senſe of theſe Words, *he will not withhold me from thee*. Which ſhe ſaid to withhold and divert him from his purpoſe at that time; which *R. Samuel Laniado* (who endeavours to ſupport the forenamed Opinion of their Doctors) doth but very weakly oppoſe. See *Buxtorf. de Sponſal. & Divortiis*, Sect. 20. See my Notes upon Chap. iii. 3.

Ver. 14. *Howbeit he would not hearken unto her Voice: but being ſtronger than ſhe, he forced her, and lay with her.*] As the Nightingale in *Heſiod* ſung in vain to the ravenous Hawk (as *Strigelius* gloſſes upon theſe Words) ſo *Tamar* ſaid all this to a deaf Man, who was wholly under the power of his furious Luſt, which would not ſuffer him to mind either God, or Men, or himſelf.

Ver. 15. *Then Amnon hated her exceedingly, ſo that the Hatred wherewith he hated her, was greater than the Love wherewith he had loved her.*] The *Jews* are much concerned to give a reaſon of this Hatred. And *Raſi*, and others ſay, that in her ſtruggling with him to reſiſt his Attempt upon her, ſhe hurt thoſe Parts wherewith he offended, which extreamly enraged him. This is not improbable: But others think it a better account to ſay, that ſhe reproached him ſo bitterly with what he had done, that he could not endure to hear it; and perhaps his own Conſcience began to fly in his face.

And Amnon ſaid unto her, Ariſe, be gone.] He doth not ſo much as ſpeak one kind Word to her, nor call her Siſter (as *Pellicanus* obſerves) but in a rude manner bids her be gone, as if ſhe had been a common Strumpet.

Ver. 16. *And ſhe ſaid unto him, There is no Cauſe;*] For this hard Uſage.

This Evil is greater than the other that thou didſt unto me:] It was not a greater Sin, but it did her the greater Miſchief, becauſe it publiſh'd her Shame, and made that known to all, which was done ſecretly.

But he would not hearken to her.] This was very barbarous, to thruſt her out of doors immediately, and in the day-time, without conſulting how to cover, if it were poſſible, ſo foul a Fact. So *Joſephus*, he would not let her ſtay till Night, but commanded her to be put out while it was day-light, ἵνα καὶ μάρτυσι τῆς αἰσχυνης παραπέσοι, that ſhe might meet with Witneſſes of her Shame.

Ver. 17. *Then he called his Servants, that miniſtered unto him, and ſaid unto them, Put now this Woman out from me, and bolt the Door after her.*] This was a new Violence to her, to be turned out of doors, with ſuch contemptuous Language, as if ſhe had been an impudent Intruder.

Ver. 18. *And ſhe had a Garment of divers Colours upon her: For with ſuch Robes were the King's Daughters, that were Virgins, apparelled.*] This was ſuch a Garment as *Joſeph* the beloved Son of *Jacob* wore. See upon *Gen.* xxxvii. 3.

And his Servants brought her out, and bolted the Door after her.] An high Contempt of a King's Daughter; which they knew her to be by her Apparel, if by nothing elſe. But their Dependance on their Maſter over-ruled all the Reſpect due to her.

Ver. 19. *And Tamar put Aſhes upon her Head, and rent her Garment of divers Colours that was upon her,*] But theſe were Expreſſions of the greateſt Grief, which ſhe was not able to ſuppreſs.

And laid her Hands on her Head, and went on crying.] Bewailing her Calamity. *Laying her Hands on her Head* was alſo a Token of great Trouble and Grief; ſhe covering thereby her Face, as one aſhamed. Thus *Jeremiah* ſaith, the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould go forth from *Aſſyria, with their Hands upon their Head*, xi. 37. that is, ſaith *Abarbinel*, like a Woman who bewails her Misfortune, and there is none to deliver her. St. *Hierom* and *Theodoret* more plainly; they ſhall go forth with their Hands on their Heads, *in ſignum pudoris & doloris*, in token of their Shame and of their Grief. Spreading forth their Hands is the ſame. *Lam.* i. 17

Ver. 20. *And Abſalom her Brother,*] Unto whoſe Houſe ſhe went.

Said unto her, Hath Aminon thy Brother been with thee?] A modeſt Expreſſion for the foul Rape he had committed: At which he conceived great Indignation, and therefore in ſcorn doth not call him her Brother *Amnon*, but *Aminon*. So the Words are in the *Hebrew*, *Hath Aminon thy Brother been with thee?*

But hold thy peace, my Siſter: He is thy Brother, regard not this thing.] He ſeems to deſire her to put up the Injury in ſilence, that it might not bring too much Diſgrace on their Family: But indeed, that he might diſſemble the Revenge he intended, upon occaſion, to take of him.

So Tamar remained deſolate in her Brother Abſalom's Houſe.] She would ſee no body, I ſuppoſe, but only thoſe that waited on her in her Brother's Family.

Ver. 21. *And when King David heard of all theſe things, he was very wroth.*] But out of his great Indulgence, inflicted no ſort of Puniſhment upon him, that we read of: πρεσβύτατος γὰρ ἦν υἱὸς αὐτῷ (as *Joſephus* obſerves) for he was his eldeſt Son, which made him ſpare him.

Ver. 22. *And Abſalom ſpake unto his Brother Amnon neither good nor bad:*] Never ſaid a Word to him about this matter, when they met together.

For Abſalom hated Amnon, becauſe he had forced his Siſter Tamar.] Tho' he hated him in his heart, yet he never expreſſed the leaſt Reſentment. So the Particle *ki* ſhould be tranſlated, not *for*, but *tho'*. By this means *Amnon* was lull'd aſleep into a Belief, that *Abſalom* would not trouble him for what he had done, becauſe he did not threaten, nor ſo much as expoſtulate with him, nor take any notice of what had paſſed; tho', in reaſon, he ought to have been the more afraid, that he was meditating a terrible Revenge: According to the Fable of the little Mouſe, who when the Dunghil-Cock came into the Parlour, clapping his Wings,

and making a great noiſe, was very much affrighted at it, but minded not the Cat which came gently creeping towards her; whom her Mother chid for her Folly, telling her there was no Danger from the fluttering, clamorous Cock; but from the ſilent Cat, ſhe was to expect preſent Death. So *Victorinus Strigelius* gloſſes upon this Place.

Ver. 23. *And it came to paſs after two Years,*] In all which time *Abſalom* had ſaid nothing to *Amnon* about his abuſed Siſter; that he might think he was ignorant of it, or did not regard it, or had forgot it.

That Abſalom had Sheep-ſhearers in Baal-hazor, which is beſide Ephraim: And Abſalom invited all the King's Sons.] For the time of Sheep-ſhearing was a kind of Harveſt in thoſe Countries; and therefore full of Joy: which they expreſſed by making a Feaſt upon thoſe Days. We read of it early in the Book of *Geneſis*, *viz.* of *Laban*'s going to ſhear his Sheep, xxxi. 19. and *Judah*, after his mourning for his Wife's Death, went to refreſh himſelf at a Sheep-ſhearing with his Friends, xxxviii. 12, 13. And it was at a time of ſuch Joy, that *David* ſent to *Nabal* for ſome Relief, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 8.

Ver. 24. *And Abſalom came to the King, and ſaid, Behold now, thy Servant hath Sheep-ſhearers, let the King, I beſeech thee, and his Servants, go with thy Servant.*] He had no mind the King ſhould go; but invited him, to avoid all Suſpicion.

Ver. 25. *And the King ſaid to Abſalom, Nay, my Son, let us not all go,*] For he ſeems to have invited all his Family: When he beſeeched him, and his Servants to go with him.

Leſt we be chargeable unto thee; and he preſſed him: howbeit he would not go, but bleſſed him.] Gave him thanks for his Invitation, and prayed God to bleſs him.

Ver. 26. *Then ſaid Abſalom, If not, I pray thee, let my Brother Amnon go with me.*] To cover his Deſign, he pretended, I ſuppoſe, a ſpecial Kindneſs for him: Or at leaſt deſired the King to do him the Honour, to let him have the Company of his eldeſt Brother.

And the King ſaid unto him, Why ſhould he go with thee?] Being the next Perſon in the Kingdom to the King, it is likely *David* thought it would make the Entertainment too chargeable.

Ver. 27. *But Abſalom preſſed him, that he let Amnon and all the King's Sons go with him.*] Who might have taken exceptions, if *Amnon* alone had been entertained by him; therefore his Importunity prevailed to have the company of them all.

Ver. 28. *And Abſalom had commanded his Servants, ſaying, Mark ye now when Amnon is merry with Wine,*] And had no Thoughts of any Danger.

And when I ſay unto you, Smite Amnon, then kill him, fear not: Have not I commanded you? Be courageous, and be valiant.] He encourages them to hope, that he being the King's Son, and next Heir to the Crown, when *Amnon* was gone (for *Chileab* ſeems now to be dead) would ſtand between them and Danger of being called to an account for what they did.

Ver. 29. *And the Servants of Abſalom did as Abſalom had commanded: then all the King's Sons aroſe, and gat every one upon his Mule and fled.*] Fearing he might deſtroy all the Royal Family: For Ambition was as ſtrong in him as Revenge; which appeared afterward in his Endeavours to dethrone his Father. *Mules* began to be much in uſe in *David*'s days (as *Bochart* obſerves) who appointed *Solomon* to be carried on his own Mule, and declared King, 1 *Kings* i. 33. And *Solomon* had a Preſent of them made to him, 1 *Kings* x. 25. And they were not uſed only to ride on, but for Carriage of Burdens, 1 *Chron.* xii. 40. and to draw Chariots, as the LXX underſtand *Iſaiah* lxvi. 20. See *Hierozoicon, P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 19.

Ver. 30. *And it came to paſs while they were in the way, that Tidings came to David, ſaying, Abſalom hath ſlain all the King's Sons, and there is not one of them left.*] He that ſaw *Amnon* killed, preſently ran away in a great Fright, imagining all the King's Sons were ſo ſerved.

Ver. 31. *Then the King aroſe, and tare his Garments, and lay on the Earth; and all his Servants ſtood by with their Clothes rent.*] This was a natural Expreſſion of great Grief, to throw themſelves not upon their Beds (as *Maimonides* obſerves) but upon the Ground. Otherwiſe, they turned their Beds upſide down, and ſo lay as hard as if they lay upon the Ground. See *Gierus de Luctu Hebr.* Cap. 18. Sect. 8.

Ver. 32. *And Jonadab the Son of Shimeah, David's Brother, anſwered and ſaid,*] Who was noted before to be a very ſubtile Man (*ver.* 3.) and underſtood all the Intrigues (as we now ſpeak) about the Court.

Let not my Lord ſuppoſe they have ſlain all the young Men the King's Sons; for Amnon only is dead:] This he ſpake not from any certain Intelligence he had received from *Abſalom*'s Houſe; but from rational Conjecture, out of what he had learnt concerning *Abſalom*'s Reſentment.

For by the Appointment of Abſalom this hath been determined, from the day that he forced his Siſter Tamar.] He had talked, I ſuppoſe, among his Familiars, that he would take a time to revenge the Injury done his Siſter, though for the preſent he took no notice of it: which *Jonadab*, being a prying Man, had ſome way or other diſcovered.

Ver. 33. *Now therefore let not my Lord the King take the thing to his heart, to think that all the King's Sons are dead: for Amnon only is dead.*] He affirms this with the greater Confidence, becauſe he never heard (tho' he was of a very inquiſitive Temper) of any Quarrel *Abſalom* had with the reſt of the King's Sons, but only *Amnon*.

Ver. 34. *But Abſalom fled.*] With all his Servants who committed the Murder. For he ſoon found it was not in his, nor any body's power to protect them.

And the young Man that kept the Watch, lift up his Eyes, and looked,] Round about him.

And behold, there came much People by the way of the Hill-ſide behind him.] They did not think fit to keep the direct Road from *Baal-Hazor* to *Jeruſalem* (for what reaſon, we cannot now know) but went about: So that they came not before the Watchman, but behind him.

Ver. 35. *And Jonadab ſaid unto the King, Behold, the King's Sons come: As thy Servant ſaid, ſo it is.*] Hearing a Company was coming, he went

went out, it is likely, to deſcry who they were: And, ſeeing the King's Sons, made haſte and carried *David* the good News.

Ver. 36. *And it came to paſs, as ſoon as he had made an end of ſpeaking, that behold the King's Sons came,*] They trod upon *Jonadab*'s heels, as we now ſpeak.

And lift up their Voice and wept: And the King alſo, and all his Servants wept very ſore.] See iii. 32. But we read of no publick Funeral and Lamentations which he made for him, as he did for *Abner*.

Ver. 37. *But Abſalom fled, and went to Talmai the Son of Ammihud King of Geſhur:*] For no City of Refuge in his own Country could give him Protection, having committed a deſigned Murder; therefore he fled out of the Kingdom to his Mother's Father. See iii. 3.

And David mourned for his Son every day.] Either for the loſs of *Amnon*, or for *Abſalom*; who was loſt, as to any Comfort he could have from his Company. It ſeems to be meant of the latter; for it is ſaid he was comforted for *Amnon:* and therefore his continued Affliction for three Years together, was upon the account of *Abſalom*.

Ver. 38. *And Abſalom fled, and went to Geſhur, and was there three Years.*] This is repeated to ſhew, that he found ſuch Favour with his Grandfather, that he went no further, but continued with him three Years in ſafety. *Geſhur*, it appears from xv. 8. was a part of *Syria*.

Ver. 39. *And the Soul of David longed to go forth unto Abſalom:*] He had a vehement Deſire to ſee him. Though ſome, even of the Ancients, tranſlate the Words, *he ceaſed to purſue after Abſalom:* As if he had at firſt endeavoured to ſeize him, either in his Flight to *Geſhur*, or afterwards, when at any time he went abroad. But ours appears to be a true Tranſlation, from the beginning of the next Chapter; where *David*'s Heart is ſaid to be towards *Abſalom*.

For he was comforted concerning Amnon, becauſe he was dead.] He was unwilling to want the Comfort of both his Sons; and ſince it was impoſſible to bring *Amnon* back again, he long'd to bring back *Abſalom:* But he had committed ſo horrid a Crime, that he durſt not venture to reſtore him in his Favour.

CHAP. XIV.

Verſe 1. *NOW Joab the Son of Zeruiah perceived the King's Heart was towards Abſalom.*] That he longed to ſee him, and have him reſtored to his own Country, if it could be contrived by ſome handſome Pretence for it. Which *Joab* therefore endeavoured to bring about; knowing he was dear to the People, as well as to *David*: And he might by his Reduction ingratiate himſelf with *Abſalom*, whom he looked upon as next Heir to the Crown.

Ver. 2. *And Joab ſent to Tekoah,*] A City in the Tribe of *Judah* (2 *Chron.* xi. 5, 6.) but at a diſtance from *Jeruſalem:* And the further off, the better for his purpoſe; becauſe the Caſe which the Woman was to repreſent to the King, could not eaſily be enquired into, if he deſired to know the Truth. The *Jews* ſay, it was in the Tribe of *Aſher*, the Place where the Prophet *Amos* was born.

And fetcht thence a wiſe Woman,] A Woman was the fitteſt for this purpoſe; eſpecially a Widow, who was proper to move Compaſſion. And a grave Woman, as *Joſephus* calls her (πρεσβύτις) was ſtill more proper.

And ſaid unto her, I pray thee, feign thy ſelf now to be a Mourner, and put on now mourning Apparel, and anoint not thy ſelf with Oil, but be as a Woman that had a long time mourned for the dead:] Who put on no Ornaments, nor uſed any Ointment, but appeared in a ſordid neglected Condition.

Ver. 3. *And come to the King, and ſpeak on this manner unto him: So Joab put the Words into her mouth.*] And, in all probability, introduc'd her into the King's preſence; and then left her to manage the matter with him, according to her Prudence. Or, as ſeems to be ſuggeſted, *ver.* 21. he ſtood by at ſome diſtance, whilſt ſhe addreſſed herſelf to the King.

Ver. 4. *And when the Woman of Tekoah ſpake to the King, ſhe fell on her face to the ground, and did obeyſance,*] This was the humbleſt Poſture of Reverence.

And ſaid, Help, O King.] Relieve a poor diſtreſſed Widow.

Ver. 5. *And the King ſaid unto her, What aileth thee? and ſhe anſwered, I am indeed a Widow Woman, and my Huſband is dead.*] Which made her the greater Object of Pity.

Ver. 6. *And thy Handmaid had two Sons, and they two ſtrove together in the Field, and there was none to part them, but the one ſmote the other, and ſlew him.*] This, and the foregoing, and the next Verſe, repreſent her Condition as very lamentable: That ſhe had loſt her Huſband, and one of her Sons, and was in danger to be deprived of the other; which was all ſhe had.

Ver. 7. *And behold the whole Family is riſen againſt thine Handmaid, and they ſay deliver him that ſmote his Brother, that we may kill him,*] Put him to death, as the Law required, *Numb.* xxxv. 18, 19.

For the Life of his Brother which he ſlew, and we will deſtroy the Heir alſo:] Theſe Words, if ſpoken by the Kindred, ſhew it was not Love to Juſtice, but a Deſire to have the Inheritance, which moved them to proſecute the Murderer.

And ſo they ſhall quench my Coal which is left,] Deprive me of the little Comfort of my Life, which remains (and is in a manner buried as a Coal in the Aſhes) and ruin my Family.

And ſhall not leave to my Huſband neither Name, nor Remainder upon earth.] Utterly extinguiſh her Huſband's Memory. In all this ſhe intended to frame a Caſe as like to *David*'s as ſhe could deviſe: By determining which in her favour, he might judge how much more reaſonable it was to preſerve *Abſalom*. But there was a wide Difference between her Caſe and his, how plauſible ſoever their Likeneſs might appear. For her Son ſhe pretended was ſlain in a Scuffle with his Brother, and was no premeditated Murder, as *Abſalom*'s was. It was alſo in the Field, where there were no Witneſſes, whether it was wilful or no; Whereas all the King's Sons ſaw *Amnon* barbarouſly murdered by his Brother. And in this laſt paſſage the Difference is as great as

in any; for *David*'s Family was not in danger to be extinguiſhed, if *Abſalom* were loſt alſo: he having many Children, and alſo many Wives, whereby he might have more. And therefore in that likewiſe this Caſe differed from hers who was a Widow.

Ver. 8. *And the King ſaid, Go to thine Houſe, and I will give charge concerning thee.*] He promiſes he would take care the matter ſhould be thoroughly examined, and juſtice done her.

Ver. 9. *And the Woman of Tekoah ſaid unto the King, My Lord, O King, the Iniquity be on me, and on my Father's Houſe: and the King and his Throne be guiltleſs.*] She deſires a ſpeedy Sentence might be given in her favour; which if it prov'd wrong by her miſinforming the King, ſhe prays the Guilt might light on her and her Family, and the King and his be innocent.

Ver. 10. *And the King ſaid, Whoſoever ſaith aught unto thee, bring him unto me, and he ſhall not touch thee any more.*] If any one endeavoured to lay hold on her Son, he bids her bring that Perſon before him (for which end he commanded his Officers to be aſſiſtant to her) and he would puniſh him, ſo that none ſhould dare to meddle with him any more.

Ver. 11. *Then ſhe ſaid, I pray thee, let the King remember the LORD thy God,*] She ſeems to deſire him to confirm what he had ſaid by an Oath. For Men ſwore by *remembring* (or *making mention* of) the Name of the LORD. Others think ſhe only prays him to remember how merciful and gracious God is, and had been to himſelf, even in pardoning the Murder of *Uriah*.

That thou wouldſt not ſuffer the Avenger of Blood to deſtroy any more,] In the *Hebrew*, *to multiply to deſtroy:* That is, after ſhe had loſt one Son, to take away the Life of the other, as the next Words explain it.

Leſt they deſtroy my Son.] Or, let them not deſtroy my Son, which remains.

And he ſaid, As the LORD liveth,] Tho' it was a bold Requeſt in the Woman to deſire him to confirm what he had ſaid by an Oath; yet ſuch was his pity to her, that to ſend her away entirely ſatisfied, he ſolemnly ſwears he would preſerve her Son.

There ſhall not one Hair of thy Son fall to the earth.] He ſhould not ſuffer the leaſt harm upon this account.

Ver. 12. *Then the Woman ſaid, Let thy Handmaid, I pray thee, ſpeak one word unto my Lord the King: And he ſaid, Say on.*] Now ſhe deſigned to open her Meaning in this Parable, and plainly deſires the King to make her Caſe his own: but it would take up ſome time, and therefore ſhe beſpeaks his Favour to hear her patiently.

Ver. 13. *And the Woman ſaid, Wherefore haſt thou thought ſuch a thing*] As that which ſhe had hitherto been ſpeaking of.

Againſt the People of Iſrael?] Who were in danger to loſe *Abſalom*, the Heir of the Crown; which was far worſe than the private Loſs of her Son.

For the King doth ſpeak this thing, as one that is faulty, in that the King doth not fetch home his baniſhed.] In the Sentence he had pronounced for her, he had condemned himſelf, becauſe he had not called *Abſalom* from his Exile. This looks like too bold a Speech: But the Senſe is no more than this; Do not judge otherwiſe in thy own caſe, than thou haſt done in mine. For all the World allows (as *Strigelius* here obſerves) the Reaſonableneſs of that Saying, *Odi ſapientem qui ſibi non ſapit.* Her Reaſoning indeed was infirm, his Caſe and hers being very unlike upon ſeveral accounts, which I before obſerved. But tho' he ſuppoſed killing of her Son was caſual, but *Amnon*'s Murder deſigned; and ſhe had no more Sons, and *David* had many, *&c.* yet *David* perceiving how the People ſtood affected towards *Abſalom* (otherwiſe he knew this Woman durſt not have ſpoken after this manner) and it being his own Deſire, as much as theirs, to have him re-called, he overlooked all the Differences there were in his caſe, and did not go about to ſhew her the Weakneſs of her Diſcourſe.

Ver. 14. *For we muſt needs die, and are as Water ſpilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again:*] She pleads for further Pity towards him, from the Conſideration of our common Mortality, and repreſents that Death comes on apace, and we need not haſten it: And when we are dead, we can no more be recovered, than Water when it is ſpilt on the ground, which is preſently ſucked up and ſeen no more. This is alſo a weak, though plauſible Argument; for by this reaſoning all Malefactors ſhould be ſpared, becauſe it will not be long before Death cuts them off: But when we have a mind to a thing, all Reaſons ſeem ſtrong to perſwade us to it. Some apply this to his mourning for *Amnon*; as if ſhe had ſaid, doſt thou ſtill weep for thy other Son? He muſt have died; and now he is gone, thy Tears cannot call him to Life again. But this is not probable, becauſe it is ſaid in the concluſion of the foregoing Chapter, *He was comforted concerning Amnon, ſeeing he was dead.*

Neither doth God reſpect any Perſon,] If this be a right Tranſlation, the Meaning is, that *David* himſelf was mortal, though a great King. But I think the *Hebrew* Words, *Iſſa Nepheſh*, never ſignify Reſpect to Perſons; but the Word *Panim* is uſed in that ſenſe, not *Nepheſh*, which ſignifies the *Soul*, as the other doth the *Face* or Countenance. Therefore theſe Words ſhould be tranſlated, *God doth not take away the Soul*, or *Life*. She argues from the ſparing Mercy of God, who doth not preſently inflict the Puniſhment of Death, when Men have deſerved it. And perhaps ſhe had in this a particular Reſpect to *Abſalom*, whom God had not cut off, but let him live; and therefore ſhe deſires *David* to imitate God.

Yet doth he deviſe means, that his baniſhed be not expelled from him.] Or, according to the foregoing Words, *but he doth deviſe means*, &c. God provided many Cities of Refuge, ſhe means, to which he that ſlew another unawares might flee; where though he was baniſhed from his Habitation for a time, he was not quite expelled, but might return again, after the Death of the High-Prieſt. From whence ſhe argues, that Kings being the Images of God, nothing could more become them than Clemency and Mercy; in mitigating the Puniſhment of Offenders, tho' there were juſt Cauſe of Anger againſt them. Which ſtill was ſhort of the preſent Caſe; for

God was not ſo merciful as to provide for the ſafety of a wilful Murderer. But ſuch ſpecious Arguments are good enough, when Men are willing to be perſwaded: And nothing more moving than the Example of God, who doth not delight in the Death of a Sinner.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore that I am come to ſpeak of this thing unto my Lord the King, it is becauſe the People have made me afraid:*] This ſounds as if the People talked ſo diſcontentedly about *Abſalom*'s Baniſhment, that it was another Motive to her to make this Addreſs to the King. But it doth not ſeem to me to be likely, that the People were diſſatisfied, becauſe he was not recalled; but rather *David* was afraid the People would be diſſatisfied, if he did recall him. I ſaid indeed before (*ver.* 13.) that *David* imagined by her Speech, that they were deſirous of his Return from Baniſhment; but he did not think ſo before: And whatſoever their Deſires might be, they did not expreſs any Diſcontent, becauſe he was not; for then there would not have been any need of this Woman to bring that about, which he deſired more than they. Therefore I think the laſt Words ſhould be tranſlated, not *becauſe*, but *tho' the People made me afraid*; that is, thoſe ſhe adviſed withal, told her it was too bold an Attempt: But this did not diſcourage her, becauſe ſhe preſumed the King would be ſo good, as to give her a favourable Audience, and not be angry with her, ſince what ſhe ſaid was well intended. So the next Word is to be tranſlated, *but*, not *and*.

But thy Handmaid ſaid, I will now ſpeak unto the King; it may be that the King will perform the Requeſt of his Handmaid.] That is, notwithſtanding the Fears which ſome put into her, ſhe reſolved to make this Petition. And ſhe gives her Reaſon for it, in the next Verſe.

Ver. 16. *For the King will hear, to deliver his Handmaid out of the hand of the Men that would deſtroy me and my Son together out of the Inheritance of God:*] Clemency and Kindneſs are the Properties of good Kings; and ſuch ſhe ſaith ſhe knew the King to be, who would take pity upon her and her Son, in whoſe Preſervation her Life was bound up. And when ſhe calls the Land of *Iſrael*, *the Inheritance of God*, who dwelt among them there, ſhe ſecretly puts the King in mind how dangerous it was to let *Abſalom* (unto whom ſhe had adventured to apply her Caſe) to continue in an idolatrous Country; where God was not worſhipped, as he was in the Land of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 17. *Then thine Handmaid ſaid, the Word of my Lord the King ſhall now be comfortable:*] Thereupon ſhe grew confident that the King's Anſwer would be according to her Heart's deſire; it being the higheſt Glory of a Prince (as the Emperor *Titus* was wont to ſay) not to ſend any Petitioner away ſad and ſorrowful. And indeed the King's great Patience, in attending to ſo long an Addreſs, might make her preſume to receive a gracious Anſwer.

For as an Angel of God, ſo is my Lord the King, to diſcern both good and bad:] To diſcern between juſt and unreaſonable Petitions; as well as patiently to hear both thoſe things which are grateful, and thoſe which are leſs acceptable. And therefore ſhe doubted not of ſuch a kind Anſwer as the Angels bring, who are Meſſengers of divine Mercy.

Therefore the LORD thy God will be with thee.] To direct him to judge aright, and to ſhew Mercy. There is a great deal of Artifice in all this. For to preſume upon the Kindneſs of another, and to expect gracious Anſwers from their noble Qualities, is very moving; Men being very loth to defeat thoſe who think ſo highly of them; according to that of *Ariſtotle*, in the ſecond Book of his *Rhetorick*, *We love thoſe that admire us.*

Ver. 18. *Then the King anſwered and ſaid unto the Woman, Hide not from me, I pray thee, one thing that I ſhall aſk thee. And the Woman ſaid, Let my Lord the King now ſpeak.*] As much as to ſay, and I will anſwer truly.

Ver. 19. *And the King ſaid, Is not the hand of Joab with thee in all this?*] His Prudence made him ſuſpect that a Woman durſt not have adventured upon this Speech, but by the Counſel and Contrivance of ſome greater Perſon. And none more likely than *Joab*, whom he knew to be a cunning Man, and a Friend to *Abſalom*.

And the Woman anſwered and ſaid, As thy Soul liveth, my Lord the King, none can turn to the right hand or to the left, from ought that my Lord the King hath ſpoken:] As much as to ſay in our Language, *it is even ſo*. And therefore ſhe did not ſeek by any Windings, or Turnings this way or the other, to diſſemble the matter, but plainly confeſſed it, as it follows. Concerning the Phraſe, *Turn to the right hand or left*, ſee upon *Gen.* xxiv. 49.

For thy Servant Joab he bad me, and he put all theſe Words in the mouth of thy Handmaid.] The Senſe of them, which he left her to manage to the beſt advantage.

Ver. 20. *To fetch about this Form of Speech hath thy Servant Joab done this thing:*] The Meaning is, *Joab* inſtructed her, that having obtained pardon for her Son, ſhe ſhould turn about the face of her Speech (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) another way; and transfer it to *Abſalom*, as a parallel Caſe with her own. And ſo *Joſephus* expreſſes her Senſe, *Lib.* 7. *Antiq. Cap.* 8. *When ſhe had thanked the King for his Pity towards her, ſhe ſaid, But that I may be more certain of thy Clemency, receive thy own Son into thy favour; for how is it poſſible for me not to doubt of the favour thou promiſeſt me, when thou ſtill ſuffereſt thy own Son to lie under thy Indignation for the like Fault?*

And my Lord the King is wiſe, according to the Wiſdom of an Angel of God, to know all things that are done in the earth.] That is, in the whole Kingdom, where nothing could be hid from him, but he knew all Men, and their Counſels; and likewiſe knew what was fit to be done, in anſwer to their Deſires. She ſtill perſiſts in her Admiration of the King, that ſhe might the more incline him to grant her Requeſt.

Ver. 21. *And the King ſaid unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: Go therefore, and bring the young Man Abſalom again.*] The King turned from her to him (who ſeems to have ſtood in ſome part of the Room, while ſhe delivered her Petition) as the principal Agent in this Buſineſs; whom he was pleaſed to gratify in his Requeſt.

Ver. 22.

Ver. 22. *And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself,*] As the Woman did, when she entered into his presence, to present her Petition, *ver.* 4.

And thanked the King:] For Favours are to be no less humbly acknowledged, than humbly begged.

And Joab said, To-day thy Servant knoweth that I have found Grace in thy sight, my Lord, O King, in that the King hath fulfilled the Request of his Servant.] He looked upon it as a Mark of the King's great Kindness, who was not angry, but granted so bold a Request; in which he was mistaken: for tho' he passed by the Murder of *Amnon*, yet he remember'd *Joab*'s Murder of *Abner* to his dying day.

Ver. 23. *So Joab arose and went to Geshur, and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.*] St. *Ambrose* mentions this as an Instance of the wonderful Affection which Parents have to their Children, tho' degenerate and wicked; by which we may raise our Thoughts to comprehend a little of the inconceivable Love of our heavenly Father (as *Strigelius* here meditates) towards his own eternal Son; and towards Mankind for his sake.

Ver. 24. *And the King said,*] When he heard he was come to *Jerusalem.*

Let him turn to his own House, and let him not see my face.] His Affection to him did not so blind his Eyes, but he still saw, it would not be for his Honour, to let him come into his presence.

So Absalom returned to his own House,] This intimates, as if he came not only to *Jerusalem*, but to the King's Court.

And saw not the King's Face.] Which was some Humiliation to him, and put him upon Repentance; for he saw he had not a full Pardon, being not utterly restored to the King's Favour. The People also were convinced by this how detestable his Crime was, in the King's account; and that he would not easily pass by the like in any other Person, since he could not endure the sight of a Son, whose Hand was defiled with the Blood of his Brother.

Ver. 25. *But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom, for Beauty, from the Sole of the Foot, even to the Crown of the Head there was no Blemish in him.*] For his Father and Mother were both very lovely Persons: But this proved the Occasion of his Ruin; for he grew proud, because he was so much admired; and forgetting his cruel Murther of his Brother, it tempted him to rely on the Favour of the People, in committing of a greater Crime, which was seeking the Life of his Father.

Ver. 26. *And when he polled his Head (for it was at every Year's end that he polled it; because the Hair was heavy to him, therefore he polled it.*] It is not certain, that he cut his Hair once a Year: For the Words in the *Hebrew* are, *from the end of Days to Days*, without any particular Designation of the Time. And therefore the *Targum* translates it, *at stated Times*; that is, when it grew too heavy, which might be once in two Years, more or less, as *Bochartus* observes.

He weighed the Hair of his Head at two hundred Shekels, after the King's weight.] In those days Hair was accounted a great Ornament, and the longer it was, the more it was esteemed. And therefore no wonder *Absalom* nourished his with much Care, and let it grow to great length: which made him look more like a goodly Person. Insomuch, that in After-ages, they were wont to use Art (as perhaps they did now) to make the Hair grow, and grow thick, and strong (as the same *Bochartus* hath shewn) and they anointed their Hair also with fragrant Oils of Myrrh, Cinnamon, and such like; and after that, powder'd it with Dust of Gold: All which made it very ponderous. So that *Absalom*'s Hair weighed, when it was cut off, two hundred Shekels; which he demonstrates was no more than three Pound and two Ounces of our Weight. This is not at all incredible, considering that he let it grow so long as he was able to bear the Weight of it; which was increased, it is likely, by such Additions as I have mentioned; for a King's Son would not want any thing that might add to his Splendor. *Josephus* also informs us, that such Ostentation was in use among the *Jews* in those days; for speaking of the noble Guard which attended King *Solomon*, with long Hair flowing about their Shoulders, he saith, that they scattered in their Hair every day, ῥῆγματα τῦ χρυσίυ, little Particles of Gold, which made their Hair shine and sparkle by the Reflection of the Sun's Rays upon the Gold. As for their Interpretation, who think that *Absalom*'s Hair did not weigh thus much, but was sold for two hundred Shekels, *Bochartus* shews how absurd it is to imagine a King's Son would sell his Hair, or that any one would buy it, especially at that rate; there being no Peruques worn in those days. And besides, the Text confutes it, *he weighed the Hair of his Head*, &c. whereas, if it had been sold, the Buyer would have weighed the Money, not *Absalom*; as *Abraham* did, when he bought the Field of *Ephron*, *Gen.* xxiii. 16. and *Jeremiah* when he bought the Field in *Anathoth*, xxxii. 9. See his Epistle to *Michael Faukellius*, at the end of the third Edition of his *Geographia Sacra.*

Ver. 27. *And unto Absalom were born three Sons and one Daughter, whose Name was Tamar; she was a Woman of a fair Countenance.*] How the LXX in the *Vatican* Edition, came to add here, that *Tamar* was afterward the Wife of *Rehoboam*, and bare him *Abijah*, I cannot tell; but I suppose it was from some *Jewish* Tradition.

Ver. 28. *So Absalom dwelt two full Years in Jerusalem, and saw not the King's Face.*] He lived privately, having the Company only of his own Family. For it is likely, he was by the King's Command confined to his House, where he had few Visitants, being under the King's Displeasure.

Ver. 29. *Therefore Absalom sent for Joab, to have sent him to the King,*] He did not employ his Privacy so well as he should have done; but had ambitious Designs in his head, if he could be restored to the King's Favour, and enjoy greater Liberty; for which he intended to make *Joab* his Intercessor.

But he would not come to him: And when he sent again the second time, he would not come.] *Josephus* thinks that *Joab* only took time to consider, whether he should do what was desired: But *Absalom* was in haste, and could

not endure any Delay, and therefore did as follows. Or perhaps *Joab* thought he had done enough, and was afraid the King might be angry, if he preſſed him further.

Ver. 30. *Therefore he ſaid unto his Servants, See, Joab's Field is near unto mine, and he hath Barley there; go and ſet it on fire: And Abſalom's Servants ſet the Field on fire.*] He had thoſe ſtill about him, who were ready to execute any Command, tho' never ſo unjuſt; as they did when he bad them kill *Amnon*. And it appears by this, what a daring Perſon *Abſalom* was, who durſt affront ſuch a Man as *Joab* after this manner.

Ver. 31. *Then Joab aroſe and went to Abſalom unto his Houſe, and ſaid unto him, Wherefore have thy Servants ſet my Field on fire?*] This carried *Joab* preſently to his Houſe, to expoſtulate with him about the Damage he had done him; for which we do not find he offers any Satisfaction; which may make it ſeem ſtrange, that ſo furious a Man as *Joab* ſhould not immediately revenge himſelf, by ordering his Field to be burnt, or ſome ſuch way: But he was ſo wiſe as to conſider, that being the King's Son he might ſome time or other be reconciled to his Father, and do him a prejudice.

Ver. 32. *And Abſalom anſwered Joab, Behold I ſent unto thee, ſaying, Come hither, that I may ſend thee to the King,*] He ſeems to have no Senſe of any Injury he had done *Joab*, but he had juſt cauſe to complain that he would not come to him.

To ſay, Wherefore am I come from Geſhur?] Theſe were Words too inſolent to be ſent to the King; therefore one would think he only expreſſed himſelf thus to *Joab*.

It had been better for me to have been there ſtill:] He might have found means to return thither, if he had not had other Deſigns in his head; which made him deſire to have his full Liberty.

Now therefore let me ſee the King's Face; and if there be any Iniquity in me, let him kill me.] He could not but know there was Iniquity in him: but he pretends, if the King would not pardon it, he had rather die than not ſee his Father's Face.

Ver. 33. *So Joab came to the King, and told him: and when he had called for Abſalom,*] Theſe paſſionate Expreſſions, that he was weary of Life, while he continued baniſhed from the King's Preſence; nay, that he deſired to die, ſo he might but ſee him, moved *Joab* to intercede for him, and *David* to receive him into his favour.

He came to the King, and bowed himſelf on his Face to the ground before the King:] Begging pardon, as *Joſephus* explains it, for the Sin he had committed.

And the King kiſſed Abſalom.] In token of Reconciliation. *Joſephus* ſaith the King raiſed him up from the ground, καὶ τῶν γεγονότων ἀμνηστίαν ἐπαγγέλλεται, and promiſed him an Oblivion of what was paſt. Which was a great Weakneſs in *David*; for impenitent Perſons become more wicked by a full Pardon of their Offences, as *Abſalom* did. Who being thus received into the King's Favour, became more gracious with the People; who before looked upon him as an excommunicated Perſon, and would have nothing to do with him.

CHAP. XV.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs after this,*] When he thought he had eſtabliſhed himſelf in his Father's good Affection.

That Abſalom prepared himſelf Chariots, and Horſes, and fifty Men to run before him.] He took great State upon him, and made him, as we now ſpeak, a ſplendid Equipage: Being royally attended, as the next Heir to the Crown (for we hear nothing of *Chileab*, who it is likely was dead) deſigning to draw the eyes of the People to him. Who, as they were much in love with his Beauty, ſo were mightily taken with this unuſual fine Sight of Chariots and Horſes; which the Law did not allow: But *David* was ſo indulgent, that he took no notice of it.

Ver. 2. *And Abſalom roſe up early in the Morning,*] He accuſtomed himſelf to riſe betimes in the Morning, to make a ſhow of his great Care for the publick Good.

And ſtood beſide the way of the Gate:] Not of the King's Palace, ſome think, but of the City, where was the Seat of Judgment. But ſince he ſpeaks of coming to the King for Judgment, it is likely he ſate in his own Palace, at the Gate of which *Abſalom* was wont to ſtand.

And it was ſo, that when any Man that had a Controverſy came to the King for Judgment,] Who reſerved all weighty Cauſes for his own Hearing: And Appeals were made to him from the other Courts, as *Corn. Bertram* obſerves, Cap. 10. *de Republ. Judaica.*

Then Abſalom called unto him, and ſaid, Of what City art thou?] He kindly enquired where he dwelt; and, it is likely, what he was, and of what Family, &c. as if he intended to take a particular Care of him.

And he ſaid, Thy Servant is of one of the Tribes of Iſrael.] That is, of ſuch or ſuch a Tribe, and of ſuch a City in that Tribe as he named to him.

Ver. 3. *And Abſalom ſaid unto him, See, thy matters are good and right,*] He was ſo officious as to look into their Cauſe a while, and examine it; flattering every one into an Opinion, that in his Judgment, he had Right on his ſide. So that if their Cauſe went againſt them, they might conclude, that if *Abſalom* had been Judge, it would have gone otherways.

But there is no Man deputed of the King to hear thee.] The King he pretended was old, and unfit to judge Cauſes, till ſome others had firſt heard them, and opened the Matter to him. And his Sons [who being principal Officers in his Family (ſee *chap.* viii. *ult.*) were the fitteſt to bring Buſineſs to him] were Men of Pleaſure, and did not mind publick Affairs. Thus he ſtruck not only at his Father, but at all his Brethren; and principally, it is likely, at *Solomon*: who he was afraid would be preferred before him by his Father, being a beloved Son, and born of an *Iſraelite*, whereas he was begot of a Stranger, the Daughter of the King of *Geſhur*. Who, it is probable, might put him upon this Courſe; and his Baniſhment for three Years had alſo exaſperated him: And his being ſecluded for two Years more from ſeeing his Father, was ſo far from bringing him to any Senſe of his Guilt,

Guilt, that it more inraged him againſt his Father, and all his Family.

Ver. 4. *And Abſalom ſaid moreover, O that I were made Judge in the Land, that every Man that hath any Suit or Cauſe, might come unto me, and I would do him juſtice.*] Tho' he was admitted to come to Court, and ſee the King, yet he had no Office there, as the reſt of the King's Sons had; which he took ill, and endeavour'd the People ſhould do ſo too; by magnifying his Care, if he were in Authority, to do them ſpeedy Juſtice.

Ver. 5. *And it was ſo, that when any Man came nigh him to do him obeyſance,*] To honour him as the King's Son.

That he put forth his Hand, and took him,] About the Neck, I ſuppoſe, in token of great Familiarity and Kindneſs.

And kiſſed him,] A moſt vile Piece of Flattery: But People are pleaſed with ſuch unwonted Compliments. For ſo *Plato* obſerves, that when any Perſon intended to make himſelf a Tyrant in a Popular State, he no ſooner entred upon the Government, but προσγελᾶτε καὶ ἀσπάζεται πάντας ὃ ἂν περιτυγχάνει, he ſmiled upon all, and kindly ſaluted them, whereſoever he met them; avowing that he hated Tyranny, and promiſing great things, both privately and publickly, καὶ πᾶσιν ἵλεως τὲ καὶ πατρῷος εἶναι προσποιεῖται, ſeeming to be mild, gentle, and fatherly unto all, *Lib.* 8. *de Republ.* p. 566. *Edit. Serrani.*

Ver. 6. *And after this manner did Abſalom to all Iſrael that came to the King for Judgment:*] He continued this Courſe a long time, till he had inveigled the People, and gained their Hearts to him. For as *Ariſtotle* obſerves in his *Politicks*, *Lib.* 5. *Cap.* 4. all Changes in Commonwealths are made by one of theſe two ways, ὅτεμεν διὰ βίας, ὅτε δὲ δι' ἀπάτης, either by Force and Violence, or elſe by Deceit and Craft. Now there is not a more famous Inſtance in Hiſtory of the latter, than this of *Abſalom*, who, by flattering Speeches, and large Promiſes, cunningly alienated the Hearts of the People from his Father.

So Abſalom ſtole the Hearts of the Men of Iſrael.] Robbed his Father of the Affections of the People, and poſſeſſed himſelf of them: Some admiring his Beauty and Gallantry; others his Courteſy and Civility; others being taken with his magnificent Promiſes of the noble things he would do, if he were their King. Juſt as *Virgil* ſaith in Book 7. of his *Æneids*, that *Turnus* drew the Hearts of ſome to follow him in the Wars, becauſe he was a moſt graceful Perſon; others, becauſe he was deſcended from an ancient Royal Race; and others were moved by the noble Acts he had done, *Ver.* 473, 474.

Hunc decus egregium formæ movet, atque juventæ
Hunc Atavi Reges, hunc claris dextera factis.

Thus *Abſalom* was young and wonderfully beautiful, deſcended from Kings by his Father and Mother's ſide; and tho' he had done no great things, yet boaſted of what he would do, when he had opportunity. *Ludov. de Dieu* thinks there is a peculiar Meaning in this Phraſe, that he drew their Affections to him, concealing in the mean time his Intentions. Upon *John.* x. 24.

Ver. 7. *And it came to paſs after forty Years,*] One would think, that in the Copy which *Joſephus* uſed, it was written *arba*, four, not *arbaim*, forty Years: For his Words are, μετὰ δὲ τὴν τοῦ πατρὸς καταλλαγὴν τεσσάρων ἐτῶν ἤδη παραλελυθότων, four Years after his Father was reconciled to him. But there are no Warrants now for this reading; but the forty Years here mentioned are not to be underſtood, as if this happened after *David* had reigned forty Years, that is, in the laſt Year of his Reign; for he was now very vigorous, which he was not a little before he died. But as our great Primate of *Ireland* in his *Annals* underſtands it, forty Years after *David* was anointed by *Samuel*, that is, when he was threeſcore Years old, ten Years before he died. Then his Son conſpired againſt him between the Feaſt of the Paſſover and Pentecoſt; as ſome gather from *Barzillai*'s preſenting him with parched Corn and new Fruits, when he fled from *Abſalom*, xvii. 28. And ſo *Strigelius*. But the *Talmudiſts* in *Sedar Olam*, and other Books, will have theſe forty Years to commence from the time that the *Iſraelites* aſked a King to reign over them. And after all, *Abarbinel* is of opinion, that the plaineſt Senſe is after forty Years of *David*'s Reign; ſo that it was about the latter end of his Life, when this great Calamity befel him, though not in the very laſt Year of it. For it is not ſaid in the fortieth Year, but about the end of forty Years. See *Buxtorf. Anticritica*, p. 1004.

That Abſalom ſaid unto the King, I pray thee, let me go and pay my Vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.] Now he pretends Religion, as before he did the publick Good.

Ver. 8. *For thy Servant vowed a Vow, while I abode at Geſhur in Syria, ſaying, If the LORD will bring me again indeed to Jeruſalem, then will I ſerve the LORD.*] With a ſolemn Sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *And the King ſaid unto him, Go in peace.*] It is much he ſhould diſmiſs him without any Suſpicion, when he had deferred ſo long to perform this Vow, and made ſuch court to the People, as he could not but be informed.

So he aroſe and went to Hebron.] Which was an high Place, where they were wont to ſacrifice 'till the Temple was built. And it being the Place of his Birth, where the Royal Seat had been in the beginning of *David*'s Reign, he thought it the moſt commodious City, next *Jeruſalem*, for his purpoſe.

Ver. 10. *And Abſalom ſent Spies throughout all the Tribes of Iſrael,*] To try how the People ſtood affected to him.

Saying, as ſoon as you hear the Sound of the Trumpet, then ye ſhall ſay, Abſalom reigneth in Hebron.] This was the Signal which was to be given, that they ſhould take Arms. For as ſoon as they heard the Sound of the Trumpet (which he took care ſhould be blown in all the Tribes) theſe Spies were to proclaim that *Abſalom* was crowned in *Hebron*; whereupon, all his Partakers, it is likely, ſhouted, *God ſave King Abſalom.*

Ver. 11. *And with Abſalom went two hundred Men out of Jeruſalem that were called,*] Invited by him to feaſt with him upon his Sacrifice. And it is likely they were principal Perſons of the City, whom he drew in, to avoid Suſpicion.

And they went in their ſimplicity, and they knew not any thing.] Of his Deſign; but went only to wait upon him, as the King's Son, who did them the honour to invite them to a holy Feaſt. Among theſe two hundred Men, the *Jews* fancy were all thoſe of the grand *Sanhedrin*; who thought they had been called by *David*'s Order to attend his Son. For which there is no ground; tho' Mr. *Selden* has produced a great deal out of the *Talmudiſts* concerning this matter, *L.* 2. *de Synedriis*, *Cap.* 16. But I have ſhewn elſewhere, there was no ſuch *Sanhedrin* in theſe times.

Bartenora upon *Sota* hath a Conceit, that *Abſalom* begged of the King (for he had ſtolen his Heart before he ſtole the People's) that he would grant him liberty, under his Hand, to chooſe two Perſons whom he liked beſt, to be his Companions; which being obtained, he went with this Writing from two to two, 'till he had gathered two hundred; part of which were the Men of the great *Sanhedrin*, whoſe Examples others followed; all believing they had been warranted by *David* to attend his Son.

Ver. 12. *And Abſalom ſent for Ahitophel the Gilonite, David's Counſellor, from his City, even from Giloh,*] None are more capable to do miſchief to Kings, than thoſe that know their Secrets, having been of the Privy-Council. And it is ſuppoſed by the *Jews*, that *Ahitophel* was incenſed againſt *David* for abuſing *Bathſheba*, whom they take to have been his Grand-daughter, ſhe being the Daughter of *Eliam*, xi. 3. and *Eliam* being the Son of *Ahitophel*. xxiii. 34.

While he offered Sacrifices:] Or rather, After he had offered Sacrifices, while he ſat at Dinner, he ſent for him to come to him.

And the Conſpiracy was ſtrong; for the People increaſed continually with Abſalom.] Moſt of which, it is likely, intended no harm at the firſt, but came meerly to do honour to the King's Son, and to partake of his Bounty. Nay, *Abarbinel* is of opinion, that neither *Abſalom*, nor the Elders of *Iſrael*, nor the reſt of the People, who were miſled by them, had any Intention to diveſt *David* of his Crown and Dignity, much leſs to take away his Life; but only to ſubſtitute *Abſalom* as a Coadjutor to him, for the executing of the Royal Authority during *David*'s Life, and to be his Succeſſor after his Death. And indeed, as it was very monſtrouſly unnatural in *Abſalom* to deſign the Deſtruction of ſuch a kind Father, ſo it is not very probable that he ſhould gain ſuch a Number as he had, to aſſiſt him in ſuch a villanous Enterprize. And yet, notwithſtanding this, *David* looked upon this as a Treaſon againſt his Life, as appears from *ver.* 14. and xvi. 11. becauſe he knew, whatſoever they intended, they would be carried further, tho' they meant no more than *Abarbinel* ſuppoſes. And more than that, if this Opinion of his were true, it is evident, they themſelves did proceed ſo far as to deſign (contrary to their firſt Intentions) to kill *David* for their own greater Security. For ſo *Ahitophel* adviſed, and they all conſented to it, xvii. 2, 4. which ſhews how dangerous it is to go out of the right Way; for they do not know into what Precipices they may fall. And it ſhould be a Warning to all Men, never to begin any thing that is wrong, which may lead them to commit that in the Iſſue, which they abhorred at the firſt; when they find they cannot be ſafe in one Wickedneſs, unleſs they commit a greater.

Ver. 13. *And there came a Meſſenger unto David, ſaying, The Hearts of the Men of Iſrael are after Abſalom.*] Some of the two hundred Men, who went innocently along with him from *Jeruſalem*, it is likely, ſent this Intelligence; which did not come preſently: But when the Conſpiracy was plain and open, by a great Concourſe of People to him; and the Elders of *Iſrael*, and the military Men, (who are called *all Iſrael*, as *Fortunatus Sacchus* thinks) declared for him.

Ver. 14. *And David ſaid unto all his Servants that were with him at Jeruſalem, Ariſe, let us flee; for we ſhall not elſe eſcape from Abſalom:*] Tho' *Jeruſalem*, at leaſt the Fort of *Sion*, was a ſtrong Place, yet they could not have time to lay in Proviſion to endure a Siege: And beſide, he was not willing to be cooped up there; but choſe rather to go into the Country, where he hoped to find Friends and Followers.

Make ſpeed to depart, leſt he overtake us ſuddenly, and bring evil upon us, and ſmite the City with the Edge of the Sword.] He knew *Abſalom* would loſe no time to accompliſh his End; and therefore requires them immediately to be gone, and prevent a Surprize. He was deſirous alſo to preſerve *Jeruſalem* from being ſacked, being the Royal City, upon which he had beſtowed much Coſt.

Ver. 15. *And the King's Servants ſaid unto the King, Behold, thy Servants are ready to do whatſoever my Lord the King ſhall appoint.*] One ſeems to have ſpoken in the Name of the whole Court: And it was ſome comfort to him, that he had a Company of ſuch faithful Servants about him, as were ready to execute whatſoever he commanded.

Ver. 16. *And the King went forth, and all his Houſhold after him:*] In the *Hebrew*, the Words are, *All his Houſhold at his feet.* Which ſhews that he went on foot, and would not make uſe of his Mule; being in a mournful State, and deſirous to move his People's Compaſſion to him.

And the King left ten Women that were Concubines, to keep the Houſe.] For their Sex, and their Quality, might be thought to be a ſufficient Protection to them. What became of his Wives is not here related; it is probable they went along with him, to take care of him, as the other were left to take care of the Houſe.

Ver. 17. *And the King went forth, and all the People after him,*] That is, all the People of *Jeruſalem*, who were well-affected to him.

And tarried in a place that was far off.] At a good diſtance from the City, where, it is likely, he put the People that came out confuſedly after him into good Order, and waited to ſee what other Friends would come to him.

Ver. 18. *And all his Servants paſſed on beſide him;*] His houſhold Servants, I ſuppoſe, marched on both hands of him.

All the Cerethites, and all the Pelethites,] Who theſe were, I have ſhewn at large upon viii. 18. and it is poſſible they now brought up the rear.

And all the Gittites, ſix hundred Men, which came after him from Gath, paſſed on before the King.] Theſe marched in the Front of his little Army; but who they were, 'tis hard to tell; for we read nothing of them before. Some take them to have been Proſelytes born in *Gath* of the *Philiſtines*, who came with *Ittai* to *David*; being attracted by the Fame of his Piety, and happy Succeſſes. Others take them to be *Jews*, who had fled to *David* in his Exile, when he was at *Gath*, and accompanied him ever after, not only in the time of *Saul*'s Perſecution, but after he came to the Crown of *Judah* and *Iſrael*.

Ver. 19. *Then the King ſaid to Ittai the Gittite, Wherefore goeſt thou alſo with us?*] He ſeems to have been the Commander of thoſe ſix hundred Men before-mentioned. And the *Jews* make him the Son of *Achiſh* King of *Gath*; who out of Religion and Friendſhip came to *David*.

Return to thy place,] That is, to *Jeruſalem*.

And abide with the King:] For ſo *Abſalom* was by Uſurpation.

For thou art a Stranger, and an Exile.] Who upon that account might hope to be civilly treated; at leaſt being none of *David*'s Family, and a new Comer, he thought it was not fit to engage him in their Broils.

Ver. 20. *Whereas thou comeſt to us but yeſterday, ſhould I make thee this day go up and down with us?*] He was newly ſettled at *Jeruſalem*; and therefore *David* thought it unreaſonable he ſhould be ſo ſoon unſettled again.

Seeing I go whither I may,] Eſpecially ſince he knew not whither he ſhould betake himſelf for ſafety; and therefore would not have *Ittai* expoſe himſelf to ſuch Uncertainties. See concerning this Phraſe, 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 13.

Return thou, and take back thy Brethren:] Some underſtand by his Brethren, the ſix hundred Men that came from *Gath*: But it is not probable *David* would part with ſuch a Guard as they were, in this time of extreme Danger, unleſs they had deſired to be gone; therefore he rather means thoſe Perſons that attended him, or were of his Family, who came to ſojourn with him in *Judæa*.

Mercy and Truth be with thee.] In the *Hebrew*, the Words are, *With thee Mercy and Truth*. Which ſome take to ſignify, *Thou art a right honeſt and good Man*. But our Tranſlation ſeems better, which makes them a Form of a Bleſſing, or Prayer to God, that he would requite the Kindneſs and Fidelity of *Ittai*, by ſhewing Mercy to him, and faithfully fulfilling his Promiſes made to thoſe who came to put their Truſt in him.

Ver. 21. *And Ittai anſwered the King, and ſaid, As the* LORD *liveth, and as my Lord the King liveth, ſurely in whatſoever Place my Lord the King ſhall be, whether in Death or in Life, even there alſo will thy Servant be.*] A marvellous Fidelity in a Stranger, when a Son was a Rebel againſt him. And *David*'s Humanity is no leſs admirable in offering to diſmiſs him ſo freely, yea earneſtly preſſing him to return, becauſe he was a Stranger; though he was in the greateſt need of all the Aſſiſtance he could get to defend him.

Ver. 22. *And David ſaid to Ittai, Go, and paſs over.*] There was not a word more to be ſaid, now he had ſworn he would not leave him.

And Ittai the Gittite paſſed over,] The Brook *Kedron*, as it follows in the next Verſe.

He, and all his Men, and all the little ones that came with him.] This ſhews that his whole Family were come, as I noted before, to ſojourn in this Country.

Ver. 23. *And all the Country*] About *Jeruſalem*,

Wept with a loud Voice,] Being extreamly afflicted to ſee their Prince, under whom they had lived in great Peace and Proſperity, reduced to ſuch Extremities.

And all the People paſſed over:] All that continued faithful to *David* in thoſe parts.

The King alſo himſelf paſſed over the Brook Kedron,] He ſtaid 'till the laſt, that he might take notice who appeared for him, as they paſſed over before him.

And all the People paſſed over towards the way of the Wilderneſs.] And when they were over, they marched through the Wilderneſs, that lay between *Jeruſalem* and *Jericho*.

Ver. 24. *And lo, Zadok alſo and all the Levites went with him, bearing the Ark of the Covenant of the* LORD,] That is, all the *Kohathites* that were at *Jeruſalem*, whoſe Office it was to carry the Ark, and take care of it.

And they ſet down the Ark of God;] When they came to *David*, they ſet down the Ark in the Place where he was, to ſignify that God would be with him, and accompany him; and that the People might thereby be excited to follow him, who had the Token of the Divine Preſence with him.

And Abiathar went up,] To the Top of the Mount *Olivet*.

'Till all the People had done paſſing out of the City.] From the Mount he could behold, when the People, who would follow *David*, were come out of the City. And then, I ſuppoſe, he came down, and deſired that the Ark and the King might move up the Hill alſo.

Ver. 25. *And the King ſaid unto Zadok,*] The *Talmudiſts* have a fancy that the King ſpake to *Zadok*, not to *Abiathar*, becauſe he had removed *Abiathar* from the High-prieſthood: Upon this account, that he conſulting by *Urim* and *Thummim*, God gave no Anſwer; but when *Zadok* inquired, God did anſwer. Whereupon *David* underſtood the Spirit of God was departed from *Abiathar*, and therefore turned him out of his Office. Which is notoriouſly falſe; for he was not turned out till the Reign of *Solomon*.

Carry back the Ark into the City:] For he did not think it decent to have it wander about with him he knew not whither; as *Abarbinel* obſerves: And perhaps he thought God might be angry with him, ſhould he let it be carried out of its place: As if he truſted in the Ark, which was but the Token of his Preſence, more than he did in God himſelf, who had preſerved him

him in the Perſecution of *Saul*, when he had no Ark with him.

If I find favour in the eyes of the LORD, *he will bring me again, and ſhew me both it, and his Habitation.*] It was not for the Honour of the Ark, as I ſaid, to take it out of the Place which he had made for it; which he calls God's Habitation, becauſe there he dwelt by this ſpecial Token of his Preſence in it. And if he had a Favour to him, he knew he could preſerve him without the Ark, as well as with it; and bring him again to worſhip him in his proper Place.

Ver. 26. *But if he ſay, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as ſeems good in his ſight.*] He was very ſenſible of his own ill Deſervings; and humbly ſubmits to whatſoever Puniſhment, even the heavieſt, that God would think fit to inflict upon him.

Ver. 27. *And the King ſaid alſo unto Zadok the Prieſt,*] He is frequently called by *Joſephus*, *the High-prieſt*: Particularly in *Lib.* 7. *Antiq. Cap.* 6. where he ſaith *David* made him Ἀρχιερέα μετ' Ἀβιαθάρη, φίλος γὰρ ἦν αὐτῷ, *High-prieſt together with Abiathar: for he was his Friend.* But hereby we are only to underſtand that he was the *Sagan*, as the *Jews* call the Vicar or Deputy of the High-prieſt; who is called the *Second Prieſt*, 2 *Kings* xxv. 18. See *Selden de Succeſſ. in Pontif. Ebræor.* Lib. 1. Cap. 4.

Art thou not a Seer?] A very wiſe Man, or a Prophet, who could not but diſcern in what ſtate things were likely to be, and that he might ſerve *David* better by ſtaying in *Jeruſalem* than going along with him.

Return into the City in peace, and your two Sons with you, Ahimaaz thy Son, and Jonathan the Son of Abiathar.] This was another Reaſon for ſending back the Ark: for as it was not fit to keep it with him, and the Prieſts and Levites alſo to attend it, ſo they might do him more Service elſewhere than in his Camp.

Ver. 28. *See, I will tarry in the Plain of the Wilderneſs,*] He put an intire Confidence in them, that they would not betray him, by acquainting them where he meant to reſt a while, to wait for Intelligence from them.

'Till there come word from you to certify me.] What *Abſalom* deſigned; and accordingly he intended to ſteer his courſe.

Ver. 29. *Zadok therefore and Abiathar carried the Ark of God again to Jeruſalem; and they tarried there.*] Mention being made both here, and alſo *ver.* 33. of *Zadok* before *Abiathar*, it ſeems to intimate ſome Preference to him, and to juſtify what *Joſephus* ſaith, that he was the King's Friend; and being conſtantly with him was more honoured than *Abiathar*.

Ver. 30. *And David went up the Aſcent of Mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his Head covered, and went barefoot:*] Dejected, as *Salvian* gloſſes, into the Condition of a Servant; or rather in the Habit of a Mourner. For *covering the Head* was a Token of Shame and Confuſion, and great Trouble; and ſo was going *barefoot*. Which was uſed on the great Faſt, or Day of Expiation, as we find in *Codex Joma*, *Cap.* 8. tho' the Doctors ſay, they might put on Woollen or Linnen Socks, but no Leathern Shoes. And this was obſerved alſo in Funerals, as *Buxtorfius* ſhews in his *Synagoga Judaica*, *Cap.* 49. which was a Cuſtom in the days of *Ezekiel*, xxiv. 17. Nor were the Heathen Strangers to it; but in times of great Calamity went *barefoot*, as that excellent Perſon *Ezekiel Spanhemius* obſerves in his Notes upon *Callimachus* his Hymn *ad Cererem*, ver. 125.

And all the People that were with him, covered every Man his Head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.] Going bare-foot alſo, it is moſt probable, as the King did; whoſe Example they followed.

Ver. 31. *And one told David, ſaying, Ahitophel is among the Conſpirators with Abſalom.*] This touched him very nearly, becauſe he was a very wiſe Man, and one whom he took for his Friend, *Pſalm* lv. 13.

And David ſaid, O LORD, *I pray thee, turn the Counſel of Ahitophel into Fooliſhneſs.*] He prays that he might give fooliſh Counſel; or that it might be contemned and looked upon as fooliſh; or that it might miſcarry in the Execution.

Ver. 32. *And it came to paſs, that when David was come to the Top of the Mount, where he worſhipped God,*] Looking towards the Ark in the Houſe of God; which he could ſee from the Top of the Mount.

That Huſhai the Archite came to meet him,] There was a City in the Tribe of *Ephraim* called *Archi*, *Joſh.* xvi. 2. where this Perſon, in all likelihood, was born and bred, and coming to *Jeruſalem*, became one of *David*'s Privy Council: Being famous for Wiſdom; otherwiſe *Abſalom* would not have ſo readily entertained him, and admitted him into his Secrets.

With his Coat rent, and Earth upon his head:] Which were Expreſſions of great Sorrow. *Joh. Braunius* hath demonſtrated, the Garment called *Ketonah* was round, like our Surplices, with Sleeves to put the Hands and Arms into it. Which was worn by great Perſons, not only among the *Jews*, but the *Ægyptians*, *Tyrians*, and *Aſſyrians*, he obſerves, (*Lib.* 2. *de Veſtitu Sacerd. Hebr. Cap.* 2. *Sect.* 13, 14.) which may incline us to a Belief, that *Huſhai* was no mean Man, but a Perſon of Quality.

Ver. 33. *Unto whom David ſaid, If thou paſs along with me, then thou wilt be a burden to me.*] For he was not provided with Maintenance for his own Family; and *Huſhai* being no Soldier, but a Counſellor, could not be ſo uſeful to him in the Field, as he might be at the Court.

Ver. 34. *But if thou return to the City, and ſay unto Abſalom, I will be thy Servant, O King;*] So he was to call him, becauſe he had taken upon him that Title.

As I have been thy Father's Servant hitherto, ſo will I now alſo be thy Servant:] He would have him pretend he would be as faithful to him as he had been to *David*; and it was very well known he had done him good Service. This was not honeſt; but it was according to the Policy practiſed in thoſe days, and indeed in all Ages. Which *Procopius Gazæus* approves ſo far as to ſay, that *a Lye which is told for a good End, is equivalent to Truth.* But I dare not juſtify ſuch Doctrine; though what *Huſhai* undertook to do, was not to get Money, or to do others hurt, but to preſerve a good King, and a Prophet, and a Friend.

Then mayeſt thou for me defeat the Counſel of Ahitophel.] God he thought had ſent this Man, in anſwer to his Prayer (*ver.* 31.) if he would but follow his Direction.

Ver. 35. *Haſt thou not with thee there, Zadok and Abiathar the Prieſts? therefore it ſhall be, that whatſoever thou ſhalt hear out of the King's Houſe, thou ſhalt tell it to Zadok and Abiathar the Prieſts.*] Whom he looked upon as truſty Perſons, and faithful to his Intereſt; and ſo they proved.

Ver. 36. *Behold, they have there with them their two Sons, Ahimaaz Zadok's Son, and Jonathan Abiathar's Son: and by them ye ſhall ſend unto me every thing that ye can hear.*] They were not with their Fathers in *Jeruſalem*; but lay cloſe in a Place not far off, ready to carry any Meſſage that was ſent by them. See xvii. 17.

Ver 37. *So Huſhai David's Friend came into the City, and Abſalom came into Jeruſalem.*] Where *Huſhai*, I ſuppoſe, waited for his coming: having got thither before him, and ſo ordered his Affairs, that it was not known he had been to offer his Service to *David:* Or, thoſe that knew it, out of reverence to him, and affection to *David*, did not diſcover it.

CHAP. XVI.

Verſe 1. *AND when David was a little paſt the Top of the Hill,*] viz. Mount *Olivet*, xv. 30.

Behold, Ziba, the Servant of Mephiboſheth met him with a couple of Aſſes ſaddled, and upon them two hundred Loaves of Bread, and an hundred Bunches of Raiſins, and an hundred of Summer-fruits, and a Bottle of Wine.] They put their Wine into Bottles, or Bags; ſome of which were large Veſſels, and contained a great deal of Wine. Such no doubt was this, which had Liquor in it, proportionable to the reſt of the Preſent.

Ver. 2. *And the King ſaid unto Ziba, What meaneſt thou by theſe? And Ziba ſaid, The Aſſes are for the King's Houſhold to ride on,*] For his Wives and Children, if they were weary with travelling on foot; as they now did.

And the Bread and Summer-fruits for the young Men to eat,] For the Refreſhment of the King's Attendants.

And the Wine, that ſuch as be faint in the Wilderneſs may drink.] This argues great Conſideration of *David*'s Condition: To which he ſuited his Preſent; which in a Wilderneſs came very ſeaſonably, and was very noble; perhaps the *Bunches of Raiſins* were intended for *David*'s own Support.

Ver. 3. *And the King ſaid, And where is thy Maſter's Son?*] He deſired, I ſuppoſe, to know whether this Preſent was from himſelf, or from *Mephiboſheth.*

And Ziba ſaid unto the King, Behold, he abideth at Jeruſalem: for he ſaid, To-day ſhall the Houſe of Iſrael reſtore me the Kingdom of my Father.] This ſeems to be a Fiction, but well contrived: for the Family of *David* being ſo broken, he might think it probable the Crown would fall to him.

Ver. 4. *Then ſaid the King to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephiboſheth.*] We read ix. 2. that *Ziba* was but a Servant (ſee there) but now *David* makes him a Freeholder; giving him a great Eſtate: Which, if he ſaid true, was forfeited to the King for Treaſon, as it had been before in the time of *Iſhboſheth*, and thereupon given to *Mephiboſheth*. But in this *David* ſeems to have been too credulous, and raſhly condemned *Mephiboſheth* before he heard what he could ſay for himſelf; but he imagin'd, perhaps, that *Ziba* durſt not tell ſo notorious a Lye, which might ſhortly be diſproved. And beſide, a Man that comes to relieve another who is in great diſtreſs, eaſily wins his good Opinion.

And Ziba ſaid, I humbly beſeech thee, that I may find grace in thy ſight, my Lord, O King.] He pretends to value the King's Favour more than the Gift he had beſtowed upon him.

Ver. 5. *And when King David came to Bahurim,*] A City in the Tribe of *Benjamin* (xix. 16.) into the Territories of which *David* was now come; though not as yet into the Town itſelf, as appears from *ver.* 14. The *Targum* calls it *Almoth*, which is of the ſame ſignification with *Bahurim*; the one importing *young Men*, and the other *Youth.*

Behold, thence came out a Man of the Family of the Houſe of Saul, whoſe Name was Shimei the Son of Gera: he came forth, and curſed ſtill as he went.] Out of an inveterate Hatred to *David*; whom he looked upon as the great Enemy of his Family.

Ver. 6. *And he caſt ſtones at David,*] In contempt of him: Or, as ſome fancy, to reproach him with the Adultery he had committed; for which he deſerved to have been ſtoned.

And at all the Servants of King David:] This ſhews it was done only in contempt of them; as if they had been a Company of Dogs.

And all the People, and all the mighty Men were on his right hand, and on his left.] He was under ſuch a ſtrong Guard, that *Shimei*'s Rage was little leſs than Madneſs; for he could not hurt *David*, but might have been immediately killed himſelf.

Ver. 7. *And thus ſaid Shimei when he curſed, Come out, come out,*] As much as if he had ſaid, get thee out of the Kingdom, from whence thou deſerveſt to be expelled. So the Words are in the *Hebrew*; *Go out, go out:* The doubling of which Words expreſs his vehement Deteſtation of him.

Thou Man of Blood, thou Son of Belial:] So they called all thoſe that made their Will their Law. But *R. Levi Ben Gerſom* thinks he hath reſpect in theſe laſt Words to the Adultery committed with *Bathſheba*; as in the firſt, he might have to the killing of *Uriah.*

Ver. 8. *The LORD hath returned upon thee all the Blood of the Houſe of Saul,*] This was perfect Railing: For *David* had ſhed none of their Blood; but he maliciouſly imputes to him the Death of *Abner*, and of *Iſhboſheth.*

In whoſe ſtead thou haſt reigned,] In effect, he calls him an Uſurper.

And the LORD hath delivered thy Kingdom into the hand of Abſalom thy Son: and behold, thou art taken in thy Miſchief, becauſe thou art a bloody Man.] He ſtill vomits out the ſame Reproaches, with a moſt wicked Spirit, which the *Greeks* call ἐπιχαιρεκακία; *rejoicing in Iniquity*; to ſee *Abſalom* ſo proſperous in his horrid Rebellion.

Ver. 9. *Then ſaid Abiſhai, the Son of Zeruiah, unto the King, Why ſhould this dead Dog curſe my Lord the King?*] See iii. 8.

Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his Head.] There was admirable Diſcipline obſerved in this ſmall Army, none of which durſt ſtir without *David*'s Order, or Leave. And this, according to human Reaſon, was a juſt Motion which *Abiſhai* made: He being very near of kin to *David*, as *Shimei* was to *Saul*, and therefore a fit Perſon to ſtop the mouth of ſuch a mad Dog, by cutting off his Head.

Ver. 10. *And the King ſaid, What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruiah?*] He ſpeaks this with ſome Indignation; and reflects upon *Joab*, as well as *Abiſhai*, who had been the Occaſion of theſe Reproaches.

So let him curſe, becauſe the LORD hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David.] God neither bid him curſe *David*, nor excited him to it; but finding his Heart full of Malice and Rage, gave him an Opportunity to vent it, as a Puniſhment unto *David*. Unto which the good King humbly ſubmits; looking upon it as coming from the hand of God, who delivered him up to this Contempt. And in this, *David*'s Virtue was admirable: For it is not an eaſy thing to ſtifle all Motions to Revenge, when it is eaſy to take it, and there is an high Provocation to it. It is an Obſervation indeed of *Cicero*'s (*Orat. de Aruſpicum reſponſis*) that *perditi hominis profligatique maledictis, nullius gloria dignitaſque violatur*; by the Reproaches of a wicked, profligate Fellow, no Man's Glory or Dignity is hurt or violated. But *David* doth not ſcorn theſe Curſes, out of meer Greatneſs of Spirit, as coming out of the mouth of a baſe Wretch, not worthy to be regarded; but acknowledges the Juſtice of them, and bears them with a ſingular Patience, out of Humility and Reverence to God, who had ſo ordered it.

Who ſhall then ſay, Why haſt thou done ſo?] He doth not mean, who ſhould aſk *Shimei* ſuch a Queſtion, but who ſhould take upon him to find fault with God, who had juſt reaſon to ſuffer this? Tho' *Grotius* thinks *David* excuſes *Shimei* in theſe Words. For ſpeaking concerning the Reſpect that is to be uſed to Kings, in not giving them publick Reproaches; he excepts thoſe which are given by a Prophet, who had a ſpecial Command from God for it. Upon which account he ſaith, when *David* was openly upbraided by *Shimei* as a Murderer, he had no Excuſe to make for him but this, that perhaps God had commanded him to do it; ſhewing that this alone could make it lawful to ſpeak evil of the King, if God, in a ſpecial manner enjoined it. *Lib. de Imperio Summar. Poteſt. circa Sacra*, Cap. 9. Sect. 19.

Ver. 11. *And David ſaid unto Abiſhai, and to all his Servants, Behold, my Son, which came forth of my Bowels, ſeeketh my Life: how much more may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curſe; for the LORD hath bidden him.*] His Paſſion ſeems not to have been at all ſtirred by this impotent Railer, and endeavours to quiet the Spirits of others; calmly reaſoning himſelf and them, with admirable Conſideration, into an humble Patience: For what were the Revilings of a Stranger, to the murderous Intentions of a Son? And how could he withſtand God, who inflicted this Puniſhment upon him for his Sins?

Ver. 12. *It may be the LORD will look upon my Affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his curſing this day.*] He durſt not be confident, being conſcious of his ill Deſervings; but he had ſome hope, that God would be as gracious to him, as this Man was malicious.

Ver. 13. *And as David and his Men went by the way,*] Taking no notice of him.

Shimei went along on the ſide of the Hill over-againſt him, and curſed as he went, and threw ſtones at him, and caſt duſt.] Neglect of him made him more outragious; which gave *David* occaſion to exerciſe the greateſt Patience, under ſo long a Vexation.

Ver. 14. *And the King, and all the People that were with him, came weary,*] Not only with their Journey, but with Grief.

And refreſhed themſelves there.] At *Bahurim*, ver. 5.

Ver. 15. *And Abſalom and all the People of the Men of Iſrael came to Jeruſalem, and Ahitophel with him.*] As ſoon as *David* was got into the Wilderneſs, he took poſſeſſion of *Jeruſalem*, and the King's Palace.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs that when Huſhai the Archite, David's Friend, was come unto Abſalom,*] Among others, that came to welcome him to *Jeruſalem*.

That Huſhai ſaid unto Abſalom, God ſave the King, God ſave the King.] He not only owned his Authority, but with great affection ſeemed to deſire its Countenance. Which was an egregious piece of Flattery and Diſſimulation.

Ver. 17. *And Abſalom ſaid, Is this thy Kindneſs to thy Friend? why wenteſt thou not with thy Friend?*] *Abſalom* had not ſo little Senſe, as not to conſider, that no Man ought to forſake a Friend in his diſtreſs: Though at the ſame time he did not reflect, how he had not only forſaken, but forced away his own Father. So that one might have ſaid to him, *Is this thy Duty to thy Father?*

Ver. 18. *And Huſhai ſaid unto Abſalom, Nay, but whom the LORD and this People and all the Men of Iſrael chooſe, his will I be, and with him will I abide.*] The Voice of the People he pretends to look upon as the Voice of God; and that he was bound to prefer the publick Good before his own private Obligations or Affections.

Ver. 19. *And again, Whom ſhall I ſerve? ſhould I not ſerve in the preſence of his Son? As I have ſerved in the preſence of thy Father, ſo will I be in thy preſence.*] He gives a ſecond Reaſon; that he ſhould not offend againſt *David*, in giving good Counſel to his Son.

Ver. 20. *Then ſaid Abſalom to Ahitophel, Give counſel among you what we ſhall do.*] I ſuppoſe *Ahitophel* was made Preſident of the Council (as we now ſpeak) who required the reſt to deliver their Opinions after he had delivered his.

Ver. 21. *And Ahitophel ſaid unto Abſalom, Go in unto thy Father's Concubines, which he hath left to keep the Houſe,*] It appears, by this, he was a profane Politician, who did not regard by what means, how wicked ſoever, he compaſſed his ends. The *Hebrews* think alſo, that by this

Counſel

Counſel *Ahitophel* gratified his own Revenge, becauſe *David* had lain with his Grand-daughter, as I before noted.

And all Iſrael ſhall hear that thou art abhorred of thy Father,] That he and his Father were become irreconcilable Enemies. For *Ahitophel* involved him in a greater Sin than that for which he killed *Amnon*: It not being ſo foul a Crime to lie with his Siſter, as it was to commit Inceſt with his Father's Wives.

Then ſhall the Hands of all that are with thee be ſtrong.] When they were poſſeſſed with an Opinion, that the Father and Son could never come to an Accommodation. Which might have been hoped between ſuch near Relations; and then the People had been in an ill Condition; for *David* might not have been reconciled to them, tho' he was to his Son. But after this deteſtable Crime, there was no likelihood that they would ever be Friends again.

Ver. 22. *So they ſpread Abſalom a Tent upon the top of the Houſe, and Abſalom went in to his Father's Concubines, in the ſight of all Iſrael.*] Who were ſtrangely depraved, in that none of them ſhould cry out againſt ſuch abominable Wickedneſs.

Ver. 23. *And the Counſel of Ahitophel which he counſelled in thoſe days, was as if a Man had inquired at the Oracle of God:*] It was ſo ſure and ſafe, that it was commonly followed, without any doubting of the Succeſs. Such was this Counſel which he now gave; for there was no greater Danger to him and all *Iſrael*, than for *Abſalom* to repent, and ſubmit to his Father: therefore he endeavoured, as I ſaid, to make them irreconcilable, by doing his Father the higheſt Injury. Such was this to which he adviſed, as we learn by *Jacob*'s Reſentment of it in his Son *Reuben*, and many other Examples, for which I refer to *Grotius*. He made the Breach therefore thus wide, that it might never be healed: For if it had, *David* might have called him and others, in due time, to an account for their Treaſon.

So was all the Counſel of Ahitophel, both with David and with Abſalom.] While *David* was in proſperity he gave him faithful Counſel; but now in his Diſtreſs as wiſely conſulted his Ruin. For as *Procopius Gazæus* obſerves, *accommodavit ſe rebus præſentibus.* He was one of thoſe who complied with the preſent State of things; and now, with great reaſon, adviſed to make haſte to diſpatch *David*; fearing leſt natural Affection ſhould work a Reconciliation, and he ſhould be puniſhed for his Perfidiouſneſs.

CHAP. XVII.

Verſe 1. *MOreover, Ahitophel ſaid unto Abſalom, Let me now chooſe out twelve thouſand Men,*] Out of the whole Multitude of the *Iſraelites* that followed *Abſalom:* A thouſand choice Men, I ſuppoſe, out of each Tribe; for he knew it would take up too much time to gather all the Forces of *Iſrael* together, and give *David* an Opportunity to eſcape.

And I will ariſe and purſue after David.] It ſeems he was a Soldier, as well as a Counſellor: Or at leaſt, he thought his Counſel ſo ſure of being ſucceſsful, that he undertook himſelf to put it in execution. He was afraid alſo, that if *Abſalom* ſhould command them himſelf, natural Affection might make him ſpare his Father, and not take away his Life; or perhaps work an Agreement between them; and ſo leave him in danger, as I ſaid before, to be called to an account for his Rebellion.

This Night] The next, I ſuppoſe, after *David* went away: For Speed was the main thing on which he depended.

Ver. 2. *And I will come upon him while he is yet weary*] With a long March.

And weak handed,] Before he had got more Forces together.

And I will make him afraid:] Strike a Terror into him, by this ſudden Attack, and in the Night, when he was ill provided.

And all the People that are with him ſhall flee,] Finding how unable they were to reſiſt ſuch a Force.

And I will ſmite the King only.] And ſpare all the People, whom he would not purſue.

Ver. 3. *And I will bring back all the People unto thee:*] By this means he doubted not to make an end of the War preſently: And to bring all *Iſrael* to be his Subjects.

The Man whom thou ſeekeſt, is as if all returned:] By ſmiting *David*, with whom alone was his Quarrel, the whole Nation would come in to him: There being no other, to whom they ſhould ſubmit, when he was dead.

So all the People ſhall be in peace.] Thus they ſhould have a Peace without War; by taking and killing him, which would preſerve both the People which were with *Abſalom*, and thoſe with *David*. They ſhould all be ſaved, and he alone deſtroyed.

Ver. 4. *And the Saying pleaſed Abſalom well, and all the Elders of Iſrael.*] For it was very ſound Advice: It being dangerous to deliberate long about ſuch wicked Deſigns, which muſt be executed ſpeedily: So *Tacitus* well obſerves, *Scelera impetu, bona fide conſilia mora valeſcunt*; Wicked Counſels prevail by ſudden Violence, but good by Delays.

Ver. 5. *Then ſaid Abſalom, Call now Huſhai the Archite alſo, and let us hear likewiſe what he ſaith.*] It was a Proverb, it is likely, before *Solomon*'s time, that *in a multitude of Counſellors there is ſafety*; by which *Abſalom* reſolved to govern himſelf. But the Providence of God is chiefly to be here noted: who made *Abſalom* irreſolute and doubtful, even in that Counſel which was approved by all the Elders of *Iſrael*, and was evidently the wiſeſt that could be given.

Ver. 6. *And when Huſhai was come to Abſalom, Abſalom ſpake unto him, ſaying, Ahitophel hath ſpoken after this manner:*] Relating what he had ſaid, *ver.* 2, 3.

Shall we do after his ſaying?] Follow his Advice.

If not; ſpeak thou.] He gives him full liberty to ſpeak freely, if he were of another Opinion: which he might deliver without offence, either to him or any body elſe.

Ver. 7. *And Huſhai ſaid unto Abſalom, The Counſel that Ahitophel hath given, is not good at this time.*] He confeſſed him to be a Man of extraordinary Judgment; but no Man is wiſe at all times: And he thought now he was in an Error, for the following Reaſon.

Ver.

Ver. 8. *For (ſaid Huſhai) thou knoweſt thy Father, and his Men, that they be mighty Men,*] Old Soldiers, who are aware of the Danger wherein they are, and will provide againſt it, that they be not eaſily ſurprized.

And they be chafed in their Minds,] So extremely provoked and exaſperated, that it would be dangerous to fall upon them with ſo ſmall an Army as *Ahitopel* propoſed. For ſuch deſperate Perſons would ſell their Lives at a dear rate.

As a Bear robbed of her Whelps in the Field:] All Men know that a Bear is a very fierce Creature: And good Authors, particularly *Ariſtotle*, obſerves, that She-Bears are fiercer than the Male, eſpecially when they have Whelps to take care of, as the ſame Philoſopher writes, *Lib.* 6. *Hiſt. Animal.* C. 18. But moſt of all inraged, when their Whelps are killed, or taken away from them; which is mentioned often in Holy Scripture, *Prov.* xvii. 12. *Hoſea* xiii. 8. where *Kimchi* obſerves, that they bring forth their Whelps wrapt up in a very thick Skin, which it coſts them a great deal of pains to free them from; and therefore grieves them more, when they find they have laboured in vain. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 9.

And thy Father is a Man of War, and will not lodge with the People.] Of ſuch Experience in warlike Affairs, that as his Men would defend him ſtoutly, and with great Fury, ſo when all was done, it was probable *Ahitophel* would not know where to find him; for great Captains having diſpoſed their Force to the beſt advantage, and ſet their Guards, oftentimes retire themſelves from the Camp, and lodge in ſome ſecret Place.

Ver. 9. *Behold he is hid now in ſome Pit, or in ſome other Place:*] Some Cave, or other lurking-place; as he was in the days of *Saul*, who was never able to catch him.

And it ſhall come to paſs, when ſome of them] That is, of *Abſalom*'s Forces.

Be overthrown at the firſt,] As might well be ſuppoſed, if *David*'s Men ſhould come on a ſudden upon them, out of an Ambuſh, and put the firſt Ranks into diſorder, if not make a Slaughter among them.

That whoſoever hears it, will ſay, There is a Slaughter among the People that follow Abſalom.] This News would preſently be ſpread through the whole Army, and Fear make them think the Slaughter greater than it was.

Ver. 10. *And he alſo that is valiant, whoſe Heart is as the Heart of a Lion, ſhall utterly melt:*] For Men are apt to conjecture of Succeſſes by the Beginning; and it is a great Encouragement to Men to fight when they proſper at the firſt Onſet; and mightily diſheartens thoſe that are beaten. Lions are not only very ſtrong, but very furious Creatures; and therefore valiant Men are ſaid to have the *Hearts* of Lions, and the *Faces* of Lions, (1 *Chron.* xii. 8.) and the Army of Locuſts to have the *Teeth* of Lions (*Joel* i. 6.) But no Men are ſo terrible, but they may be terrified, when they are ſuddenly and unexpectedly ſurprized by Men as terrible as themſelves, and far more incenſed and juſtly enraged.

Voſſius thinks that the word *Lebi*, which in *Hebrew* ſignifies a *Lion*, comes from the word *Leb*, which in that Language ſignifies the *Heart*; as much as to ſay, *Cordatus*, an hearty Creature, full of Courage: Whence the *Greeks* call a valiant and generous Man, θυμολέοντα and λεοντόθυμον. See him, *Lib.* 3. *de Orig. & Progr. Idol. Cap.* 52. and *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 2.

For all Iſrael know that thy Father is a mighty Man, and they that be with him are valiant Men.] Who would purſue any Advantage with the greateſt Courage and Reſolution.

Ver. 11. *Therefore I counſel, that all Iſrael be generally gathered unto thee, from Dan even to Beerſheba, even as the Sand that is by the Sea in multitude,*] He means all the fighting Men throughout the Country, which were very numerous. In which Advice, his chief Aim was to gain time for *David* to raiſe an Army by the help of his Friends; for all *Iſrael* could not preſently be gathered together, and put into Order of Battle.

And that thou go to Battle alſo in thy own Perſon.] Which would encourage the People to fight valiantly, when he was at the head of them; and would win him great Glory, in owing his Victory to his own Conduct, and not to other Mens.

Ver. 12. *And ſo ſhall we come upon him in ſome place where he ſhall be found; and we will light upon him as the Dew falls upon the ground:*] He compares the Multitude of their Soldiers to the Drops of Dew, which cover the Face of the whole Earth; ſo that if *David* was in the Field, he could not eſcape, but he would fall into the hands of ſome or other of them.

And of him, and of all the Men that are with him, there ſhall not be left ſo much as one.] For his Army would be ſo large as to ſpread itſelf over all the Country, and ferret *David* and his Men out of all their Holes, by ſearching every one of them. This Counſel was very plauſible to one who relied upon the Greatneſs of an Hoſt; and *Huſhai* was alſo ſo cunning as to ſpeak as if he would accompany him.

Ver. 13. *Moreover, if he be got into a City, then ſhall all Iſrael bring Ropes to that City, and we will draw it into the River,*] He repreſents a further Advantage of ſuch a Multitude; that if *David* quitted the Field, and got into the ſtrongeſt of their Cities, encompaſſed with high Walls, and a deep Ditch, they were enow to begirt it round, and by Ropes put about the Walls, draw them down and all the Houſes of the City, into the Ditch that run about it. There was no ſuch thing, that we read of, practiſed in War; therefore ſome by *Chabalim* (which we tranſlate *Ropes*) underſtand *Troops*, or *Bands* of Men, who by Machines drawn with Ropes, could batter down Walls and Houſes: or rather, this is a bragging hyperbolical Speech, that they ſhould be ſo numerous as to be able to do this, if there were no other way to reduce the City.

Until there be not one ſmall Stone found there.] Much leſs any Man remaining there.

Ver. 14. *And Abſalom and all the Men of Iſrael ſaid, The Counſel of Huſhai is better than the*

Counſel

Counſel of Ahitophel:] For ſo it would naturally ſeem to Men that had a bad Cauſe, and were cowardly, having nothing but their Numbers to depend upon.

For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good Counſel of Ahitophel, to the intent that God might bring evil upon Abſalom.] But the chief Reaſon was, that God blinded their Eyes, and infatuated their Judgments, that they could not diſcern what was beſt, but take that courſe which would ruin *Abſalom*. Such is the wonderful over-ruling Providence of God, in more Caſes than we are aware of; for, as St. *Hilary* ſpeaks, concerning the Rage of Hereticks, *Si quantum audet impietas, tantum conſuleret prudentia, difficile eſſet veritatis cauſam agere.* If Wickedneſs were as wiſe and prudent in Counſel, as it is bold and daring in Attempts, it would be hard to maintain a good Cauſe.

Ver. 15. *Then ſaid Huſhai to Zadok and Abiathar the Prieſts, Thus and thus did Ahitophel counſel Abſalom and the Elders of Iſrael; and thus have I counſelled.*] He acted the part of a true Friend to *David*, but not of a truſty Servant to *Abſalom*, whoſe Counſels he betrayed.

Ver. 16. *Now therefore ſend quickly, and tell David,*] Carry him this Intelligence with all ſpeed.

Saying, Lodge not this Night in the Plain of the Wilderneſs, but ſpeedily paſs over;] The River *Jordan*.

Leſt the King be ſwallowed up, and all the People that are with him.] For fear *Abſalom* ſhould change his Reſolution, and incline again to the Counſel of *Ahitophel*; who being a Man of great Authority, might perſuade him his Advice was the trueſt.

Ver. 17. *Now Jonathan and Ahimaaz ſtaid in Enrogel,*] A Place near *Jeruſalem* (*Joſh.* xv. 7, 8.) which the *Targum* tranſlates the *Fuller's Well*; becauſe, as *Kimchi* ſays, the Fullers there trod their Cloth with their Feet; for he derives *Rogel* from the word *Regel*, which ſignifies a *Foot*.

(For they might not be ſeen to come into the City.)] Their Fathers charged them to ſtay in this Place, becauſe it would have been difficult to ſend them out of the City, without being diſcovered.

And a Wench went and told them:] Pretending, perhaps, to go thither to ſcour ſome Cloaths.

And they went and told King David.] After a little ſtop in their way, as it here follows.

Ver. 18. *Nevertheleſs, a Lad ſaw them, and told Abſalom:*] Some of whoſe Troopers, who were ſcouting thereabouts (as *Joſephus* underſtands it) diſcovered them before they had gone two Furlongs.

But they went both of them away quickly, and came into a Man's Houſe at Bahurim,] They ſuſpected they were diſcovered, and therefore turned out of the publick Road (as *Joſephus* explains it) and made haſte to this Village, and perhaps to that Man's Houſe where *David* refreſhed himſelf, xvi. 5, 14.

Which had a Well in his Court, whither they went down.] For at that time of the Year, their Wells in many Places are dry, or had little Water in them. And it would not be eaſily ſuſpected that they would ſtay in an open Court.

Ver. 19. *And the Woman took and ſpread a Covering over the Well's mouth, and ſpread ground Corn thereon;*] Corn newly thraſhed out, which ſhe pretended to dry in the Sun.

And the thing was not known.] By this means they lay undiſcovered.

Ver. 20. *And when Abſalom's Servants*] Who were ſent to purſue them.

Came to the Woman of the Houſe,] For ſome had informed them that they had turned this way.

They ſaid, Where is Ahimaaz and Jonathan?] They were known Perſons, being the Sons of the moſt eminent among the Prieſts; or, perhaps, they deſcribed them to her, ſo that ſhe could not but know whether two ſuch Perſons came thither, or paſſed that way.

And the Woman ſaid unto them, They be gone over the Brook of Water.] Which came, I ſuppoſe, from the Fountain of *Enrogel*. It ſeems to have been a common Opinion in thoſe days, that theſe officious Lyes, for the ſafety of innocent Perſons, had no hurt in them; for we find many Inſtances of them, which cannot be juſtified. See upon *Joſh.* ii. 5.

And when they had ſought them, and could not find them, they returned to Jeruſalem.] For the Woman told them, as *Joſephus* ſays, that they made no ſtay at her Houſe; but after they had aſked for a little Drink, made haſte away; tho' if they purſued them ſpeedily, ſhe believed they might overtake them.

Ver. 21. *And it came to paſs after they were departed, they came up out of the Well, and went and told David,*] As ſoon as the Purſuers were returned back to *Jeruſalem*.

And ſaid unto David, Ariſe, and paſs over the Water; for thus hath Ahitophel counſelled againſt you.] And they did not know but he, by his great Wiſdom, might over-rule the Counſel of *Huſhai* (with which, no doubt, they alſo acquainted *David*) and perſuaded *Abſalom* to hearken to his; and then *David* was in extreme danger.]

Ver. 22. *Then David aroſe, and all the People that were with him, and they paſſed over Jordan: by the Morning-light there lacked not one of them that was not gone over Jordan.*] By this it appears, that they paſſed over in the Night, either at the Fords, or in Boats; and that not one of them miſcarried in the Paſſage, or ran away from him.

Ver. 23. *And when Ahitophel ſaw that his Counſel was not followed,*] Soon after *Ahimaaz* and *Jonathan* were gone to *David*, it publickly appeared, that the Counſel of *Ahitophel* was rejected, and *Huſhai*'s entertained.

He ſaddled his Aſs, and aroſe, and gat him home to his Houſe, to his City, and put his Houſehold in order,] Settled his Affairs, and diſpoſed of his Eſtate.

And hanged himſelf,] Being confident that *David* would get the better of *Abſalom*; and that then he ſhould be put to death for his Treaſon; which made him chooſe to be his own Executioner. So we underſtand it; though ſome of the *Jews* will have it that he died of Grief, being choaked with a Quinſey. For it is not likely, they think, ſo wiſe a Man as he would hang himſelf: But being

being full of Anguiſh, Anger and Vexation (ariſing not meerly from his Pride, which enraged him to ſee any Man's Counſel preferred to his; but to the Foreſight, as I ſaid, of Danger, if *David* prevailed, as he was ſure he would) theſe Paſſions caſt him into ſo violent a Diſtemper, that he was ſtrangled by it. And ſo ſome interpret the Word απήγξατο, in *Matth.* xxvii. 5.

And died, and was buried in the Sepulchre of his Father.] Where perhaps he would not have had the Honour to be interred, if he had been executed by *David*.

Ver. 24. *Then David came to Mahanaim:*] A Place in the Tribe of *Gad*. See Chap. ii. 8. of this Book.

And Abſalom paſſed over Jordan, he and all the Men of Iſrael with him.] As ſoon as he had gathered them together; which required ſome time: During which, *David* had Opportunity to ſtrengthen himſelf, by gathering an Army alſo. Which was after the Death of *Ahitophel* (who ſaw what Delays were made by gathering *Iſrael* together, and what the Conſequence would be) and after Relief was ſent him by ſeveral Perſons: Particularly by *Shobi* of the Children of *Ammon*, *ver.* 27. Who were Neighbours to this Part of the Country of *Iſrael*, though at a good Diſtance from *Mahanaim*.

Ver. 25. *And Abſalom made Amaſa Captain of the Hoſt inſtead of Joab: which Amaſa was a Man's Son whoſe Name was Ithra, an Iſraelite*] By Religion; though by Birth an *Iſhmaelite*. See 1 *Chron.* ii. 27. *Abarbinel* thinks the quite contrary, that he was an *Iſraelite* by Birth, but had lived long in the Land of the *Iſhmaelites*. And by *the Son of a Man* he underſtands an Illuſtrious Perſon.

That went in to Abigail the Daughter of Nahaſh,] That is, he married one of the Daughters of *Jeſſe*; who is here called *Nahaſh*. For, as *Kimchi* obſerves, many Perſons had two Names: And this ſignifies *a Serpent*. From whence it is, that when *Iſaiah* ſaith, xiv. 29. *out of the Serpents root* (or *the root of Nahaſh*) *ſhall come forth a Cockatrice, or Baſiliſk*; the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe expounds it, *out of the root of Jeſſe ſhall come forth the Meſſiah*. Who was typified by the brazen Serpent in the Wilderneſs.

Siſter to Zeruiah, Joab's Mother.] So *Amaſa* was Couſin-German to *Joab*: and *David* was Uncle to them both. *Abſalom*, one would think, ſhould not have truſted in ſuch an Office, ſo near a Relation of *David*: But he himſelf was much nearer; and he took *Amaſa* to be as ambitious as himſelf.

Ver. 26. *So Iſrael and Abſalom pitched in the land of Gilead.*] Waiting an Opportunity to fight *David*.

Ver. 27. *And it came to paſs when David was come to Mahanaim, that Shobi the Son of Nahaſh of Rabbath of the Children of Ammon,*] This was a Comfort to *David* to ſee himſelf honoured in his Diſtreſs, by one of a ſtrange Country; which he had made his Enemy, by the terrible Execution he had made among them, xii. 26, &c. But it is thought, that this *Shobi* the Brother of *Hanun*, abhorring the baſe Affront which he put upon *David*, was preſerved by him; and made King of the Country in the room of *Hanun*. And ſhewed his Gratitude for ſo great a Kindneſs, by coming to his Relief, and perhaps to his Aſſiſtance in his extreme Neceſſity.

And Machir the Son of Amiel of Lodebar,] Who bred up *Mephibosheth* the Son of *Jonathan*, 'till *David* ſent for him, ix. 5.

And Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim,] Who was a Man of great Wealth (xix. 32.) and of as great Goodneſs: For he maintained *David* while he was in thoſe Parts.

Ver. 28. *Brought Beds, and Baſins, and earthen Veſſels,*] All manner of Houſhold-ſtuff, which they now wanted.

And Wheat, and Barley, and Flour, and parched Corn, and Beans, and Lentiles, and parched Pulſe,] All ſorts of Proviſion, which were neceſſary for the Suſtenance either of Man or Beaſt. And they brought it of their own Accord, without aſking, which was a Token of their affectionate Loyalty. The Word *Kali* is twice repeated among theſe Proviſions, and is firſt joined with *Wheat, Barley, and Flour*. And properly ſignifies *toſtas fruges*, parched Corn, as we well tranſlate it. And in the latter end of the Verſe, after *Beans and Lentiles*, it muſt ſignify, as *Bochart* obſerves *toſtum aut frictum aliquod legumen*, viz. *frictum cicer*, ſome parched or fried ſort of Pulſe, to wit, fried Vetches: Which grew plentifully in *Judæa*; as it was common among both *Greeks* and *Romans* in their Food, as *Bochart* ſhews in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 7. where he obſerves that it is called *Kali* by the *Arabians* to this day. And here we may learn, by the way, from this Story, and the Preſent made him by *Abigail*, and by *Ziba*, what was the ordinary Victuals uſed in thoſe Days. Grain and Pulſe made up a great Part of it, which were the common Food of the ancient *Ægyptians*. And the *Romans*, in their beſt Times, when they moſt of all applied themſelves to Agriculture, did ſcarcely live upon any thing elſe: Whence came the Illuſtrious Names of *Fabius*, *Piſo*, *Cicero*, and *Lentulus*.

Ver. 29. *And Honey,*] Milk and Honey in thoſe Times were reckon'd the greateſt Delicacies, and were the Food of Kings and great Perſons; as the ſame *Bochart* obſerves, *Lib.* 4. *Cap.* 11.

And Butter, and Sheep, and Cheeſe of Kine for David and for the People that were with him to eat:] The making of *Butter*, I have obſerved elſewhere, was early known in thoſe Countries; and ſo was *Cheeſe*. For, as the Author now mentioned, obſerves, though theſe Words *Saphoth Lachar* be very variouſly interpreted, yet the *Chaldee* and *Syriac*, as well as all the *Hebrews*, underſtand by *Saphoth* Cheeſe made of Cow's Milk: From the *Hebrew* and *Chaldee* Word *Saphar*, which ſignifies to *ſtrain*; Cheeſe being made by preſſing the Whey out of the Curds. See *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 33. Here is no mention of any Fleſh-Meat but *Sheep*, which were very plentiful in thoſe Countries: And ſo was *Fiſh* alſo, but we never read any mention of its being eaten, 'till the latter Times. For it is ſuppoſed by Learned Men, that the Ancients deſpiſed it, as too light and delicate for ſtrong Stomachs. Whence they obſerve that *Homer* never ſpeaks of it, nor any *Grecian* Writer of the Heroick Times.

For they ſaid, the People are weary, and hungry, and thirſty in the Wilderneſs.] Where there was Scarcity of Proviſion, and therefore they needed Refreſhment, when they were come out of it. Which moved theſe good People to bring them Beds to reſt themſelves in, after their Journey; and all theſe good things which this rich Country afforded to ſatisfy their Hunger: And it is highly probable, Bottles of Wine were not wanting, to make their Entertainment more noble.

CHAP. XVIII.

Verſe 1. *AND David numbred the People that were with him,*] And found them ſufficient to make a conſiderable Army.

And ſet Captains of thouſands and Captains of hundreds over them.] Formed them into Regiments and Companies (as we now ſpeak) and ſet proper Officers and Commanders over them.

Ver. 2. *And David ſent forth a third part of the People under the hand of Joab,*] Who was the General of the whole Hoſt: But now *David* intended to command in chief himſelf (as we read in the End of this Verſe) and therefore committed only a third part of the Army to the Conduct of *Joab*.

And a third part under the hand of Abiſhai the Son of Zeruiah, Joab's Brother, and a third part under the hand of Ittai the Gittite:] Order and Diſcipline is of more Force in a Battel than great Numbers: Therefore *David* diſpoſes his little Army, for ſo it was in Compariſon (*Joſephus* ſaith but four thouſand Men) into three Bodies, under three eminent Commanders: Who were to ſuccour one another as they ſaw Occaſion.

And the King ſaid unto the People, I will ſurely go forth with you my ſelf alſo.] Which he thought would be a great Encouragement to them, and make them fight the more valiantly.

Ver. 3. *But the People anſwered, Thou ſhalt not go forth: for if we flee they will not care for us; neither if half of us die, will they care for us:*] They did not think it adviſeable that he ſhould hazard himſelf: For which they give a good Reaſon, That if they ſhould be routed, and half of them ſlain, *Abſalom* would not think himſelf a Conqueror as long as *David* was alive: Who might raiſe new Forces, and give him Battel again. And, as *Joſephus* adds, they might poſſibly think the King had another Army to guard his Perſon.

But now thou art worth ten thouſand of us:] Whoſe Perſon therefore ought not to be expoſed to Danger.

Therefore now it is better that thou ſuccour us out of the City.] By ſending them, if there were need, a freſh Supply of Men, which he kept with him as a Reſerve in the City: And Proviſion alſo, with Counſel and Advice, as Occaſion required.

Ver. 4. *And the King ſaid unto them, What ſeemeth you beſt, I will do:*] He ſubmitted to their Opinion; for it was not a Time now to oppoſe the Senſe of his People.

And the King ſtood by the Gate-ſide, and all the People came out by hundreds, and by thouſands.] Whom *Joſephus* ſaith, he exhorted to be faithful and couragious, remembring what he had done for them, νικὴν αὐτοῖς ἐπευξάμενος, praying God to make them victorious.

Ver. 5. *And the King commanded Joab, and Abiſhai, and Ittai, ſaying, Deal gently for my ſake with the young Man, even with Abſalom.*] If they got the better, he prayed, or rather required them, to ſpare *Abſalom*'s Life: Though he did not deſerve it, yet becauſe *David* deſired it, whoſe Affection was wonderfully great to him, as his Son; and in hope perhaps to reclaim him and bring him to Repentance. He conſidered him alſo as a raſh *young Man*, and therefore an Object of his and their Pity.

And all the People heard, when the King gave all the Captains charge concerning Abſalom.] So that no private Soldier might voluntarily kill him.

Ver. 6. *And the People went out into the Field againſt Iſrael: and the Battle was in the Wood of Ephraim;*] *Joſephus* ſaith, that *Joab* drew up his Men, ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ μεγάλῳ in a large Field, which had a Wood behind it. Which is called the Wood of *Ephraim*, not becauſe it belonged to the Tribe of *Ephraim*; for they had no Poſſeſſions on this ſide *Jordan*, where the Battle was fought: But the *Gileadites* gave it that Name in Memory of the great Slaughter *Jephthah* made of the *Ephraimites* hereabouts, mentioned *Judges* xii.

Ver. 7. *Where the Men of Iſrael were ſlain before the Servants of David.*] They who fought for *Abſalom*, being called *the Men of Iſrael*, it looks like an Argument that *David*'s Army was principally gathered out of his own Tribe of *Judah*. But it will appear from xix. 11. that this is not true: And therefore by *Iſrael* we are to underſtand the Tribes on the other ſide *Jordan*, who purſued *David* into the Land of *Gilead*: Where he had got together a ſmall Army.

And there was a great Slaughter that day of twenty thouſand men.] For the Fight was obſtinate, as *Joſephus* thinks; both Sides having great Reaſon to ſtand ſtoutly to it. *Lib.* 7. *Antiq. Cap.* 9.

Ver. 8. *For the Battel was there ſcattered over the face of all the Country:*] Thereabout; both in the Field and in the Wood.

And the Wood devoured more People that day than the Sword devoured.] Some think the Wood is ſaid to devour them, becauſe they fell into Pits, or ſtumbled upon Stumps of Trees, or preſſed one another to Death, as they came into ſtrait Places; or were killed by wild Beaſts. But the moſt ſimple Meaning is, that there were more ſlain in the Wood than in the Field. That is, more in the Flight, than in the Fight: So *Joſephus*, ὡς φεύγοντας πεσεῖν πλείονας ἢ μαχομένους. For they could not run away ſo faſt in the Wood, as in the open Field. Many alſo being weary, it is likely got into lurking Places, and were there killed by wild Beaſts.

Ver. 9. *And Abſalom met the Servants of David;*] In his Flight through the Wood, he chanc'd to meet ſome of *David*'s Soldiers; who would not kill him, nor ſo much as ſtop him, much leſs ſeize him: For ſo it ſeems they underſtood *David*'s Commandment, that they ſhould not meddle with him. But though they

let him go, yet God met with him, and put a ſtop to his Flight, as it here follows.

And Abſalom rode upon a Mule,] Full ſpeed, as faſt as it could carry him.

And the Mule went under the thick Boughs of a great Oak, and his Head caught hold of the Oak,] His Neck, I ſuppoſe, ſtuck faſt between the Boughs of this Oak.

And he was taken up between the Heaven and the Earth, and the Mule that was under him went away.] He hung there, having nothing to ſupport him: And his Neck was ſo wedged between the Boughs, by the ſwift Motion of the Mule, that he was not able to diſengage himſelf. I do not ſee any Colour for their Opinion, who think he hung by his Hair, which being very long, was wrapt about the Boughs of the Tree: Nor is it probable he was without a Helmet, which covered his Hair. And beſides, it is ſaid afterward, that *Joab* ſmote him *while he was yet alive*, in the Middle of the Oak, *ver.* 14. Which had been no Wonder, if he had only hung by his Hair; which would not have killed him: Whereas when *Joab* came to him, he was only not quite dead, but very near it. Yet that great Man *Bochartus*, in his Epiſtle about the Weight of *Abſalom*'s Hair, ſuppoſes it to have been ſo thick, and ſo ſtrong, that the Weight of his whole Body could not break it when he hung thereby. Though in his laſt Work he ſaith, *Hæſit inter ramos arborum, & jumento prætergreſſo pependit inter cælum & terram.* He ſtuck between the Boughs of Trees, and his Beaſt going from under him, he hung between Heaven and Earth. *Hierozoicon, P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 11.

Ver. 10. *And a certain Man ſaw it, and told Joab, and ſaid, Behold, I ſaw Abſalom hanged in an Oak.*] But not dead.

Ver. 11. *And Joab anſwered to the Man that told him, And behold, thou ſaweſt him, and why didſt thou not ſmite him there to the ground, and I would have given thee ten Shekels of Silver, and a Girdle?*] A Military Belt, which was much eſteemed, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 4.

Ver. 12. *And the Man ſaid, Though I ſhould receive a thouſand Shekels of Silver in my Hand,*] In ready Money (as we ſpeak) paid down before-hand.

Yet would I not put forth my Hand againſt the King's Son: for in our hearing the King charged thee, and Abiſhai, and Ittai,] It was a Thing notoriouſly known, not only to him, but to all the Army.

Saying, Beware that none touch the young Man Abſalom,] Do him no Hurt; but leave me to puniſh him.

Ver. 13. *Otherwiſe, I ſhould have wrought falſhood againſt my own Life:*] Not only been falſe and diſobedient to the King, but brought his own Life in danger; and therefore not have been true to himſelf.

For there is no matter hid from the King, and thou thy ſelf wouldſt have ſet thy ſelf againſt me.] He knew the Genius of *Joab* ſo well, that he was ſure he would have been as forward as any, both to inform the King of what he had done, and to have him puniſhed for diſobeying his Sovereign. *Joab* alſo knew this to be ſo true, that he doth not rebuke him for this bold Saying.

Ver. 14. *Then ſaid Joab, I may not tarry thus with thee.*] Loſe Time in ſuch Diſcourſe.

And he took three Darts into his Hand,] From the *Hebrew Shatim*, which we tranſlate *Darts*, comes the *Latin* Word *Spatha*: Which was a ſort of Weapon among the ancient *Gauls*, as *Bochartus* ſhews, called by the *Chaldee Giſæ*; from whence the *Latin Geſum*: Which *Feſtus* ſaith, was *grave jaculum*, an heavy Dart, being made all of Iron. See his *Canaan, Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 42.

And thruſt them through the Heart of Abſalom, while he was yet alive in the midſt of the Oak.] Not through that Part which is ſtrictly called *the Heart* (for then he would have died immediately, and there would have been no need of his Soldiers falling upon him, as we read they did in the next Verſe) but through the midſt of his Body; which did not kill him out-right, but there was ſtill ſome Life remaining in him.

Ver. 15. *And ten young Men that bear Joab's Armour,*] Who waited upon his Perſon, as General of the Army.

Compaſſed about, and ſmote Abſalom, and ſlew him.] Surrounded him, and thruſt their Spears or Swords through him; and ſo put an end to his Life. *Joab*, I ſuppoſe, thought himſelf not ſafe, as long as *Abſalom* was alive. For ſome unquiet People, he thought, who were deeply ingaged in this Rebellion, would move new Diſturbances to ſet him on the Throne. Therefore he did not as *David* commanded, but as he imagined he ſhould have commanded. *Kimchi* hath a Conceit that ſome of *Abſalom*'s Crimes are legible in his Puniſhment: For he was thruſt through with three Darts, having ſtolen the Heart of the King, and then of the two hundred Men that followed him out of *Jeruſalem*; and then of all *Iſrael*. And as he committed Inceſt with his Father's ten Concubines, ſo ten young Men compaſſed him about, and killed him.

Ver. 16. *And Joab blew the Trumpet,*] Sounded a Retreat.

And the People returned from purſuing after Iſrael: for Joab held back the People.] This was done like a good Man: For he knew the People were drawn into this Rebellion, and would return to their Duty, now they had none to head them. Thus *Cæſar* after the Defeat of *Pompey*, and the ſcattering of his Army, cried *Miles parce civibus*, Soldiers, ſpare your Fellow-Citizens.

Ver. 17. *And they took Abſalom, and caſt him into a great pit in the Wood,*] They would not bring his Body to be diſpoſed of by his Father's Order, leſt it ſhould too much move his Paſſion.

And laid a great heap of Stones upon him:] So that after a ſort, he was ſtoned: As the Law ordered a rebellious Son to be, *Deut.* xxi. 20, 21. *Adricomius*, in his Deſcription of the Holy Land, ſaith this Heap remained to his days; and all Travellers, as they went by it, were wont to throw a Stone to add to the Heap, in deteſtation of his Rebellion againſt his Father.

And all Iſrael fled every one to his Tent.] See 1 *Sam.* iv. 10.

Ver. 18. *And Abſalom in his Life-time had taken and reared up for himſelf a Pillar, which is in the King's Dale:*] This *Dale* is mentioned, *Gen.* xiv. 17. and was not far from *Jeruſalem*: There he thought to perpetuate his Memory

(which had better been forgotten) by a very magnificent Structure; as *Raſi*, and ſeveral other *Jewiſh* Doctors fancy: And ſome that have been in the Holy Land, tell us of ſuch a Noble Fabrick in the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*. But this is a ſuppoſititious Monument, as *Wagenſeil* obſerves upon *Sota*, Page 221. For *Joſephus*, who is more to be believed than theſe later Authors, ſaith, that it was only a Pillar, *Lib.* 7. *Antiq. Cap.* 9. where he calls it, στύλον λίθου μαρμαρίτου, a Pillar of Marble; which he ſaith, was two Furlongs from *Jeruſalem:* In a Place where the King's Horſes run Races, as ſome ſay, and other Exerciſes uſed to be performed.

For he ſaid, I have no Son to keep my name in remembrance:] We read before, xiv. 27. that he had three Sons and one Daughter: But, as *Kimchi* and other *Hebrew* Doctors ſay, they were all dead; ſo that he had no Hope to make his Name ſurvive him, by any other Means but this.

And he called the Pillar after his own Name, and it is called unto this day, Abſalom's Place.] In the *Hebrew* the Word which we tranſlate *Place* is *Jad*, which ſignifies *an Hand*. As much as to ſay, *his Work:* Though *Kimchi* obſerves, that this Word ſometimes is the ſame with *Makom*, a *Place*, as in *Iſaiah* lvi. 5. And when this Book was written, it bare *Abſalom*'s Name: Though it is likely it did not laſt very long; for ſuch Works of Vanity are commonly ſhort-liv'd. Of which the moſt famous Inſtance we meet with in Hiſtory is recorded by *Pliny*, *Lib.* 37. *Natural. Hiſt. Cap.* 6. where he ſaith, *Demetrius Phalereus* had as many Statues erected to him in *Athens* as there are Days in the Year, *viz.* 360, which is more, he thinks, than ever Man had. But they were all thrown down, and broken in pieces, *nondum anno hunc numerum dierum excedente*, before a Year was expired.

Ver. 19. *Then ſaid Ahimaaz the Son of Zadok, Let me now run and bear the King tidings, how the* LORD *hath avenged him of his Enemies.*] By this it appears *Ahimaaz* did not return to *Jeruſalem* after he carried Intelligence to *David*, but ſtaid with him, and was in this Battel; for the Prieſts bore Arms as well as other Men: And particularly performed the Office of Trumpeters to the Army, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 12. And here it is obſervable what ſtrict Diſcipline was kept in thoſe Days: That no Man durſt ſtir to carry the News of what had been done, without the Leave of the Commander in chief.

Ver. 20. *And Joab ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt not bear tidings this day, but thou ſhalt bear tidings another day:*] Some Reward, no doubt, was wont to be given to him that brought good Tidings, eſpecially of a great Victory: Which made him ſo deſirous to be the Meſſenger.

But this day thou ſhalt bear no tidings, becauſe the King's Son is dead.] Which he knew would be unwelcome News to *David*, and procure no Good to *Ahimaaz*.

Ver. 21. *Then ſaid Joab to Cuſhi,*] An *Ethiopian* by Birth, as ſome think, but had embraced the *Jewiſh* Religion: And it is probable, was one of thoſe ten young Men who attended on *Joab*, and was preſent when *Abſalom* was killed; and helped perhaps to diſpatch him, *ver.* 13.

Go tell the King what thou haſt ſeen.] He mentioned, it is likely, the Particulars: Which he would not put in Writing, but have him deliver by Word of Mouth. For he himſelf would not relate what he had done to *Abſalom*.

And Cuſhi bowed himſelf unto him, and ran.] It was a great Honour to be a Meſſenger of ſuch good Tidings, as the Defeat of the King's Enemies.

Ver. 22. *Then ſaid Ahimaaz the Son of Zadok, yet again to Joab, But howſoever, let me, I pray thee, alſo run after Cuſhi.*] We cannot tell what made him ſo earneſt to carry Tidings, unleſs it was hope of Reward, and Confidence that his own Swiftneſs would make him the firſt Meſſenger of good News. For *Joſephus* ſaith, he told *Joab* he would relate nothing to the King, but περὶ μόνης τῆς νικῆς, only concerning the Victory: ἡσυχάσειν δὲ περὶ τῆς Αβσαλώμου τελευτῆς, but ſay not a Word about the Death of *Abſalom*.

And Joab ſaid, Wherefore wilt thou run, my Son, ſeeing thou haſt no tidings ready?] Concerning the Particulars of the Fight, which he had not Time to acquaint him withal. He calling him *my Son*, it ſignifies he had a great Affection to him, and therefore had denied his firſt Requeſt: For *Joab* knew the King better than *Ahimaaz* did; who had a mind to run, becauſe he imagined the King would be pleaſed to hear he was out of danger: Whereas *Joab* knew the King loved *Abſalom* ſo dearly, that no body would be acceptable to him that could not aſſure him he was ſafe.

Ver. 23. *But however, ſaid he, let me run.*] He did not underſtand *Joab*'s Kindneſs, and therefore preſſes him again to grant his Deſire.

And he ſaid unto him, Run. Then Ahimaaz ran by the way of the Plain, and over-ran Cuſhi.] There were two Ways from hence to the Place where *David* was: One over the Mountains, which was the ſhorter Way; the other by the Plain, which though the longer, according to the Proverb, proved the neareſt. Or, as *Joſephus* underſtands it, *Ahimaaz* ran a more compendious Way, which he alone knew, ἐπιτομετέραν ἐμβαλὼν τῶν ὁδῶν; γὰρ μόνος αὐτὴν ἐπιγίνωσκεν.

Ver. 24. *And David ſat between the two Gates:*] The Gate was a very large Place, where publick Meetings uſed to be; and had an inward and an outward Door, between which *David* ſat to hear News.

And the Watchman went up to the roof over the Gate unto the Wall,] Over the Gate there was a Watch-Tower, from whence they might ſee round about, whether any were coming, and from what Quarter.

And lifted up his Eyes, and looked, and behold a Man running alone.] Whom he ſpied at ſome diſtance; but could not diſcern who he was.

Ver. 25. *And the Watchman cried, and told the King. And the King ſaid, If he be alone, there is tidings in his Mouth.*] He took it for a Sign that he was a Meſſenger ſent from *Joab*, and that he brought good News: For if they had been routed, there would have been more than one ſeen running away.

And he came apace, and drew near.] So that, in a little time, he could diſcern who he was.

Ver.

Ver. 26. *And the Watchman ſaw another Man running, and the Watchman called unto the Porter, and ſaid, Behold, another Man running alone. And the King ſaid, He alſo brings tidings.*] More News than the former.

Ver. 27. *And the Watchman ſaid, Methinks the running of the foremoſt is like the running of Ahimaaz the Son of Zadok.*] Who was remarkable, it ſeems, for his ſpeed in Running.

And the King ſaid, He is a good Man, and comes with good Tidings. He was one true to the King's Intereſt, and therefore he concluded, would not bring bad News.

Ver. 28. *And Ahimaaz called, and ſaid unto the King, All is well.*] He was in haſte to let the King know the good Succeſs they had in the Battel, and therefore ſeems to have ſaid at a Diſtance, before he came up to him, *Peace*; which is the Word in the *Hebrew*, ſignifying all Happineſs and Proſperity.

And he fell down to the Earth upon his Face before the King,] When he approached nearer to him.

And ſaid, Bleſſed be the LORD *thy God, which hath delivered up the Men that lift up their hand againſt my Lord the King.*] Like a truly religious Man, he aſcribes the Victory they had got unto the LORD; who ſtill ſhewed his Mercy unto *David*, and continued to be *his God*, *i. e.* his Benefactor.

Ver. 29. *And the King ſaid, Is the young Man Abſalom ſafe?*] He would not expreſs his Joy 'till he heard that *Abſalom* was preſerved.

And Ahimaaz anſwered, When Joab ſent the King's ſervant, and me thy ſervant,] This ſeems to ſignify that *Cuſhi* was one belonging to the Court.

I ſaw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.] He diſſembled his Knowledge of *Abſalom's* Death; and perhaps in this ſaid true, that he did not know the particular Manner of it; though it appears plainly (from *ver.* 20.) that he knew he was dead.

Ver. 30. *And the King ſaid unto him, Turn aſide and ſtand here: and he turned aſide, and ſtood ſtill.*] He would not have him go away 'till *Cuſhi* came, ſuppoſing he might find more of the Truth, by examining them both together.

Ver. 31. *And behold Cuſhi came,*] Not long after *Ahimaaz* had delivered his Meſſage.

And Cuſhi ſaid, Tidings, my Lord the King: for the LORD *hath avenged thee this Day of all them that roſe up againſt thee.*] He ſaid no more than *Ahimaaz* had done; thinking it would be unacceptable News to mention *Abſalom's* Death.

Ver. 32. *And the King ſaid unto Cuſhi, Is the young Man Abſalom ſafe? And Cuſhi anſwered, The Enemies of my Lord the King, and all that riſe againſt thee to do thee hurt, be as that young Man is.*] This was a decent manner of Speech to inform him that he was dead.

Ver. 33. *And the King was much moved,*] So that we do not find he enquired after the Manner of his Death, nor after any of the Particulars of the Victory.

And went up to the Chamber over the Gate,] See xix. 8.

And wept:] Being extreamly diſturbed, he retired as far as he could from all Company, ἐπὶ τὸ ὑψολότατον τῆς πόλεως (as *Joſephus* ſpeaks) to the very higheſt Part of the City, where he bewailed his Son, knocking his Breaſt, and tearing his Hair (as the ſame Author's Words are) καὶ παντοίως αὐτὸν αἰκιζόμενος, afflicting himſelf all manner of Ways.

And, as he went up, he ſaid,] When he came into the Chamber, it was not ſo eaſy to know what he did, or hear what he ſaid, becauſe he ſhut up himſelf privately: But as he went up the Stairs, he thus bemoaned the Loſs of his Son.

O my ſon Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon Abſalom! would God I had died for thee, O Abſalom, my ſon, my ſon!] No Words can be more paſſionate: And it is likely his Wiſh, that he had died in *Abſalom's* ſtead, was only the Effect of exceſſive Love to him, and Grief for him, which made him vent himſelf in Expreſſions which were not conſiderate. But *Pellicanus* (in which he follows St. *Auſtin*) thinks this was a deliberate Wiſh, becauſe *Abſalom* died impenitent, and might have lived to be a better Man; but if *David* had died, he had good Hope of his own Salvation. But I take this not to be well grounded; for if *David* had died, in all likelihood his Son would not have been ſorry for it, but triumphed in his good Succeſs, and proved a wicked Tyrant over a baſe People. The Stupidity of the *Jewiſh* Doctors is inconceivable, who fancy *Abſalom* would have cut his Hair, by which he hung, with his Sword, had he not ſeen Hell gaping for him, if he fell down; which made him chooſe to die in the Oak: But his Father, by his Lamentation over him, crying ſeven Times, *my Son, my Son*, delivered him from the ſeven Gates of Hell, and brought him into Paradiſe. See *Bartoloccius* in his *Kirjath Sepher*. *Tom.* 2. *p.* 128, *&c.* 162.

CHAP. XIX.

Verſe 1. *AND it was told Joab, Behold, the King weepeth and mourneth for Abſalom.*] For *Joab* was now come to the City himſelf, to give the King an Account of the Fight: And it is likely *Ahimaaz*, or *Cuſhi*, informed him how heavily the King took the News of his Son's Death.

Ver. 2. *And the Victory*] That is, the Joy for the Victory.

That day was turned into mourning unto all the People: for the People heard ſay that day, how the King grieved for his Son.] They had ſo great a Regard to their Prince, that when they heard of his Affliction, they were afflicted with him: And inſtead of triumphing, they alſo made Lamentations.

Ver. 3. *And the People gat them by ſtealth that day into the City,*] Not by the Gate where *David* was, but by ſome ſecret Way, that he might not ſee them: Juſt like Thieves, who are afraid to be diſcovered and puniſhed for what they have done.

As People being aſhamed ſteal away when they flee in Battel.] As if they had loſt the Day, and not been victorious.

Ver. 4. *And the King covered his Face,*] Such was the Cuſtom of deep Mourners (as *Kimchi* here obſerves) that they might neither ſee, nor

be ſeen. As being aſhamed (ſaith *R. Levi*) any ſhould behold their rueful Looks.

And the King cried with a loud Voice, O my Son Abſalom, O Abſalom my Son, my Son!] It is obſerved by many learned Men, that the Oriental People expreſſed their Paſſions with greater Vehemence than we are wont to do in theſe Parts of the World. Where crying out aloud with a doleful Voice, called *howling* in Scripture, is not uſual; but was common among the *Jews*, as we ſee before in *David*, iii. 32. and at the laying the Foundation of the Temple after the Captivity, when they that wept with a loud Voice, drowned the Voice of thoſe that ſhouted for Joy, *Ezra* iii. 12, 13.

Ver. 5. *And Joab went into the Houſe of the King,*] It ſeems by this, that *David* was removed before *Joab* came, from the Top of the Gate, and gone to his Houſe, where he was wont to reſide.

And ſaid, Thou haſt ſhamed this day the Faces of all thy Servants,] Making them hang down their Heads, as if they had committed ſuch a Crime, that they were aſhamed to look Men in the Face.

Which this Day have ſaved thy Life, and the Lives of thy Sons, and of thy Daughters, and the Lives of thy Wives, and the Lives of thy Concubines:] Of all that was dear unto him.

Ver. 6. *In that thou loveſt thine Enemies, and hateſt thy Friends;*] In whoſe Preſervation he ſeemed to take no pleaſure, but only to grieve for the Loſs of a Rebellious Son.

For thou haſt declared this day, that thou regardeſt neither Princes, nor Servants:] Neither himſelf, nor *Abiſhai*, nor *Ittai*, nor any of the great Officers and faithful Soldiers, who had adventured their Lives for him.

For this day I perceive, that if Abſalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleaſed thee well.] This was ſpoken by *Joab* too ſharply, and inſolently: Yet it was ſomething neceſſary at this Time to awaken *David* out of a ſtrange Lethargy, which made him take notice of no body, but behave himſelf as if he had no Concern for any Perſon in the World, but for *Abſalom* alone, who was gone out of it.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore ariſe, go forth, and ſpeak comfortably to thy Servants:*] He wiſhes him to go and ſhew himſelf to his People, and acknowledge their good Service, praiſe their Courage, and congratulate their happy Succeſs: Giving the Honours and Largeſſes that were due unto them, or promiſing them Rewards proportionable to their Merits.

For I ſwear by the LORD, if thou go not forth,] Unto the People, and declare how ſenſible he was of their Services.

There will not tarry with thee one Man this Night;] He reſolved, and confirmed it with the moſt ſolemn Oath, that he would lead his whole Army away from him, and leave him alone. *David* ſeems to have anſwered nothing to all this Diſcourſe, which moved *Joab* to conclude with theſe harſh Words.

And that will be worſe unto thee than all the Evil that befel thee from thy Youth until now.] For during the cruel Perſecution of *Saul*, as well as in this Exile, he had a good Company of faithful Perſons with him. *Joſephus* expreſſes this Threatning very well, τότεσοι πικρότερον, ϰ᾽ ἀληθες ποιήσω το πένθος, *I will make thee weep for ſomething* (as we ſpeak) *and more bitterly than ever.*

Ver. 8. *Then the King aroſe, and ſat in the Gate:*] Where the Concourſe of People uſed to be about Buſineſs. For the *Gate* was a ſpacious Place, and the ſame Thing with the Exchange, or the *Forum* among the *Romans*. The Market for Commodities was held here, as we learn from the Prophecy of *Eliſha*, who foretold Corn ſhould be ſold at ſuch a Rate the next Day in the *Gate* of *Samaria*, 2 *Kings* vii. 2. which was a very large Place, ſince *Ahab* aſſembled there four hundred falſe Prophets, 1 *Kings* xxii. 10. In theſe *Gates* alſo there was ſome Building, wherein were Seats for the Elders and Judges: For *Boaz* having a Cauſe to be heard, *went up to the Gate*, and ſat down there, *Ruth* iv. 1, 2. And ſo many publick Aſſemblies being held here, it makes it probable that the *Chamber over the Gate* (mentioned in the foregoing Chapter) where *David* went to weep, was the Place where the Privy Council were wont to meet.

And they told unto all the People,] That were in the City and elſewhere.

Saying, Behold the King doth ſit in the Gate: and all the People came before the King:] To congratulate to him his Safety, and to receive the Tokens of his Favour.

For all Iſreal had fled every Man to his Tent.] 'Till the People heard the King appeared publickly, and no longer bewailed *Abſalom*.

Ver. 9. *And all the People were at ſtrife through all the Tribes of Iſrael,*] Who ſhould be forwardeſt to bring back the King: Blaming one another's Slackneſs in it.

Saying, the King ſaved us out of the Hand of our Enemies, and he delivered us out of the Hand of the Philiſtines, and now he is fled out of the Land for Abſalom.] They call to mind what Benefits they had received by his Means, in their Deliverance from many Enemies; eſpecially the *Philiſtines*, who had grievouſly oppreſſed them: And alſo their great Ingratitude to him in driving him out of *Jeruſalem*, and forcing him to flee over *Jordan*, for the ſake of *Abſalom*.

Ver. 10. *And Abſalom whom we anointed over us, is dead in Battle:*] We do not read of his being actually anointed: But they choſe him for their King, and obeyed him as if he had.

Now therefore why ſpeak ye not a Word of bringing the King back?] They ſpake this to their Elders; who ſeem to have been dubious what to do, 'till they heard the Senſe of the People.

Ver. 11. *And David ſent to Zadok, and to Abiathar the Prieſts,*] By their Sons, whom he had with him.

Saying, Speak unto the Elders of Judah,] The Prieſts were Men of great Authority, eſpecially the High-prieſt and his Deputy; and moſt proper to be employed to deal with the Elders.

Saying, Why are ye the laſt to bring the King back to his Houſe?] That which made them ſo cold, was, I ſuppoſe, the Senſe of their Guilt in joining with *Abſalom:* Who began his Conſpiracy in *Jeruſalem* it ſelf, and perfected it in *Hebron*, both Cities of *Judah*. Whoſe Revolt was the baſer, becauſe he was of their Tribe,

and had long ſhewn his great Kindneſs to them (1 *Sam.* xxx. 26, *&c.*) the Conſcience of which made them afraid to bring him again to *Jeruſalem.*

(*Seeing the ſpeech of all Iſrael is come to the King, even to his houſe*)] Theſe laſt Words, *even to his houſe*, ſeem to be but a Repetition of what was ſaid before, *to his Houſe*, viz. at *Jeruſalem:* The other Words being a *Parentheſis.*

Ver. 12. *Ye are my Brethren, ye are my Bone, and my Fleſh:*] That is, he had much Kindred among them.

Why are ye then the laſt to bring the King back?] He expreſſes the greater Kindneſs to them, leſt they ſhould be ſo deſperate as to defend *Jeruſalem* againſt him.

Ver. 13. *And ſay unto Amaſa, Art not thou of my Bone and of my Fleſh?*] That is, his Siſter's Son: Whom he bids them particularly court; for, being General of *Abſalom*'s Forces, he might through Shame and Fear be very loth to look his Uncle in the Face.

God do ſo to me and more alſo, if thou be not Captain of the Hoſt before me continually in the room of Joab. He ſolemnly promiſes to prefer him to the higheſt Command of the Kingdom: For now he thought it a fit time to depreſs *Joab*; who was grown inſufferably inſolent and imperious. For he had ſlain *Abner* moſt perfidiouſly in cold Blood; and killed *Abſalom* againſt the King's Command; and now lately inſulted him in his Sorrow: Threatning, (if we may believe *Joſephus*) τὴν βασιλείαν ἑτέρῳ παραδῶναι, that he would depoſe him, and deliver the Kingdom to ſome other Perſon. This Promiſe *David* endeavoured to perform, bidding *Amaſa* take upon him to aſſemble all the Men of *Judah* (xx. 4.) yet leaving *Joab* (*ver.* 7.) the Command of his own Legion. Which he took ſo heinouſly, that he killed *Amaſa*; and was Captain of the Hoſt again, more out of Fear, than any Favour *David* had for him: For if *Amaſa* had lived, *David* would have humbled him. For *Amaſa* had a great Intereſt in *Iſrael*, over whom he had commanded in Chief; eſpecially in the Tribe of *Judah*, whoſe Heart he bowed to receive *David* again, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And he bowed the Heart of all the Men of Judah, even as the Heart of one Man,*] Either this Diſpoſition was wrought in them by *Amaſa*; or the kind Words delivered from *David* by *Zadock* and *Abiathar*, overcame them.

So that they ſent this Word unto the King,] By ſome meſſenger of their own.

Return thou and all thy Servants.] Aſſuring him they were ready to receive him, and return to their Obedience.

Ver. 15. *So the King returned and came to Jordan:*] Began to return back, and came as far as *Jordan:* Which parted the Country where he was from the Land of *Canaan.*

And Judah] That is, the Elders of *Judah.*

Came to Gilgal, to go to meet the King, to conduct the King over Jordan.] This was an Expreſſion of their great Affection, to come thus far to attend him, and to furniſh him, I ſuppoſe, with Accommodations in his Journey: For *Gilgal* was near *Jordan*; on the other ſide of the River.

Ver. 16. *And Shimei the Son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, haſted and came down with the Men of Judah, to meet King David.*] Hoping *David* would receive him kindly in ſuch good Company.

Ver. 17. *And there were a thouſand Men of Benjamin with him,*] He was nobly attended, to ſhow how powerful he was, and what an Intereſt he had in his Country: And yet came to implore the King's Mercy. Perhaps he was a Captain of a Thouſand in his own Tribe: Who came with him to intercede for his Pardon.

And Ziba the Servant of the Houſe of Saul, and his fifteen Sons and his twenty Servants with him,] See ix. 10.

And they went over Jordan before the King.] They were ſo officious as to go further than the Men of *Judah*, to the other ſide of *Jordan*, where the King was: Before whom they paſſed over.

Ver. 18. *And there went over a Ferry-boat.*] Prepared, as many ſuppoſe, by the Men of *Judah*. *Joſephus* will have it a *Bridge*; compoſed perhaps of many Boats joined together.

To carry over the King's Houſhold, and to do what he thought good: To carry over what he pleaſed to order.

And Shimei the Son of Gera fell down before the King, as he was come over Jordan;] As ſoon as he landed.

Ver. 19. *And ſaid unto the King, Let not my Lord the King impute Iniquity to thy Servant, neither do thou remember that which thy Servant did perverſely in the Day that my Lord the King went out of Jeruſalem, that the King ſhould take it to his heart.*] Reſent it ſo deeply as to be reveng'd of him.

Ver. 20. *For thy Servant doth know that I have ſinned:*] He profeſſes himſelf ſenſible of the Crime he had committed, and was ſorry for it.

Therefore behold, I come the firſt this Day of all the Houſe of Joſeph, to go down to meet my Lord the King.] To ſhew by his Example, what the reſt ſhould do: And, as the *Hebrew* Doctors gloſs upon it, they would all ſee in him an Inſtance either of *David*'s Clemency or Severity; and accordingly behave themſelves. He was not properly of the Houſe of *Joſeph*, but of a Tribe near of kin to it: So that at this Time, it ſeems, they looked upon themſelves as Members of the ſame Body; being deſcended from the ſame Mother: And they continued ſo 'till the Kingdom was rent. For *Benjamin* is placed between *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh* (the two Sons of *Joſeph*) in *Pſalm* lxxx. 2. and they marched under the ſame Standard, *Numb.* ii. 18, 19, *&c.*

Ver. 21. *But Abiſhai the Son of Zeruiah anſwered and ſaid, Shall not Shimei be put to death for this, becauſe he curſed the Lord's Anointed?*] He would have gone and done Execution upon him, at that Time when he curſed (xvi. 9.) and now he imagined there could be no Reaſon to ſpare him.

Ver. 22. *And David ſaid, What have I to do with you, ye Sons of Zeruiah,*] It ſeems *Joab* joined with his Brother: Who thought to govern all the King's Motions as they pleaſed. But he bids them, in a diſdainful manner, ſtand aſide, and not meddle in this Matter.

That ye ſhould this day be Adverſaries unto me?] Hinder me from following my own Inclinations, and ſet my People againſt me. For by following this Advice, he might have alienated the Hearts of

of all *Iſrael* from him, and made them fear the the like Puniſhment for their Revolt.

Shall any Man be put to death this day in Iſrael?] In a time of univerſal Joy, he would not have any Family have Cauſe to make Lamentation. It was accounted an ill Omen among other Nations, if any Man was put to death on the King's Birth-day: And this was a ſecond *Natalis Imperii*, Birth-day of *David*'s Empire; which he would not have ſullied with any Cloud of Sorrow.

For do I not know that I am this day King of Iſrael?] He had Power to puniſh, or to pardon, as he pleaſed: And being reſtored to his Kingdom, would not enter upon it with Blood.

Ver. 23. *Therefore the King ſaid unto Shimei, Thou ſhalt not die: and the King ſware unto him.*] That he would not put him to death. But this did not oblige him not to give ſuch a Charge as he did to *Solomon*, to do Juſtice upon him for any new Diſobedience. Nothing is more glorious than Mercy and Clemency, as the Heathens themſelves were ſenſible. *Cæſar* ſaith in a Letter of his to *Oppius* and *Cornelius* (which is among *Cicero*'s *Epiſtles*) *Hæc nova eſt vincendi ratio*, &c. This is a new way of conquering, to ſence our ſelves by Mercy and Liberality, *L.* 9. *Epiſt. ad Atticum.*

Ver. 24. *And Mephiboſheth the ſon of Saul.*] That is, his Grand-ſon.

Came down to meet the King, and had neither dreſſed his Feet,] But wholly neglected himſelf, as they uſed to do in a Time of publick Sorrow. For the not dreſſing his Feet ſignifies (as *Schickard* and others underſtand that he had not cut the Nails of his Toes; but let them grow, as he did his Beard. It may be underſtood of his not waſhing his Feet; the Neglect of which made Men very ſordid. For in thoſe Countries, they lying upon Beds when they eat (as *Scaliger* obſerves in his Sixth Book *de Emend. Temporum*) put off their Shoes, and waſhed their Feet, *ne pulveroſis pedibus ſtrata inquinarent*, leſt they ſhould defile the Carpets, with their duſty Feet. Beſides, in hot Weather the Smell of their Feet without waſhing was offenſive.

Nor trimmed his Beard,] He not only let the Hair grow, but took no care to put it in good Order. For the Words in the *Hebrew* are, *he had not done any thing to his feet, nor any thing to his beard.*

Nor waſhed his Clothes.] His Shirt, nor any of the Linnen which he wore. As for their woollen Garments, they were not wont to waſh them.

From the day the King departed, until the day he came again in peace.] This long-continu'd Mourning argued him to be really afflicted for the King's Exile.

Ver. 25. *And it came to paſs, when he was come to Jeruſalem to meet the King,*] It is manifeſt from the foregoing Verſe, that he came down from ſome other Place to *Jeruſalem* to meet the King: But could not meet him ſooner, as others had done, becauſe *Ziba* had got his Eſtate, and, it is likely, would not furniſh him with an Aſs, no more than he had done when *David* fled away.

That the King ſaid unto him, Wherefore wenteſt thou not with me, Mephiboſheth?] As Prudence, as well as Gratitude obliged him.

Ver. 26. *And he anſwered, My Lord, O King, my Servant deceived me; for thy Servant ſaid, I will ſaddle my Aſs, and ride thereon, and go to the King; for thy Servant is lame.*] He had ordered an Aſs to be made ready for him to carry him to *David*: Inſtead of which, *Ziba* ſaddled it for himſelf; and went with that falſe Story, which is mentioned xvi. 3.

Ver. 27. *And he hath ſlandered thy Servant unto my Lord the King; but my Lord the King is an Angel of God:*] To diſcern between Truth and Falſhood.

Do therefore what is good in thy ſight.] And therefore he ſubmits himſelf intirely to his Judgment, and truſted to his Kindneſs.

He had great Reaſon ſo to do, as he confeſſes in the next words.

Ver. 28. *For all my Father's Houſe were but dead Men before my Lord the King: yet dideſt thou ſet thy Servant among thoſe that did eat at thy own Table:*] The undeſerved Benefits he had received from *David* made him abſolutely reſign himſelf to his Will and Pleaſure.

What right therefore have I yet to cry any more to the King?] He did not challenge any thing as his Right, nor thought it decent to trouble the King further with his Complaints.

Ver. 29. *And the King ſaid unto him, Why ſpeakeſt thou any more of thy matters?*] As if he had ſaid, Enough, Enough; I deſire to hear no more of the Injuries done me by the Houſe of *Saul*.

I have ſaid, Thou and Ziba divide the Land.] Some of the *Hebrew* Doctors underſtand this, as if he now parted the Eſtate formerly given to *Mephiboſheth*, between him and *Ziba*; partly out of Shame, leſt he ſhould appear too raſh and haſty of Belief, in giving all to *Ziba*, and partly out of Suſpicion that the too great Wealth of *Mephiboſheth* might make him ambitious. But they acknowledge this Sentence to be unjuſt, *Ziba* making no Defence for himſelf. And ſome of them ſay, a Voice from Heaven was heard thereupon, ſaying, that God would make the like Diviſion of *David*'s Kingdom, between *Reboboam* and *Jeroboam*. But if we carefully attend to the Words, they carry another Senſe in them; being as much as if he had ſaid, *My firſt Grant ſhall ſtand*; when he decreed that *Mephiboſheth* ſhould be Lord of the Land, and *Ziba* ſhould manage it for him, ix. 10. See *Selden de Succeſſionibus, Cap.* 25. *Fol.* 89, 90. where he makes out this very clearly.

Ver. 30. *And Mephiboſheth ſaid unto the King, Yea, let him take all, foraſmuch as my Lord the King is come again in peace unto his own houſe.*] Nothing could be more generouſly ſpoken, nor ſignified greater Affection, than that he was content to be a Beggar, now that the King was reſtored to his Kingdom.

Ver. 31. *And Barzillai the Gileadite came down from Rogelim,*] A Place in Mount *Gilead*.

And went over Jordan with the King, to conduct him over Jordan.] Meerly to bring him on his Way ſo far, and then return.

Ver. 32. *Now Barzillai was a very aged Man, even fourſcore years old,*] Which was a great Age in *David*'s Days, *Pſal.* xc. 10.

And he had provided the King of Suſtenance, while he lay at Mahanaim: for he was a very great Man.] And had a very large Heart, which moved him to ſupply the Wants of *David*, and all his Family and Attendants, as long as he ſtayed at *Mahanaim*, which was a conſiderable time. *Pliny* relates, that *Craſſus* denied any Man to be rich, who was not able to maintain a Legion, *Lib.* 33. *Natural. Hiſtor. Cap.* 10. where he mentions one that entertained all *Xerxes*'s Army at a Feaſt: But here was a far more rare Example of Virtue in *Barzillai*, who maintained not a proſperous Prince in all his Glory, but a diſtreſſed Prince in his Exile, when no hope appeared of a Reward.

Ver. 33. *And the King ſaid unto Barzillai, Come over with me, and I will feed thee with me at Jeruſalem.*] Entertain him at his own Table, as a ſingular Friend.

Ver. 34. *And Barzillai ſaid unto the King, How long have I to live, that I ſhould go up with the King unto Jeruſalem?*] He excuſes himſelf, by ſeveral Reaſons, for not accepting the King's Kindneſs; and the firſt is, becauſe as he was unfit for travel ſo far, ſo for ſo ſhort a time as he had to live, it was not prudent to change his Dwelling.

Ver. 35. *I am this day fourſcore Years old, and can I diſcern between Good and Evil?*] Theſe general Words are explained by the Particulars which follow.

Can thy Servant taſte what I eat and drink? can I hear any more the Voice of ſinging Men, and ſinging Women?] His ſecond Reaſon is, that the King's Kindneſs would be ill beſtowed upon one that had no Reliſh left of any of the Pleaſures of a Court.

Wherefore then ſhould thy Servant be a burden unto my Lord the King?] A third is, that inſtead of doing the King any Service, he ſhould prove a Burden to him; for old Men muſt have ſome to wait on them, and take care of them.

Ver. 26. *Thy Servant will go a little way over Jordan with the King:*] Expreſs his dutiful Affection to him as far as he was able.

And why ſhould the King recompenſe me with ſuch a reward?] Since he had but done his duty to his Sovereign, he did not expect to be ſo highly rewarded for it.

Ver. 37. *Let thy Servant, I pray thee, turn back again, that I may die in my own City, and be buried by the Grave of my Father and of my Mother:*] He beſeeches him for a fourth Reaſon, not to preſs him to go further; but ſuffer him to enjoy that which old Men naturally deſire; to die in the Place where they have lived; and to be buried with their Anceſtors.

But behold thy Servant Chimham, let him go over with my Lord the King, and do unto him what ſhall ſeem good unto thee.] That he might not ſeem rude in refuſing the King's gracious Offer, he deſires him to tranſlate his Kindneſs to his Son, and beſtow upon him what he pleaſed.

Ver. 38. *And the King anſwered, Chimham ſhall go over with me, and I will do unto him that which ſhall ſeem good unto thee:*] He would not have it left to his Choice what he ſhould do for *Chimham*; but deſires the good old Man to ſay what he would have for him, and it ſhould be done. We do not read what *Barzillai* aſked, or what *David* did for him: But there being mention made in *Jer.* xli. 17. of *the habitation of Chimham*, and that near to *Bethlehem*, it is a very reaſonable Conjecture of *Grotius*, in his Annotations on that Place, that *David* having a Patrimony in the Field of *Bethlehem*, the Place of his Nativity, *Jus ibi habitandi, & fructus quoſdam ſuos faciendi dedit Chimhamo*, he beſtowed it upon *Barzillai*'s Son; and from thence this Place took the Name of *Chimham*, which remained 'till the Days of *Jeremiah*.

And whatſoever thou ſhalt require of me, that will I do for thee.] He promiſes withal, that when *Barzillai* was gone home, if he had any Occaſion to petition him, his Requeſt ſhould be granted.

Ver. 39. *And all the People went over Jordan: and when the King was gone over, the King kiſſed Barzillai, and bleſſed him;*] They parted with great Kindneſs, and the King prayed God to requite what *Barzillai* had done for him

And he returned to his place,] With great Satisfaction, that he had ſeen his Sovereign in his way to be reſtored to his Kingdom.

Ver. 40. *And the King went on to Gilgal, and Chimham went with him:*] As one of his near Attendants.

And all the People of Judah conducted the King, and alſo half the People of Iſrael.] That is, the Elders, and great Men both of *Judah* and *Iſrael*. To gratify his own Tribe, *David* marched on, not expecting the coming of all the great Men of *Iſrael*, who were making themſelves ready to wait upon him.

Ver. 41. *And behold, all the Men of Iſrael came to the King, and ſaid unto the King,*] When the other half of the *Iſraelites* were got together, they thus expoſtulated with the King.

Why have our Brethren, the Men of Judah, ſtolen thee away, and have brought the King, and his Houſhold, and all David's Men with him, over Jordan?] That is, why did they make ſuch haſte, and not expect our Conſent and Aſſiſtance, who were as zealous as themſelves to bring the King back? They ſeem to take it ill, that not only *David* and his Family, but all *his Men*, i. e. his Soldiers and Guards, ſhould be brought over *Jordan*; as if they would force their way, whether the *Iſraelites* would or no.

Ver. 42. *And all the Men of Judah anſwered the Men of Iſrael, Becauſe the King is near of kin to us:*] Being of their Tribe, which juſtly required they ſhould be more forward than others in his Service.

Wherefore then be ye angry with us?] For our Affection to him.

Have we eaten at all of the King's Coſt, or hath he given us any Gift?] We get nothing by it, but have only done our Duty, and teſtified our great Affection. *Abarbinel* thinks theſe Words, *given us any gift*, import Expiation and Pardon; as in *Gen.* xviii. 26. *Numb.* vi. 26. And are as much as if they had ſaid, hath he granted us a Pardon for what we did in the Buſineſs of *Abſalom?* Whereby they ſuggeſted, that the *Iſraelites* were the principal Actors in that Rebellion, and needed an Act of Oblivion, though they did not.

Ver. 43. *And the Men of Iſrael anſwered the Men of Judah, and ſaid,*] The Words are not as before, *all the Men of Iſrael:* Which is a ſign ſome of them were cooled, though moſt of them continued violent.

We have ten Parts in the King,] By the *King* is here meant the *Kingdom: Ten Parts* of which they ſay were theirs (whereas they were *eleven* Tribes beſides *Judah*) becauſe *Simeon* being intermixed with *Judah*, it is likely now came along with them.

We have alſo more right in David than you:] As *David* was a private Perſon, *Judah* had more Intereſt in him than the reſt, becauſe he was of their Tribe: But as he was a King, the *Iſraelites* had more, being the far greater part of his Subjects.

Why then did ye deſpiſe us, that our Advice ſhould not be firſt had in bringing back our King?] They looked upon it therefore as a great Neglect, if not Contempt of them, that they had not the Precedence in this Buſineſs.

And the Words of the Men of Judah were fiercer than the Words of the Men of Iſrael.] More vehement: or, they were too hard for them in their Argument. *David* did not think fit to interpoſe; which made the Men of *Iſrael* think he favoured *Judah*, and thence aroſe a new Rebellion.

CHAP. XX.

Verſe 1. *AND there happen'd to be there*] When this Contention fell out between the Men of *Iſrael* and *Judah*.

A Man of Belial, whoſe Name was Sheba the ſon of Bichri, a Benjamite,] Who perhaps was of kin to *Saul*, as *Shimei* was (xvi. 5.) and one of the Commanders in *Abſalom*'s Army next to *Amaſa*. For ſo *Victorinus Strigelius* underſtands the *Hebrew* Words, *Iſch Bichri*, to ſignify *unus ex Proceribus*, a Noble Man, of great Power and Authority among the People: like *Catiline* at *Rome*.

And he blew a Trumpet, and ſaid, we have no part in David, neither have we Inheritance in the Son of Jeſſe:] As much as to ſay, let the Men of *Judah* have him to themſelves. He cares not for us, and we care not for him.

Every Man to his Tents, O Iſrael.] He wiſhes all the Men of *Iſrael*, ſince *David* expreſſed no more Regard to them, to go to their Homes, and trouble themſelves no further in bringing him back.

Ver. 2. *So every Man of Iſrael went up from after David, and followed Sheba the Son of Bichri:*] Inſtead of going home, they followed their ſeditious Incendiary: Taking it in ſnuff (as we ſpeak) that the King did not expect 'till they, who were the Majority, came to conduct him: But relied ſolely on the Men of *Judah*, as if they were able, without the reſt of *Iſrael*, to reeſtabliſh him in his Throne.

But the Men of Judah clave unto their King from Jordan even to Jeruſalem.] Not a Man of them ſtirred from him, but conducted him from *Jordan* to *Jeruſalem*. And we muſt not think that all the Men of *Iſrael* forſook him: But a very great Number of them. For *Shimei* in all likelihood, and his thouſand Men, ſtuck to him, though of the ſame Tribe with *Sheba*; otherwiſe *David* would have puniſhed him, when this Rebellion was quelled.

Ver. 3. *And David came to his Houſe at Jeruſalem, and the King took the Women his Concubines whom he had left to keep the Houſe, and put them in ward,*] Shut them up cloſe under a Guard, *and fed them.* Nobody came to them, but only to bring them daily Proviſion for their Suſtenance.

But went not in unto them:] Never lay with them: But looked upon them as become impure to him; having been defiled by his Son.

So they were ſhut up unto the Day of their Death, living in Widowhood.] They were not fit for any body elſe, being Royal Wives: And therefore he did not give them a Bill of Divorce, but ſhut them up cloſe, that no Man might enjoy them. And indeed it was not prudent to let them be ſo much as ſeen abroad: Which would have renewed the Remembrance of *Abſalom*'s Filthineſs.

Ver. 4. *Then ſaid the King unto Amaſa, Aſſemble me the Men of Judah*] He makes good his Promiſe to *Amaſa:* Which was a great Encouragement to others in the Tribe of *Judah*, to ſtick faſt to their King. And by this means alſo the ſeditious *Iſraelites* might be the ſooner brought to Reaſon; when they ſaw their old General in the Field againſt them.

Within three Days,] Becauſe the Buſineſs required ſpeedy Diſpatch.

And be thou here preſent.] To receive his Orders.

Ver. 5. *So Amaſa went to aſſemble the Men of Judah; but he tarried longer than the ſet Time which he had appointed him.*] He was not treacherous unto *David* (as the *Jewiſh* Doctors in the *Sanhedrim* ſay *Joab* repreſented him, and made it the Reaſon of his killing him) but he found difficulty in the Buſineſs: Becauſe the People had an high Opinion of *Joab*, and would not eaſily be brought to ſerve under a new General. This *Amaſa*, it is likely, was loth to report to the King, becauſe it would diminiſh his Authority, and repreſent him as uncapable to ſerve the King in the Office wherein he had placed him.

Ver. 6. *And David ſaid to Abiſhai,*] He perſiſted in his Reſolution to depreſs *Joab*; but employed his Brother, who was the next great Commander in the Army. Whom he doth not create Captain of the Hoſt; but for fear this Delay ſhould prove prejudicial, bids him take ſuch Forces as he found ready in *Jeruſalem*, and purſue *Sheba*.

Now ſhall Sheba the Son of Bichri do us more harm than did Abſalom:] If he had Time to gather an Army: The People being highly incenſed by the Provocation the Men of *Judah* had given them.

Take thou therefore thy Lord's Servants,] The Guards that attend *David*, and the ſtanding Forces, which were always kept on foot.

And purſue after him, leſt he get him fenced Cities, and eſcape us.] So that they muſt be put to the trouble of laying a long Siege to the Place where he was.

Ver. 7. *And there went out after him Joab's men,*] A Body of Men whom he particularly commanded.

And the Cerethites and the Pelethites, and all the mighty Men:] See upon viii. 18.

And they went out of Jeruſalem to purſue after Sheba the Son of Bichri.] For *David* thought himſelf ſafe enough in the Love of the City of *Jeruſalem*, and the reſt of the People thereabouts.

Ver. 8. *And when they were at the great Stone which is in Gibeon,*] The Place of Rendevouz (as we now ſpeak) appointed by *Amaſa* for the Men of *Judah*. Which was, as *Joſephus* ſaith, an hundred Furlongs from *Jeruſalem*.

Amaſa went before them:] As their Commander in chief.

And Joab's Garment that he had put on,] As ſoon as *Amaſa* arrived at the Army, *Joab* alſo came there as a Voluntier, of his own accord: Or rather, was there before with *Abiſhai*. Yea, *Joſephus* takes it, as if *David* had ſpoken thoſe Words (*ver.* 6.) unto *Joab*, telling him it was not ſafe to delay, and therefore bids him take ſuch Forces as they had ready, and go with his Brother *Abiſhai*. Ἰωβὸς δὲ οὐκ ἔτι μέλλειν ἔκρινεν, ἀλλὰ τὸν τὲ ἀδελφὸν καὶ τὰς ἑξακοσίας παρέλαβε, &c. He reſolv'd not to ſtay to gather more Forces: But with his Brother, and ſix hundred Men, and all the Force they had in *Jeruſalem*, marched out to purſue *Sheba*.

Was girded unto him, and upon it a Girdle, with a Sword faſtened to his Loins, in the Sheath thereof.] He had no Armour on, but ſuch a Garment as Soldiers wore, cloſely girt to him: And upon it a Belt, in which a Sword hung by his Side. Yet *Joſephus* ſaith he had a Breaſt-Plate, θώρακα ἐνδεδυμένον, as well as μάχαιραν περιζωσάμενον, begirt with a Sword.

And as he went forth] To meet *Amaſia*, πολλὴν δύναμιν ἀναγόντα, who led numerous Forces to that Place, as the ſame Author ſpeaks.

It fell out.] He had hung it ſo, that it might drop out of the Sheath when he pleaſed. And it fell out juſt as he went to ſalute and embrace *Amaſa*: Who ſeeing him ſtoop to take it up, imagined it was only to put it into the Sheath again.

Ver. 9. *And Joab ſaid unto Amaſa, Art thou in health, my Brother?*] He enquired in a friendly manner of his Welfare.

And Joab took Amaſa by the Beard with his right hand to kiſs him.] This is the Cuſtom ſtill among the Eaſtern People, the *Indians*: Who take one another by the Chin, or the Beard, when they would give an hearty Salute; and ſay *Bobba*, i. e. Father; or *Bii*, i. e. Brother, as the Author of the Voyage to the *Eaſt-Indies* relates, at the end of *Peter de Valle* his Travels, *page* 410.

Ver. 10. *And Amaſa took no heed to the Sword that was in Joab's hand:*] Which he thought he had put into his Sheath; and did not obſerve that he held it in his Left Hand, which it ſeems he could manage as well as the Right.

So he ſmote him therewith in the fifth rib,] See iii. 17.

And ſhed out his Bowels to the ground, and ſtrook him not again, and he died:] He gave him ſuch a Wound, that his very Bowels guſhed out; and there was no need to give him a ſecond Stroke.

And Joab, and Abiſhai his Brother, purſued after Sheba the Son of Bichri.] Hereupon *Joab* immediately, without any Order, reſumed his Command, and *Abiſhai* durſt not oppoſe him, but yielded it up to him. For his Authority was ſo great among the Soldiery, that none of *Amaſa*'s Men durſt ſtir to avenge his Death; the *Cerethites* and *Pelethites*, and all *David*'s Guards ſubmitting to him: And beſides, all *Amaſa*'s Men were not yet come up, but followed by degrees, as appears by the reſt of the Story.

Ver. 11. *And one of Joab's Men ſtood by him,*] By the Command of his Maſter; who knew this would make ſome Diſorder among *Amaſa*'s Soldiers.

And ſaid, He that favoureth Joab, and he that is for David,] He cunningly joins theſe two together, as if their Intereſt was inſeparable.

Let him follow after Joab.] He was grown ſo inſolent, becauſe *David* durſt not puniſh him; that as it made him venture upon this bloody Fact, ſo he preſumed, that though the Sight of *Amaſa*'s dead Body might ſtop the March of thoſe that came by it; yet upon the Declaration his Officer made, that now he was become General of the Army, their Love to him was ſuch, that they would make no ſcruple to follow him.

Ver. 12. *And Amaſa wallowed in Blood in the midſt of the High-way:*] He ſeems not to have been quite dead, though ſenſeleſs: But had ſo much Life, that he rolled to and fro in his own Blood, which was a doleful Sight.

And when the Man ſaw that all the People ſtood ſtill,] *Joab* was deceived in his Meaſures, for the People hated this Fact, as much as they loved him. And therefore as many as ſaw it, would move no further till the Body was removed out of the way: ſo that they who were behind, went without any ſtop after *Joab*.

He removed Amaſa out of the High-way into the Field, and caſt a Cloth upon him, when he ſaw that every one that came by him ſtood ſtill.] This was a prudent Officer; who expected no Orders, but of his own accord removed that out of ſight, which hindered their Purſuit of *Sheba*.

Ver. 13. *And when he was removed out of the High-way, all the People went on after Joab, to purſue after Sheba the Son of Bichri.*] They that were behind, it is likely, did not know that *Amaſa* was killed, and ſo marched on without any Scruple.

Ver. 14. *And he went through all the Tribes of Iſrael*] That is, *Sheba* rambled about the Country, from one City to another; to excite the People to take up Arms againſt *David*. But *Joſephus* refers this to *Joab*, that he followed *Sheba* from place to place, till he came where he was

Unto Abel, and Beth-Maachah,] Or rather unto *Abel Beth-Maachah*: For they were one and the ſame Place, as appears by the next Verſe. And ſo *Joſephus*, who ſaith it was a ſtrong City well fortified in the Tribe of *Napthali*, in the northern Parts of *Judæa*; upon the Borders of that Part of *Syria*, where *Maachah* was, x. 8. In this City *Sheba* at laſt ſettled himſelf, and reſolved to

defend it: Being unable, I ſuppoſe, to raiſe ſuch an Army, as to keep the Field.

And all the Beerites:] Among whom he had been before he came hither, and got ſome conſiderable Forces among them. For they were of the City *Beeroth* (it is probable) and the Parts adjacent: Which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, of which he was a Member, and perhaps dwelt in this City, *Joſh.* xviii. 25.

And they were gathered together, and went alſo after him.]. Unto *Abel Beth-Maachah.*

Ver. 15. *And they came*] That is, *Joab* and his Men purſued him thither.

And beſieged him in Abel of Beth-Maachah, and they caſt up a Bank againſt the City,] Raiſed Fortifications round about it, from whence to batter it.

And it ſtood in the Trench:] That is, *Joab*'s Army had advanced ſo far, that they had filled up the Trench: And there ſtood at the very Foot of the Wall.

And all the People that were with Joab battered the Wall, to throw it down.] Some battered it with Engines from the Forts: While thoſe at the Bottom of the Wall undermined it, to throw it down. So *Joſephus.*

Ver. 16. *Then cried a wiſe Woman of the City,*] A Woman of great Underſtanding, who alſo could ſpeak well. Many ſuch there were in *Iſrael*, it appears by her of *Tekoah*, and *Abigail*; and the Mother of King *Lemuel.*

Hear, hear; ſay I pray you unto Joab, come near hither, that I may ſpeak with thee.] She prays thoſe that were at the Bottom of the Wall, to ſtop their Proceedings a while: And deſires *Joab* to come and hear what Propoſitions ſhe had to make to him.

Ver. 17. *And when he was come near unto her, the Woman ſaid, Art thou Joab? and he anſwered, I am he.*] She was unwilling to treat with any one, but him who had Power to agree to what ſhe propounded.

Then ſhe ſaid unto him, Hear the Words of thine handmaid. And he anſwered, I do hear.] He did not deſpiſe her becauſe ſhe was a Woman; but, as became a wiſe Man, gave her a favourable Audience, and attended to what ſhe ſaid.

Ver. 18. *Then ſhe ſpake, ſaying, They were wont to ſpeak in old time, ſaying, They ſhall ſurely aſk counſel at Abel: and ſo they ended the matter.*] According to this Tranſlation of the Words, ſhe praiſes the City of *Abel* as famous, Time out of Mind, for Wiſdom, and giving ſound Advice: And now ſhe would have him believe, was not without Perſons of great Prudence, and Fidelity alſo (as it follows in the next Verſe) who would not willingly offend their King. But there is another Tranſlation in the *Margin* of our Bibles, which I take to be more literal; by referring the Word *Bariſhonah* not to *old Time*, but to the *beginning* of the Siege. As if ſhe had ſaid, when the People ſaw thee lay ſiege to the City, they ſaid ſurely they will aſk us if we will have Peace; and then we ſhall ſoon come to an Agreement, and make an end. Whereby ſhe ſecretly remembers *Joab* of a Rule in the Law, *Deut.* xx. 10. which commands them to offer Peace to the Cities of other Nations, when they came to beſiege them; and therefore much more to a City of their own, as *Abel* was. To this purpoſe *R. Solomon Jarchi*; and it agrees well with what follows, that they were a peaceable People, and faithful to their Prince: And therefore would not have refuſed to yield, upon Summons, to him. *R. Levi Ben Gerſom* gives another Senſe of them; that *Sheba* and his Company, when they firſt came into the City, aſked if they would follow him, and ſaid no more: To whom the Men of the City anſwered, we are peaceable and faithful: That is, we cannot join with thee and rebel againſt King *David.* But there is a late Writer, who thinks the Words will bear this Senſe: This was a common Saying in old Time, if any one aſked whether *Abel* was a place of Juſtice and Judgment, or a Den of Thieves; the Anſwer was, they are an upright People. And therefore ſhe aſks *Joab* why he went about to deſtroy a City ſo famous for Virtue. Thus *Mayerus* in his *Annotations* on *Seder Olam Rabbi*, Cap. 14.

Ver. 19. *I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Iſrael:*] She ſpeaks in the Name of the whole City: which was of a peaceable Temper; and had been faithful to *David* in the Time of the late Revolt.

Thou ſeekeſt to deſtroy a City, and a Mother in Iſrael:] A great City, which had many Towns depending on it; and therefore called a Mother.

Why wilt thou ſwallow up the Inheritance of the LORD?] Do an Injury to the Publick; by depopulating a Part of the Country, which is God's peculiar.

Ver. 20. *And Joab anſwered and ſaid, Far be it, far be it, that I ſhould ſwallow or deſtroy.*] Do you the leaſt Hurt, if I can avoid it. He diſclaims any ill Intentions twice, ſaith *R. Solomon*; as if he had ſaid, far be it from me, far be it from the King to deſign any ſuch Thing.

Ver. 21 *The Matter is not ſo:*] You are not rightly informed.

But a Man of Mount Ephraim,] He is ſaid before (*ver.* 1.) to be of the Tribe of *Benjamin*: But he lived, I ſuppoſe, in Mount *Ephraim.*

Sheba, the Son of Bichri by name, hath lift up his Hand againſt the King, even againſt David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the City.] And leave all *Sheba*'s Party at liberty to go home, without any Puniſhment.

And the Woman ſaid unto Joab, Behold, his Head ſhall be thrown unto thee over the Wall.] She had reaſon to be confident that both the Citizens and Soldiers would be glad to ſave themſelves, by giving up him, who had brought them into imminent Danger.

Ver. 22. *Then the Woman went unto all the People in her Wiſdom,*] Deſired they would all meet in the common Hall; where ſhe told them what Terms ſhe had made for them with *Joab:* unto which they immediately conſented.

And they cut off the head of Sheba, the Son of Bichri, and caſt it out to Joab:] It ſeems his Party was not ſtrong in the City; or ſeeing it likely to be taken, they were glad to accept of the Conditions the Woman had made for them.

And he blew the Trumpet, and retired from the City, every Man to his Tent:] Raiſed the Siege, and went home.

And Joab returned to Jeruſalem unto the King.] To give him an Account of his good Succeſs.

Ver. 23.

Ver. 23. *Now Joab was over all the Hoſt of Iſrael:*] Now that *David* was reſtored to his Kingdom, and eſtabliſhed in it, he ſettled all the great Officers who were to govern under him: And continued *Joab* in the chief Command of the Army, which was ſo much at his devotion, that he found it dangerous to diſplace him.

And Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada was over the Cerethites, and over the Pelethites:] As he was alſo before (viii. *ult.*) being a very valiant Man (xxiii. 20.) whom *Solomon* made Commander in chief of the whole Army (as now he was Captain of the King's Guards) after the Death of *Joab*

Ver. 24. *And Adoram was over the Tribute:*] Treaſurer, or Receiver of the King's Revenue. Which Office was non ſettled before; becauſe in the Beginning of his Reign, it is likely *David* had no great Revenue.

And Jehoſhaphat the Son of Ahilud was Recorder:] See upon viii. 16.

Ver. 25. *And Sheva was Scribe, and Zadok and Abiathar were Prieſts:*] It is uncertain whether *Sheva* be the ſame with *Seraiah* mentioned viii. 17. Or, *Seraiah* being dead or diſplaced, this Man came in his room. Concerning theſe *Prieſts*, ſee viii. 17.

Ver. 26. *And Ira alſo the Jairite*] He had his Original in the Country of *Jair* the *Gileadite*, on the other ſide *Jordan* (*Numb.* xxxii. 41.) who is not mentioned before, but now was made a great Officer.

Was a chief ruler about David.] The *Hebrew* Word *Cohen* (as hath been often obſerved) ſignifies any Miniſter, either Sacred, or Civil: A *Prieſt*, or a *Prince*. Inſtances of the laſt are many, and the *Targum* thus expounds it here, *Rab le David*, a Prince, or great Man about *David*. And ſo the *Prieſt of On*, *Gen.* xli. 50. and the *Prieſt of Midian*, *Exod.* ii. 26. ſignify the Prince or Ruler of *On*, and of *Midian*. As in *Job* xii. 19. We, following the *Chaldee*, tranſlate it, *God leadeth Princes away ſpoiled.*

CHAP. XXI.

Verſe 1. *THen there was a famine in the days of David, three years, year after year,*] The *Jewiſh* Doctors commonly ſay this Famine was before the Rebellion of *Abſalom*. But *Abarbinel* will have it, that Things are related here in the Order wherein they were done; ſo that this was after that Rebellion was ended.

And David inquired of the LORD,] For what Sin ſo grievous a Puniſhment was inflicted: Suſpecting (as *Abarbinel* thinks) God might ſtill puniſh him for thoſe Sins he committed in the Matter of *Uriah*.

And the LORD *anſwered, It is for Saul, and for his bloody Houſe,*] God ſoon comforted him, by letting him know that this Puniſhment was upon the account of *Saul* and his Family, who had been deeply engaged in Blood.

Becauſe he ſlew the Gibeonites.] When he ſlew the whole City of *Nob* (ſaith the ſame *Abarbinel*) where the *Gibeonites* lived, and ſerved as Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water to the Prieſts, whom *Saul* then cut off, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 18, 19. But the ſame great Man hereupon enquires, why God did not ſend this Famine rather for the Slaughter of the Prieſts, than of the *Gibeonites?* Of which he gives this Account, that the Slaughter of the Prieſts was puniſhed before, by the Slaughter of *Saul* and of his Sons, in the Battle with the *Philiſtines*, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. and now he was puniſhed in the Sons of his Concubines, and all *Iſrael* ſuffered with them by Famine, becauſe they did not hinder him from mudering the *Gibeonites*, by remembring him of the Oath which was made to them; nay, perhaps, they approved of what he did, being glad to ſee the Land rid of Foreigners. But why this Judgment was not executed before, may ſeem ſtrange, till we conſider, as he obſerves, that the Counſels of God are profound; and he hath excellent Reaſons, why he puniſhes Sinners not now, but hereafter: And knows which of their Children are moſt worthy to be puniſhed, and bear the iniquity of their Fathers. And the longer he ſtays before he ſtrikes, the more evident it is, that he doth not forget what the evil Men have done, though he doth not preſently declare his Anger againſt it. He obſerves alſo, that the *Gibeonites* being Drawers of Water, God put the *Iſraelites* in mind of their Offence, by with-holding Rain from them: Juſt as his refuſing to anſwer *Saul* by *Urim*, was a ſuitable Puniſhment for his murdering the Prieſts who conſulted God by that Oracle.

Ver. 2. *And the King called the Gibeonites, and ſaid unto them (now the Gibeonites were not of the children of Iſrael, but of the remnant of the Amorites, and the Children of Iſrael had ſworn unto them: and Saul ſought to ſlay them in his Zeal to the Children of Iſrael and Judah)*] Which tranſported him to violate a ſolemn Oath: As many ſince have done, under pretence of the publick Good.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore David ſaid unto the Gibeonites, What ſhall I do for you?*] He asks them what Satisfaction they deſired, for the Wrong that had been done them. Which may ſeem ſtrange, unleſs we ſuppoſe, as *Joſephus* doth, that God told him when he conſulted him, not only for what Crime he ſent this Puniſhment, but that he ſhould take, δικὴν ἣν αὐτοὶ θέλωσιν, ſuch a Revenge for it, as the *Gibeonites* would have. Beſides, they had never made any Complaint to *David* of the Injury which had been done them: Who might therefore be the kinder to them, and give them leave to name the Recompence that ſhould be made them.

And wherewith ſhall I make an atonement, that ye may bleſs the Inheritance of the LORD?] Pray to God to be pacified alſo; and to reſtore Plenty unto *Iſrael* again.

Ver. 4. *And the Gibeonites anſwered unto him, We will have no Silver nor Gold of Saul, nor of his Houſe; neither for us ſhalt thou kill any Man in Iſrael.*] Except thoſe that they afterwards mentioned. For they ſeem to have been People truly proſelyted to the *Jewiſh* Religion; who deſired nothing but equal Juſtice; that Men ſhould ſuffer as they have done: And therefore *Saul* having not taken away their Money, but their Lives; they deſired only that the Lives of ſome of his Family might pay for it.

And

And he ſaid, What you ſhall ſay, that will I do for you.] If they had deſired Money, or any thing elſe that was in his power, they might have had it.

Ver. 5. *And they anſwered the King, The man that conſumed us, and that deviſed againſt us that we ſhould be deſtroyed from remaining in any of the Coaſts of Iſrael,*] He intended, if not to kill, yet to baniſh them all: Which had been worſe than Death; for it would have deprived them of the Liberty of worſhipping the true God.

Ver. 6. *Let ſeven Men of his Sons be delivered unto us,*] Some imagine, that at the firſt they demanded all the Houſe of *Saul* to be delivered up unto them: But upon cooler Thoughts they demanded only ſeven Perſons.

And we will hang them up unto the LORD] To appeaſe his Anger, and vindicate his Honour. Some think this was a barbarous Cuſtom in thoſe Days (which certainly prevailed in future Times) to hang Men up, to appeaſe the Anger of their Gods, in time of Famine. Which *Johannes Geuſius* fancies the *Gibeonites* had formerly uſed, and now propounded it to *David* as a Means to make the Earth more fruitful, *De Victimis Humanis, Pars* 1. *Cap.* 14. *p.* 310, *&c.* and *P.* 2. *Cap.* 14. *p.* 312. which he imagines to be the Reaſon why it is obſerved (*ver.* 2.) that the *Gibeonites* were not of the Children of *Iſrael*, but of the Remnant of the *Amorites:* To ſhew whence this horrid Superſtition proceeded; of which ſome Tang ſtill remained amongſt them. The Vulgar here tranſlates it, *ut crucifigamus eos*, that we may crucify them. Which miſled *Serrarius* and ſome others into this Error, that Crucifixion was a Puniſhment anciently among the *Jews:* Which *Caſaubon*, *Selden*, and ſeveral other great Men have ſhewn to be falſe.

In Gibeah of Saul,] To make the Puniſhment the more remarkable and ſhameful: This being the City where he lived, both before and after he was King, 1 *Sam.* x. 26. xi. 4.

Whom the LORD did chooſe.] This aggravated his Guilt, that he was ſo highly favoured by God, and yet obeyed not his Commands: But ſpared the *Amalekites*, whom God commanded him to deſtroy; and killed theſe poor *Gibeonites*, whom he was bound by the Oath of God to preſerve.

And the King ſaid, I will give them.] This ſeems to be contrary to the Divine Law, *Deut.* xxiv. 16. that the Son ſhould not die for the Father's Fault. To which ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors thought it ſufficient to anſwer, *It is better that one Letter ſhould be taken out of the Law, than that the Name of God ſhould be publickly profaned:* That is, that one Precept, rather than an Oath, ſhould be broken. But there is no need of this; for, as *Abarbinel* judiciouſly obſerves, the Law in *Deuteronomy* is to be underſtood of Proceedings in Human Courts, not of the Divine Judgments; for God viſits the Sins of the Fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth Generation, *Exod.* xx. 5.

Ver. 7. *And the King ſpared Mephiboſheth the Son of Jonathan, the Son of Saul, becauſe of the LORD's Oath that was between them; between David and Jonathan the Son of Saul.*] Not meerly his Affection to *Jonathan*, but his Dread of breaking the Oath he had made to him, moved him to preſerve *Mephiboſheth*; leſt he himſelf ſhould incur the ſame Puniſhment which *Saul* fell under, for breaking the Oath made to the *Gibeonites*.

Ver. 8. *But the King took the two Sons of Rizpah the Daughter of Ajah,*] Who was a Concubine of *Saul*, as we read afterwards, *ver.* 11.

Whom ſhe bare unto Saul, Armoni and Mephiboſheth,] After whoſe Name perhaps *Mephiboſheth* the Son of *Jonathan* was called.

And five Sons of Michal the Daughter of Saul, whom ſhe brought up] In the *Hebrew*, *whom ſhe bare, i. e.* which were born: According to an uſual manner of ſpeaking among the *Hebrews*; of which ſee Dr. *Hammond* upon *Luke* xvi. Note *b*.

For Adriel] It is plain from hence, that by *was born* is meant, as we tranſlate it, was *brought up*. For *Michal* was not the Wife of *Adriel*, but was given to *Phaltiel*, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 44. *Merab* her elder Siſter being married to *Adriel*, 1 *Sam.* xviii. 19. by whom ſhe had theſe five Sons, whom *Michal* brought up, and therefore they are called her Children. Thus the *Jews* ſay, in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. 2. *Merab brought them forth, and Michal educated them.* And the like we read (as they alledge for the Proof of this) *Gen.* xxx. 3. *L.* 23. See *Selden De Uxore Hebr. Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 6. *Kimchi* alſo here alledges the Words of the Women in *Ruth* iv. 17. *There is a Son born to Naomi*; who was not the Mother of it, but only laid it in her Boſom, and became Nurſe to it, as is ſaid in the precedent Verſe. Thus alſo *Raſi*, *Ralbag*, and a great many other *Jews*, following the *Chaldee Paraphraſe*. And we have an Example of this in the Heathen Writers. For *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus* are called Sons of *Atreus*, becauſe their Father being dead, he took care to bring them up. So *Euſtathius* on the Second Book of the *Iliads*. *Pliſthenes* (who was their Father) *being dead*, the Youths being bred up by *Atreus*, αὐτῷ παῖδες ἐκλήθησαν, they were called his Children.

The Son of Barzillai the Meholathite.] This laſt Word is intended to diſtinguiſh him from the other *Barzillai* the *Gileadite:* For this was of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, to which *Abel Meholah* belonged.

Ver. 9. *And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the LORD:*] In a conſpicuous Place, where they might be ſeen by all that paſſed by. *David* did not command his Officers to hang them up, but delivered them to the *Gibeonites*, that they might diſpoſe of them as they pleaſed.

And they fell all ſeven together, and were put to death in the days of harveſt, in the firſt days, in the beginning of barley-harveſt.] That is, ſay the *Jews*, on the ſixteenth of *Niſan*, a little after the Paſſover.

Ver. 10. *And Rizpah the Daughter of Ajah took ſackcloth, and ſpread it for her upon the rock,*] It is probable, ſhe both made a Tent of it to dwell in, and ſpread it upon the Ground to lie upon.

From the beginning of Harveſt, until water dropped upon them out of Heaven,] From the ſixteenth of *Niſan* (as the *Hebrew* Doctors underſtand it) 'till

'till the ſeventeenth of *Marcheſvan*; that is, from the middle of our *March* to the middle of *October*; when God ſhewed he was reconciled, by ſending Showers down upon the Earth; which might be, for any thing we know, in the middle of Summer. And indeed *Abarbinel* thinks this Opinion of their Doctors is not true; but that the plain Meaning is, they hung from the beginning of Harveſt, 'till God was intreated for the Land, and was pleaſed to ſend them Rain; for want of which, they ſuffered by Famine. And he thinks it probable, that not long after they were hung up, they had plentiful Showers by the good Providence of God, though it was Summer-time; whereby it appeared God was appeaſed: But by their hanging there ſeveral Days, it is manifeſt this was not a Legal Puniſhment (and therefore *David* committed it to the *Gibeonites*, and did not execute it by his own Officers) but an extraordinary one, inflicted by thoſe who were not bound by that Law, *Deut.* xxii. 24. which in this caſe was violated.

And ſuffered neither the Birds of the air to reſt on them by day, nor the Beaſts of the field by night.] She had Servants no doubt to attend her, who kept a conſtant Watch Day and Night, to fright away the Birds and Beaſts.

Ver. 11. *And it was told David what Rizpah the Daughter of Ajah, Saul's Concubine, had done.*] Which did not diſpleaſe him, nor the *Gibeonites* neither (as far as appears) but was accounted a laudable thing; which excited *David* to the Imitation of her. I obſerved before, that *Saul* had but one Wife, and we read of no more than this one Concubine; which ſhews his Moderation in ſome things, which was praiſe-worthy.

Ver. 12. *And David went and took the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his Son, from the men of Jabeſh-Gilead, which had ſtolen them from the ſtreet of Beth-ſhan, where the Philiſtines had hanged them, when the Philiſtines had ſlain Saul in Gilboa.*] See 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 10. This noble Act of *Rizpah* moved *David* to do ſome Honour to the Carcaſes of her Sons, and to the whole Houſe of *Saul:* And for that End he ſent for the Bones of *Saul* and *Jonathan*, to inter them and thoſe Children of *Saul*'s with their Anceſtors. Which piece of Generoſity demonſtrated that he had no perſonal Enmity to the Family of *Saul*.

Ver. 13. *And he brought up from thence the bones of Saul, and the bones of Jonathan his Son;*] From under the Tree where they were buried in *Jabeſh*, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 13.

And they gathered the bones of them that were hanged.] Which ſeems to have been done ſome time after they were taken down, when nothing but their Bones remained; and then they had all ſeven an honourable Interment, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And the bones of Saul, and of Jonathan his Son*] Together with thoſe now mentioned.

Buried they in the Country of Benjamin in Zelah,] Which was in that Tribe, *Joſh.* xviii. 28.

In the Sepulchre of Kiſh his Father;] It was accounted very deſirable to be buried with their Parents; as appears by old *Barzillai*, xix. 37.

And they performed all that the King commanded:] They that were employed in this Buſineſs, gave them a ſolemn Burial, with all the Mourning that was uſual in the Funerals of Kings; as the *Hebrew* Doctors expound it.

And after that God was intreated for the land.] When Satisfaction was given to the *Gibeonites* for the Injuries done to them, God reſtored Plenty to the Country.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, the Philiſtines had yet war again with Iſrael,*] That is, after all the Wars before-mentioned in this Book with the *Philiſtines*, they again diſturbed *David*'s Repoſe in the latter End of his Reign. Some indeed will have theſe Wars to have been preſently after the War with the *Ammonites* was ended; before the Rebellion of *Abſalom*. But *Abarbinel*, I think, well reſolves, that the Hiſtory of this War is not miſplaced, but that it fell out not long after the Famine before-mentioned.

And David went down, and his Servants with him,] It is not ſaid where this Battle was fought (as the Place of the other three following is mentioned) but it is likely to have been near to the Country of the *Philiſtines*; unto which *David went down*; for it lay low, towards the Sea-ſide.

And fought againſt the Philiſtines; and David waxed faint.] Being in his declining Years; or rather of a great Age, and much worn out by various Troubles and Afflictions.

Ver. 16. *And Iſhbi-benob, which was of the Sons of the giant*] That is, of *Goliath*; who by way of Eminency is called the Giant; though *Bochartus* thinks the *Hebrew* Word *Rapha* ſignifies any Giant; and ſo theſe Words ſhould be tranſlated, *of the Race of the Giants*, i. e. of the *Anakims* who fled into this Country, particularly to *Gath*, when *Joſhua* expelled them from *Canaan*, *Joſh.* xi. 22.

(The weight of whoſe ſpear weighed three hundred Shekels of braſs in weight)] This is to be underſtood of the Head of his Spear, which weighed half as much as that of *Goliath*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 7.

He being girded with a new Sword,] The Word *Sword* is not in the *Hebrew*; nor is there any thing remarkable in his having a new Sword; therefore it ſhould be tranſlated, *with a new kind of Weapon*, or rather, *with a new Belt*; which had been beſtowed upon him as a Reward of ſome great Exploit which he had done; or as a Token of ſome new Honour, or Command conferred upon him in the Army. See xviii. 11.

Thought to have ſlain David.] Being ſtronger than he; and having him at an advantage, when by ſome Accident, he was ſeparated from his Army; as *Joſephus* underſtands it.

Ver. 17. *But Abiſhai ſuccoured him.*] Came in ſeaſonably to his Relief.

And ſmote the Philiſtine, and killed him.] The Words leave it doubtful whether he was ſlain by *Abiſhai*, or by *David*. Our Tranſlation ſeems to incline to the former: but if *David* was not the Perſon that killed him, I do not ſee how that can be verified, which is ſaid in the End of this Chapter, that all theſe Giants *fell by the hand of David and of his Servants*; for he ſlew none of them, unleſs it were this.

Then

Then the Men of David ſware to him, ſaying, Thou ſhalt go no more out with us to battle,] They had adviſed this before, when they went to fight with *Abſalom*, xviii. 3. But now they peremptorily decreed it, and ſolemnly confirmed it with an Oath.

That thou quench not the Light of Iſrael.] Leſt he ſhould be killed, and thereby they ſhould loſe the Glory of having ſuch a King reign over them; for good Kings are called the *Light* of their People (1 *Kings* xi. 36. xv. 4.) becauſe by their wiſe Government, Conduct and Courage, they made their People happy and illuſtrious.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs after this, that there was a Battle again with the Philiſtines at Gob:*] Which was alſo called *Gezer*, as *Abarbinel* thinks, 1 *Chron.* xx. 4. Or, they were ſo near one another, that the Battle was in the Confines of both.

Then Sibbechai the Huſhathite] One of *David*'s Worthies, 1 *Chron.* xi. 29.

Slew Saph, which was of the Sons of the Giant.] One of the ſame Race of the *Rephaims*; who ſeem to be deſcended from the *Anakims*.

Ver. 19. *And there was again a battle in Gob with the Philiſtines,*] This was a Place, it ſeems, very proper for Armies to draw up in; for here they fought twice.

Where Elhanan the Son of Jaare-Oregim a Bethlehemite,] He is ſimply called the Son of *Jair*, 1 *Chron.* xx. 5. and is reckoned among *David*'s Worthies, 1 *Chron.* xi. 26. and there ſaid to be the Son of *Dodo*; who, I ſuppoſe, was his Grandfather.

Slew the Brother of Goliath the Gittite,] The Word *Brother* is ſupplied out of 1 *Chron.* xx. 5. where his Name is ſaid to be *Lahmi*.

The Staff of whoſe Spear was like a Weaver's beam.] 1 *Sam.* xvii. 7.

Ver. 20. *And there was yet a battle in Gath,*] In the Territory belonging to it.

Where was a Man of great ſtature,] The LXX tranſlate it, *a Man of Madon:* who was born, that is, in a Place called by that Name.

That had on every hand ſix Fingers, and on every foot ſix Toes, twenty-four in number;] If we may believe *Tavernier* (in his Relation of the *Grand Signior's Seraglio*, p. 95.) the eldeſt Son of the Emperor of *Java*, who reigned in the Year 1648, when he was in that Iſland, had ſix Fingers on each Hand, and as many Toes on each Foot; all of equal length.

And he alſo was born to the Giant.] Was one of the *Rephaim* of that Country.

Ver. 21. *And when he defied Iſrael,*] In imitation of the great Giant *Goliath*, confiding, as he did, in his monſtrous Strength.

Jonathan, the Son of Shimea, the Brother of David, ſlew him.] We read of this Brother of *David* in 1 *Sam.* xvi. 9. where he is called *Shammah*. But this Son of his is not reckoned among *David*'s Worthies, 1 *Chron.* xi.

Ver. 22. *Theſe four were born to the Giant in Gath,*] Here *Rapha* ſeems to ſignify *Goliath*, the moſt famous Giant; if one of them had not been his Brother.

And fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his Servants.] The firſt of them was ſlain by *David* (*Abiſhai* aſſiſting) the reſt by the great Men, who were about him. See *ver.* 17.

CHAP. XXII.

Verſe 1. *AND David ſpake unto the LORD the words of this Song, in the day that the LORD had delivered him out of the hand of his Enemies,*] It is commonly thought *David* penned this Pſalm, towards the End of his Life, after all the Victories mentioned in the foregoing Chapter. Thus *Raſi, in the Time* of his old Age, and *Kimchi, in the Concluſion of his Day:* But *Abarbinel*, who contends earneſtly that all things fall out in the Order wherein they are related in this Book, is of a quite different Opinion here; and will have it that he compoſed this Song in his Youth, in the midſt of all his Straits and Difficulties; out of which when God delivered him, he ſung this Song of Praiſe unto him. So that by the Words, *in the Day that the LORD delivered him*, he thinks is meant, that every time he received any Deliverance from God, his uſual Method was to acknowledge it thankfully in the Words of this Song; which was compoſed at firſt for his own private Uſe: But in the End of his Days, he thought fit to communicate it to others; and therefore put it into the Book of *Pſalms*, that it might ſerve for the uſe of thoſe which might be in the like Straits, and receive the like Mercies. And then alſo he reviewed it, and made ſeveral Alterations in it; which, little and great, amount, as he obſerves, to ſeventy-four in Number. And this he did, as he thinks, to make his Meaning plainer; and that the People might not miſtake it. And there is ſome ground for part of what he ſaith; for the xviiith *Pſalm* is directed to the *Chief Muſician*; which ſhews it was then intended for publick Uſe: Whereas here is nothing ſaid of that, and therefore it is probable it remained for ſome time a piece of private Devotion.

And out of the hand of Saul.] He may be thought to be comprehended under the Name of his *Enemies:* But they (as the ſame *Abarbinel* obſerves) were properly the People of other Nations, who made War upon him; of whom he ſpeaks in *Pſal.* cxxxix. 21, 22. *Do not I hate them that hate thee?* &c. *I account them mine Enemies.* Now though *Saul* cruelly perſecuted *David*, yet it did not become *David* to call him his Enemy, and one that he hated: For he loved *Saul*, and therefore doth not number him among his Enemies; but in a particular manner, to diſtinguiſh him from them, adds, *and out of the hand of Saul.*

Ver. 2. *And he ſaid, the LORD is my Rock, and my fortreſs, and my deliverer,*

Ver. 3. *The God of my Rock, in him will I truſt: he is my Shield, and the horn of my Salvation, my high Tower, and my Refuge, my Saviour: thou ſaveſt me from violence.*] This great Heap of Metaphors, as *Strigelius* obſerves, is a large Paraphraſe upon the firſt Commandment; declaring God alone to be his Confidence: In whom he placed all his Strength, Safety, Security and Happineſs. The Conſequence of which is, that we ſhould love God with all our

our Heart, and Soul, and Strength (as *Moſes* adds after that Precept, *Deut.* vi. 4, 5. x. 12.) and therefore *David* adds that, when he reviewed this Pſalm; and begins it thus; *I will love thee, O LORD, my Strength*, &c. *Pſalm.* xviii. 1. See my Paraphraſe upon that *Pſalm*; where I have ſufficiently explained theſe Verſes.

Ver. 4. *I will call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praiſed: ſo ſhall I be ſaved from mine Enemies.*] See in that *Pſalm*; where there are the very ſame Words. Upon which the forenamed *Strigelius* piouſly obſerves; that as the Πανοπλία of a Soldier doth him no Service, unleſs he put it on, to defend himſelf and offend his Enemy, ſo no Protection, or Help from God is to be expected (who is ſo powerful as before deſcribed) unleſs we apply our ſelves unto him by Prayer and Praiſes.

Ver. 5. *When the Waves of Death compaſſed me about, and the Floods of ungodly Men made me afraid.*] Theſe Words in this Verſe differ from the Words in *Pſalm* xviii. but the Senſe is the ſame: That he was in a ſinking Condition, and ſaw no way to eſcape; being over-power'd by Troops of ungodly Men, who like a Torrent threatned to ſweep him away.

Ver. 6. *The Sorrows of Hell compaſſed me about, and the Snares of Death prevented me.*] He was ſo intangled in their Snares, that he had no more Power to help himſelf, than a dead Man bound Head and Foot in his Grave. For ſo the Word *Sheol*, which we tranſlate *Hell*, here ſignifies.

Ver. 7. *In my Diſtreſs I called upon the LORD, and cried to my God,*] He did not deſpair when he was at this plunge; but made his Addreſſes to him who is Omnipotent: Moſt earneſtly beſeeching him to deliver him, as he had often done.

And he did hear my Voice out of his Temple, and my Cry did enter into his Ears.] There is very little Difference between theſe Words and thoſe in *Pſalm* xviii. The Meaning of which is, that God gave him a gracious Anſwer from his Sanctuary, or from Heaven (of which the Sanctuary was a Type) and ſhewed that he was ſenſibly touched with his Affliction.

Ver. 8. *Then the Earth ſhook and trembled:*] The Terror which God ſtruck into his Enemies, is compared to an Earthquake: Which makes every body tremble, as it did the Jaylor, *Acts* xvi. 29.

The Foundations of Heaven moved and ſhook,] In *Pſalm* xviii. the Words are, *the Foundations of the Hills:* Which explains what he here means by *Heaven, viz.* Mountains lifted up to Heaven. Or, he repreſents the Dread which fell upon his Enemies, by the Conſternation which an Earthquake cauſes, when it is accompanied with Thunder, Lightning, and Hail from Heaven, in a great Tempeſt. We do not read that there were literally ſuch Storms, Tempeſts and Earthquakes for *David*'s Deliverance: But if there were, it need not ſeem ſtrange, when prophane Hiſtory informs us of God's interpoſing after this manner, in ſome Caſes. For *Strigelius* obſerves out of *Livy*, that in the eighth Year of the ſecond *Punic* War, when *Hannibal* and the *Romans* were drawn up in Battel and ready to fight (upon which the Fortune of the City of *Rome* depended) there fell ſuch a Shower of Rain and Hail, as confounded both Armies: So that being ſcarce able to hold their Arms, they retreated unto their Camps. And on the next Day, in the very ſame Place, the like Tempeſt parted them: And as ſoon as they came into their Camps, there was a wonderful Serenity and Tranquillity.

Becauſe he was wroth.] Highly diſpleaſed at their Enmity to *David*.

Ver. 9. *There went up a Smoke out of his Noſtrils, and Fire out of his Mouth devoured: Coals were kindled at it.*] Theſe are very high Metaphors, to expreſs the moſt flaming Degree of Anger; and the dreadful Effects of it.

Ver. 10. *He bowed the Heavens alſo and came down: and Darkneſs was under his feet.*] The Divine Majeſty appeared in a glorious Cloud, deſcending from Heaven: Which at the bottom was all dark; but above, bright and ſhining, with an amazing Luſtre.

Ver. 11. *He rode upon a Cherub,*] To *ride*, in the *Hebrew* Language (as *Maimonides* obſerves) is to rule, to govern, to manage with an abſolute Power, that on which one is ſaid to ride; and to diſpoſe of it as he pleaſes. *More Nevochim*, P. 1. Cap. 70. And therefore to *ride upon a Cherub*, or to make the Clouds his Chariot (which is the very ſame, becauſe Angels were wont to appear in bright Clouds) is to ſend his Heavenly Miniſters whither he thinks good, to execute his Pleaſure.

And did fly:] Made haſte to ſuccour and relieve *David*, when he was in great Diſtreſs.

And he was ſeen upon the Wings of the Wind.] A rapid Wind ſhewed that he was preſent to overturn all Oppoſition. See 1 *Sam.* v. 24.

Ver. 12. *And he made Darkneſs Pavillions round about him, dark Waters, and thick Clouds of the Skies.*] This is ſtill a Deſcription of the Angelical Powers, who ſurrounded him on all ſides as his Miniſters; ready to be imployed, which way he thought fit to ſend them. For *Andreas Cæſarienſis* truly obſerves in his Commentary on the *Revelation*, that whenſoever we read in the Sacred Books of Clouds, or thick Darkneſs, we are always to underſtand, ὑπηρέτας τῶν θείων πραγμάτων, ſome Miniſtry ready to ſerve in Divine Affairs.

Ver. 13. *Through the Brightneſs before him were Coals of Fire kindled.*] Thoſe Heavenly Miniſters going forth from his Glorious Preſence, ſent Hail-ſtones and Lightnings (as in the Days of *Joſhua*, x. 11.) in the Face of his Enemies.

Ver. 14. *The LORD thundered from Heaven, the moſt High uttered his Voice.*] Thunder is called the Voice of God, in *Pſalm* xxix. Which he ſent forth in ſuch terrible Cracks accompanied with Flaſhes of Fire, that quite daunted his Enemies.

Ver. 15. *He ſent out Arrows, and ſcattered them; Lightning, and diſcomfited them.*] Theſe were the Weapons whereby they were vanquiſhed; Lightnings were the Darts and Arrows that made them turn their Backs and run away.

Ver. 16. *And the Channels of the Sea appeared, the Foundations of the World were diſcovered at the rebuking of the LORD, at the blaſt of the Breath of his Noſtrils.*] This is the Deſcription of a great Earthquake, which rent it in ſunder,

and made such Breaches in it, that the very Bottom of it was discovered. And this was the Effect of God's just Indignation against his Enemies.

Ver. 17. *He sent from above, he took me:*] He sent his Angels to rescue and protect *David.*

He drew me out of many Waters.] Delivered him from innumerable Dangers compared to Waters breaking out upon a Country, to overflow it.

Ver. 18. *He delivered me from my strong Enemy,*] First from *Goliah*, afterwards from many others, as we read in the foregoing Chapter xxi. 16, 17, &c.

And from them that hated me:] The *Philistines*, the *Syrians*, and other Nations; whose Hatred to him made them set themselves against him, to destroy him.

For they were too strong for me.] Their Forces were more numerous than his, and would have overpowered him, if the LORD had not been his Helper.

Ver. 19. *They prevented me in the Day of my Calamity: but the LORD was my Stay.*] When he was in a weak Condition, unable to defend himself, *Saul* suddenly came upon him, and had destroyed him, if the LORD had not been his Support. See 1 *Sam.* xxii. 9. xxiii. 14, 26. xxiv. 2, 3, &c.

Ver. 20. *He brought me forth also into a large Place:*] When his House, for instance, was beset by *Saul*'s Officers, who watch'd to kill him, as he came out in the Morning; he escaped by the help of his Wife, and got to *Samuel* and *Ramah*, where he was at liberty to go whither he pleased, 1 *Sam.* xix. 11, 18.

He delivered me, because he delighted in me.] In many other Straits he afterwards delivered him: Because he had a Kindness for him, and resolved to make him King of *Israel.*

Ver. 21. *The LORD rewarded me according to my Righteousness: according to the Cleanness of my Hands hath he recompensed me.*] God knew also that he was innocent of what he was accused; and had no design to do *Saul* any hurt, 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 11, 12, &c. xxvi. 23.

Ver. 22. *For I have kept the ways of the LORD, and have not wickedly departed from my God.*] He took no unlawful Courses to preserve himself: But when *Saul* fell into his hands, he would not hurt him; because he was God's Anointed. See there 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 11, 12, 13. and xxvi. 19, &c.

Ver. 23. *For all his Judgments were before me:*] He made God's Commands the Rule of his Actions.

And as for his Statutes, I did not depart from them.] In *Psalm* xviii. the Words are, *I did not put away his Statutes from me:* That is, bid them stand aside, and give way to his Interest; but strictly observed them.

Ver. 24. *I was also upright before him, and kept my self from mine Iniquity.*] This is still spoken with respect to *Saul.* For though he offended afterwards grievously against God's Laws, yet he chose rather to suffer any thing than do *Saul* any harm: And nothing could tempt him to that Iniquity, unto which he was invited by fair Opportunities. 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 4. xxvi. 8, &c.

Ver. 25. *Therefore the LORD has recompensed me according to my Righteousness: according to my Cleanness in his eye-sight.*] According to *David*'s Prayer; which is very remarkable, 1 *Sam.* xxvi. 23. where he desires God to deal with him as he had dealt with *Saul:* With whose Blood he would not defile his Hands, when it was in his power to take Revenge.

Ver. 26. *With the merciful thou wilt shew thy self merciful, and with the upright Man thou wilt shew thy self upright.*] This is the common Method of God's Providence, to do good to those that do good to others: And to do them Justice, who do not swerve from the Rules of Righteousness when they are injuriously treated by their Neighbours.

Ver. 27. *With the Pure thou wilt shew thy self pure:*] Faithfully keep his Promises to those who are faithful to him.

And with the Froward thou wilt shew thy self unsavory.] Declare how much he distastes and abhors those that take deceitful Courses to bring about their Ends. In *Psalm* xviii. the Words are, *with the Froward thou wilt shew thy self froward*; that is, he insnares those in their own Devices, who perversely take crooked Ways to compass their Designs: which unexpectedly end in their Destruction.

Ver. 28. *And the afflicted People thou wilt save: but thine Eyes are upon the haughty, that thou mayst bring them down.*] He is wont to deliver poor helpless People, who humbly depend on him, and not on any unlawful Means for Safety: But he contrives Ways to lay those low, who (proud of their Power) insolently oppress them.

Ver. 29. *For thou art my Lamp, O LORD: and the LORD will lighten my Darkness.*] *David* himself was an instance of this; whom from a despicable, God raised to an illustrious Condition: and when he concluded he should perish (1 *Sam.* xxvii. 1.) advanced him to Royal Splendor and Greatness.

Ver. 30. *For by thee I have run through a Troop: by my God I have leaped over a Wall.*] Now he seems to celebrate the wonderful Works of God, after the Persecution of *Saul* was over, and he was made King. When numerous Enemies assaulted him; but he broke and scattered them all. And particularly (which seems to be meant by the last Words) he scaled the highest Walls, whereby his Enemies thought themselves securely defended. See Chap. v. of this Book, *ver.* 6, 7, &c.

Ver. 31. *As for God, his Way is perfect;*] By the *Way of God*, here seems to be meant his Counsels, Proceedings and Methods of his Providence: Which for the present may appear to us perplexed: but in the issue will be seen to be perfectly just, and agreeable to his Promises; as it here follows.

The Word of the LORD is tried:] The Experience of all good Men tells us, that he never failed to be true to his Word: which is freer from all Deceit, than the most refined Gold is from Dross.

He is a Buckler to all them that trust in him.] So that none can hurt those that put themselves under his Protection, with a pious Confidence in him.

Ver. 32. *For who is God, save the LORD?*] For none can defeat his Intentions, or resist his Will.

And

And who is a Rock ſave our God?] There are none ſo powerful, as to be able to hurt thoſe whom he will protect; or to defend thoſe whom he will deſtroy. Of this word *Rock*, ſee *Deut.* xxxii. 4, 31.

Ver. 33. *God is my Strength and Power:*] What great Men would *Scipio* and others have been, if they had been poſſeſſed with ſuch a Senſe of God, as to have acknowledged that all their Courage, and Conduct, and mighty Victories were owing to his Power. But no Warrior was ever like to *David*, who had God in all his Thoughts, and acknowledged all his great Acts to be performed by the Divine Aid.

And he maketh my Way perfect.] Removed all Obſtacles out of his way, to the compleating of his Conqueſts. See v. 10.

Ver. 34. *He maketh my Feet like Hind's Feet:*] This is commonly thought to relate to the Swiftneſs of *Hinds*; and ſo I have taken it in my Paraphraſe on the Pſalms: But *Bochartus* hath made it probable, that it hath reſpect to the Firmneſs of their treading; which is very remarkable, as he ſhews in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 3. *C.* 17.

And ſetteth me upon my high Places.] He was enabled to purſue his Enemies with great Celerity, and without tripping: Even unto ſuch Places, as for their Height and Craggineſs were thought inacceſſible.

Ver. 35. *He teaches my Hands to war: ſo that a Bow of Steel is broken by mine Arms.*] He aſcribes all his Strength and Dexterity to God: Who enabled him to wreſt the ſtrongeſt Bow out of his Enemies hands, and break it in pieces.

Ver. 36. *Thou haſt alſo given me the Shield of thy Salvation:*] And when he was in great Dangers, God protected him: As he did in the Battel mentioned in the foregoing Chapter (*ver.* 16, 17.) when *Iſhbi-benoth* had ſlain him, if *Abiſhai* had not ſtept in for his timely Succour.

And thy Gentleneſs hath made me great.] Theſe wonderful Deliverances he could aſcribe to nothing but the tender Mercy of God to him, when he was unworthy of his Favour.

Ver. 37. *Thou haſt enlarged my Steps under me: ſo that my Feet did not ſlip.*] When he was in great Straits, and beſet with Difficulties, God opened a wide Paſſage; and made all things ſucceed according to his Deſire. For that ſeems to be meant by his *Feet did not ſlip*, but he went on ſmoothly.

Ver. 38. *I have purſued mine Enemies and deſtroyed them: and turned not again till I had conſumed them.*] He got compleat Victories over the *Philiſtines*, *Moabites*, *Syrians*, and *Ammonites*. See Chapter viii. and x. of this Book.

Ver. 39. *I have conſumed them, and wounded them, that they could not ariſe:*] Gave them ſuch a Blow, that they were not able to renew the Fight.

Yea, they are fallen under my Feet.] Submitted themſelves unto him and ſerved him. See x. 19.

Ver. 40. *For thou haſt girded me with Strength to the Battel: them that roſe up againſt me, haſt thou ſubdued under me.*] This was remarkably fulfilled in the Rebellion of *Abſalom*; when he was in a feeble Condition, and had but few Followers: But God gave them Courage to fight, and ſuch Succeſs in the Battel, that they routed his Army; and all *Iſrael* was brought under his Obedience. See Chapter xviii.

Ver. 41. *Thou haſt alſo given me the Necks of my Enemies, that I might deſtroy them that hate me.*] This alſo was literally fulfilled, when *Sheba* raiſed a new Rebellion; and his Head was thrown over the Wall of *Abel* to *Joab*, Chap. xx.

Ver. 42. *They looked, but there was none to ſave.*] In *Pſalm* xviii. it is, *they cried:* Which may ſignify that they ſought for Help from their Allies and Confederates: But to no purpoſe.

Even unto the LORD, but he anſwered them not.] And it was too late, when other Help failed them, to ſeek for Help from God: For he had deſerted them, and would not hear their Prayers.

Ver. 43. *Then did I beat them as ſmall as the Duſt of the Earth,*] In *Pſalm* xviii. the Words are, *as the Duſt before the Wind.* He ſo entirely vanquiſhed them, that they had no more Power than the ſmall Duſt of the Earth; which is toſſed up and down with every blaſt of Wind.

I did ſtamp them as the Mire of the Street, and did ſpread them abroad.] In the forenamed *Pſalm*, *I did caſt them out as the Dirt in the Street.* That is, made them as contemptible as the Dirt in the Street, which every one tramples under his Feet.

Ver. 44. *Thou haſt alſo delivered me from the ſtrivings of the People, thou haſt made me the Head of the Heathen:*] The firſt part of theſe Words relates to the Union of the People of *Iſrael* and *Judah* under his Government, after long Contentions between them, v. 1, 2, &c. The other part to the Enlargement of his Kingdom by ſubduing his neighbouring Heathen People under him, Chap. viii. 10.

A People whom I have not known ſhall ſerve me.] Such as the *Syrians* of *Zobah*, and *Rehob*, and *Iſh-tob*, and *Maachah*: Of which *David*, it is likely, had no knowledge, 'till they came to help the *Ammonites*, x. 8.

Ver. 45. *Strangers ſhall ſubmit themſelves unto me: aſſoon as they hear, they ſhall be obedient to me.*] The very Report of his Victories, made ſome heartily ſubmit themſelves unto him: And others diſſembled their Hoſtility, and offered him their Service, x. 19.

Ver. 46. *Strangers ſhall fade away,*] Fall as withered Leaves do from the Trees.

They ſhall be afraid out of their cloſe Places.] Diſtruſting their ſtrong-holds, that they came creeping out with Fear, to ſurrender up themſelves into his hands.

Ver. 47. *The LORD liveth, and bleſſed be my Rock:*] To him he deſires all the Praiſe may be aſcribed; in whoſe Eternal Power alone he ſtill confided.

And exalted be the God of the Rock of my Salvation.] He deſires again the LORD might be magnified with the higheſt Praiſes: Who had not only preſerved him from periſhing, but exalted him to be King of *Iſrael*. For ſo the laſt Words are in the *Hebrew*, *exalted be God, the Rock of my Salvation.* Who ſafely preſerved and delivered him; and now advanced him moſt graciouſly to the higheſt Dignity.

Ver. 48. *It is God that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the People under me,*] He did not avenge himſelf, but left it to God to plead his Cauſe: Who not only puniſhed thoſe that were injurious to him, but brought many Nations under his Empire.

Ver. 49. *And that bringeth me forth from mine Enemies: thou alſo haſt lifted me up on high above them that roſe up againſt me:*] In theſe Words *David* made ſome ſmall Alteration, when he inſerted this Hymn into the Book of *Pſalms* for publick Uſe. Of which, *Abarbinel* endeavours to give a Reaſon; but he ſeems too curious in his Obſervations. The plaineſt and moſt certain of which is this: that the firſt part of theſe Words reſpect the Nations whom he ſubdued; who were properly his Enemies: And the latter the Children of *Iſrael*, when they roſe up againſt him to dethrone him.

Thou haſt delivered me from the violent Man.] After he had delivered him from *Saul*, who violently perſecuted him a long time.

Ver. 50. *Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the Heathen, and I will ſing Praiſes unto thy Name.*] He reſolved to make his thankful Acknowledgements unto God, every where: So as to make thoſe Nations whom he had ſubdued ſenſible that he aſcribed all his Victories unto him. In honour of whom he would ſing this perpetual Song.

Ver. 51. *He is the Tower of Salvation for his King:*] As he was a King by God's Appointment, and not by Uſurpation; ſo he truſted in him for the Support of his Authority.

And ſheweth mercy unto his Anointed, unto David, and to his Seed for evermore.] And he hoped the ſame Mercy which had promoted him to this Dignity, would be continued to him and to his Poſterity 'till the coming of the great King *Meſſiah*: Whoſe Kingdon ſhall have no End. See vii. 12, 13.

CHAP. XXIII.

Verſe 1. NOW *theſe are the laſt Words of David:*] He ſpake other Words recorded in the next Chapter, and in the next Book, before he died: But theſe were the laſt Words that he ſpake by the Holy Ghoſt, as *Abarbinel* expounds them. Who obſerves, that after he had compoſed the Book of *Pſalms*, and added the Hymn mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, unto it; then he ſpake theſe Words; after which the Influence of the Holy Spirit reſided on him no more. The *Chaldee* Paraphraſe (which was always highly eſteemed by the *Jews*) takes theſe Words, as if they were a Prophecy of the *Meſſiah*: For ſo it expounds them; *Theſe are the Words of the Prophecy of David, which he propheſied of the Conſummation of all things, in the Day of Conſolation, which is to come.*

David the Son of Jeſſe ſaid,] He remembers his low Condition, when God was pleaſed to make choice of him to be a King.

The Man who was raiſed up on high,] From feeding his Father's Sheep, to rule the People of *Iſrael*.

The Anointed of the God of Jacob,] The *Chaldee* hath it, anointed by the WORD of the God of *Jacob*.

The ſweet Pſalmiſt of Iſrael, ſaid,] Who was inſpired to compoſe many delightful Hymns in the Praiſes of God.

Ver. 2. *The Spirit of God ſpake by me, and his Word was in my Tongue.*] He would not have thoſe Hymns, nor what he ſpake now, looked upon as human Compoſitions: But as proceeding from a Divine Influence, conferred upon him by the Holy Ghoſt.

Ver. 3. *The God of Iſrael ſaid, the Rock of Iſrael ſpake to me,*] By *Nathan*, or by *Samuel*.

He that ruleth over Men muſt be juſt, ruling in the Fear of God: Or, as we render it in the Margin, *Be thou Ruler over*, &c. which the *Chaldee* expounds of the *Meſſiah* in this manner, *The faithful God ſpake* (ſo he interprets the word *Rock*) *I will conſtitute to me a King, he is the MESSIAH, who ſhall ariſe, and reign in the Fear of the LORD.* But this relates firſt to *David*, the Type of *Chriſt*; who was taught to rule juſtly, and in the Fear of God: That is, in the exact Obſervance of all the Divine Laws. Or, as *Abarbinel* interprets it, *When he that rules Men is juſt, then the Fear of the LORD will rule and have dominion in the Earth:* For all the People are apt to tread in the Steps of their King. So that when he that rules is juſt, it is as if he did not rule, but the Fear of the LORD ruled in the Earth.

Ver. 4. *And he ſhall be as the Light of the Morning when the Sun ariſeth,*] The Dominion of the juſt (as the ſame *Abarbinel* interprets it) ſhall be as the Morning Light when the Sun ariſeth, and the Light continually increaſes.

Even a Morning without Clouds;] Which hinder the Rays of the Sun from piercing through unto the Earth.

As the tender Graſs ſpringing out of the Earth by clear ſhining after Rain.] We have in this Tranſlation quite tranſpoſed the *Hebrew* Words, where they run thus, *from Splendor and from Rain, Graſs out of the Earth.* The Senſe of which *Abarbinel* thinks is this; it ſhall be ſuch a Morning, in which there is ſometimes Sun-ſhine, and ſometimes Showers of Rain, to make Graſs ſpring out of the Earth.

Ver. 5. *Although my Houſe be not ſo with God; yet he hath made with me an everlaſting Covenant, ordered in all things and ſure:*] Which he thus interprets; Although the Kingdom of a juſt Man, by little and little grows and increaſes; and ſometimes is clouded, and ſometimes the Light ſhines upon it: The Kingdom of *David* ſhall not be ſo, but God hath made a perpetual Covenant, *&c.*

For this is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire, although he makes it not to grow.] Or, as he interprets it, This is all my Salvation, and my Deſire, that he would not make it grow or ſhoot up (for that ſuppoſes it to be buried) but that, as was ſaid before, it may always remain in an equal manner ordered and conſerved.

It muſt be acknowledged, that there are no Words ſo obſcure in this Book, as theſe two Verſes. The Senſe of which *Ludovicus de Dieu* ſeems to me to have moſt clearly opened. The

Stability

Stability and Perpetuity of his Kingdom, ſaith he, *David* amplifies by a Compariſon from three natural Things, which are very grateful to Men, but not conſtant and ſtable; in a ſettled Order, and ſure. For the Sun ariſes, but goes down again; and the Morning may be clear, but Clouds afterwards ariſe; and the tender Graſs ſprings up, but withers away. Not ſo, ſaith he, is my Kingdom before God. It is flouriſhing, like all theſe, but perpetual: For he hath made an everlaſting Covenant with me; though ſome Afflictions have befallen me; and he hath not made all my Salvation and Deſire to grow. So he makes the firſt *Caph* of Similitude to ſtand for *three*; and to be repeated thrice, in this manner.

The God of Iſrael ſaid, the Rock of Iſrael ſpake concerning me; the juſt Man ruleth among Men: He ruleth in the Fear of God. And as the Sun ariſeth, with a ſhining Light; as the Morning is without Clouds, by reaſon of its Splendor; as from Rain the tender Graſs ſprings out of the Earth: Yet (or truly) ſo is not my Houſe with God. Becauſe he hath made an everlaſting Covenant with me; diſpoſed in all Things, and well kept and preſerved in that Order. Although he doth not make all my Salvation and Deſire to grow (that is, though ſome Adverſities happen to me and my Family) yet that always remains, which in the Covenant of God made with me, is in all Things orderly, diſpoſed, and preſerved.

Ver. 6. *But the Sons of Belial ſhall be all of them as Thorns thruſt away, becauſe they cannot be taken with Hands.*] The Kingdom of impious Men ſhall not be like the Kingdom of the Houſe of *David:* Being ſo far from being like to Graſs, which is uſeful, that they are rather like Thorns, which are rejected as hurtful and pernicious. That is, ſuch wicked Men are not fit for human Society.

Ver. 7. *But the Man that ſhall touch them, muſt be fenced with Iron, and with the Staff of a Spear.*] If any body will meddle with them, it muſt be at his peril. For ſo the word *Jimmale* (which we tranſlate *fenced*) ſignifies, *ſhall be filled*, with the Iron and the Staff of a Spear. Spears are never uſed to cut down Thorns; but Iron gives one a ſore Wound, like that which a Man receives from a Spear, when it runs into his Body, Iron and Wood withal. So the ſame *de Dieu* very judiciouſly.

And they ſhall be utterly burnt with fire in the ſame Place.] Therefore Men burn them with Fire, in the ſame Place where they grow: And ſo wicked Men are deſtroyed, where they think themſelves moſt ſecure. Which the *Targum* applies to the Judgment of the great Day, ſaying, *Their Puniſhment is in the hand of Man; but they ſhall be burnt up utterly, when the Houſe of the great Judgment appears: That they may ſit on the Throne of Judgment, to judge the World.*

Ver. 8. *Theſe be the Names of the mighty Men, whom David had;*] Now follows a Catalogue of thoſe valiant Men, who help'd to raiſe *David* to his Dignity, and preſerve him in it: Being continually with him in all his Wars. There is a Liſt of them in 1 *Chron.* xi. very different from this in ſeveral Things. But *Abarbinel* thinks that it creates no Difficulty, if we do but obſerve, that there he diſtinguiſhes them into *three Claſſes:* Thoſe that had always been with him; and they that came to him to *Ziklag*, a little before he was made King of *Judah*; and they that came to him to *Hebron*, after he was made King of all *Iſrael:* All whoſe Memories were fit to be preſerved. But here, in this Book, the Divine Writer intended only to mention the moſt excellent Heroes, who were always with him in his Wars: And for whoſe ſake he compoſed the precedent Song of Praiſes to God.

The Tachmonite that ſat in the Seat,] Or, as it is tranſlated in the Margin, *Joſheb-boſhebat the Tachmonite:* For ſo he is called in 1 *Chron.* xi. 11. *Iſhobeam*; which may well be thought the ſame Name abbreviated. He *ſat in the ſeat* (as we tranſlate it here) in the Council of War; next to *Joab:* being, it is thought, his Lieutenant-General. For that he was one of the *Sanhedrin*, who ſat in the Seat of Judgment, as ſome would have it, is not probable: Though it is likely theſe were Men of great Wiſdom, as well as Valour: And this Man being called a *Chachmonite*, *Abarbinel* thinks it was becauſe he was a Man of Learning, being given to Study as well as Fighting: For in *Hebrew* the Word *Chacham* ſignifies a wiſe Man: As this was, no queſtion, in Military Affairs, if not in Affairs of State, and other ſorts of Wiſdom.

Chief among the Captains,] The principal Commander, as I ſaid, under *Joab*. Who is not here mentioned, though he was a great Man, inferior to none of theſe: But had ſtained himſelf by the baſe Murder of two great Perſons, *Abner* and *Amaſa*. Which ſome take to be the Reaſon, why he had not the Honour to be put into the Number of thoſe Worthies who ſerved *David*.

(The ſame was Adino the Ezrite)] It is thought he had two Names, and was of the Family of the *Ezrites:* Though *Abarbinel* will have his Name to have been *Adinohaezri*.

He lift up his Spear] Theſe Words are ſupplied out of 1 *Chron.* xi. 11.

Againſt eight hnndred, whom he ſlew at one time.] In that Place of the *Chronicles* it is ſaid he killed three Hundred: That is, after the Slaughter he made in one Battle, of eight Hundred; but killed in another (as *Kimchi* underſtands it) three Hundred.

Ver. 9. *And after him was Eleazar the Son of Dodo the Ahothite, one of the three mighty men with David,*] He was a *Benjamite*, for *Ahoah* was one of his Sons, 1 *Chron.* viii. 4.

When they defied the Philiſtines] As *Goliath* had done the *Iſraelites*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 1.

That were there gathered together to battle,] In *Paſdammim*, as we read, 1 *Chron.* xi. 17. which in the ſame with *Epheſ-dammim*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 1.

And the Men of Iſrael were gone away.] Fled from before the *Philiſtines*, as it is explained 1 *Chron.* xi. 13.

Ver. 10. *He aroſe, and ſmote the Philiſtines until his hand was weary,*] With the Slaughter that he made.

And his hand clave unto his Sword:] Being all beſmeared with Blood; which drying by the Heat of it, made the Sword cleave to his Hand.

And

And the LORD wrought a great Victory that day;] Like that of *Shamgar*, *Judges* iii. *ult.* and of *Samſon*, xv. 13. where I have ſhewn theſe are not incredible Stories; God inſpiring Men with wonderful Courage, and ſtriking a Terror into their Enemies. There were Men in ancient Times of prodigious Strength, mentioned by *Pliny*, *Lib.* 7. *Nat. Hiſtor. Cap.* 20.

And the People returned after him only to ſpoil.] They that fled rallied again, when they ſaw the Wonders he did: And followed after him, not to fight, but only to partake of the Spoil.

Ver. 11. *And after him was Shammah the Son of Agee the Hararite:*] Who is not expreſly mentioned in the Book of the *Chronicles*; but plainly implied to be engaged in this great Action. For it is ſaid, 1 *Chron.* xi. 14. that *they ſet themſelves*, *&c.* that is, *Shammah* and *Eleazar:* who joined in this Enterprize. But this Place in *Samuel* teaches us, that *Shammah* the Son of *Agee* had the chief hand in it: And therefore it is aſcribed to him.

And the Philiſtines were gathered together into a troop,] Or, as we tranſlate it in the Margin, *for Forage*. For ſo *Ralbag* interprets the *Hebrew* Word *Chajja* (which *Kimchi* takes to be a City) that they came to get ſome Suſtenance out of the Field.

Where was a piece of ground full of Lentiles:] In the *Chronicles* it is, *full of Barley*. In which there is no Difficulty, one Part of the Field being ſown with *Lentiles*, and the other Part with *Barley*.

And the People fled from the Philiſtines.] Fearing to defend the Place.

Ver. 12. *But he ſtood in the midſt of the ground and defended it, and ſlew the Philiſtines:*] So that they could neither burn the Corn, nor carry it away, nor tread it down.

And the LORD wrought a great Victory.] By his Hand: Who was one of the three moſt mighty Men, though not particularly named in the Book of the *Chronicles*. It being the manner of the Scripture, as the *Jews* obſerve, to propound that briefly in one Place, which hath been at large explained in another: As this Action of *Shammah* is here in this Book.

Ver. 13. *And three of the thirty chief*] Or, as it is in the Margin, *three Captains over the thirty*. Not the three before-mentioned, but the three that follow: Who were not ſo great as the firſt three; but yet greater than any of the Thirty whom they commanded.

Went down, and came to David in the Harveſt-time,] Or rather, as the *Hebrew* Words are, *at Harveſt*. That is, ſaith *Abarbinel*, the *Philiſtines* came to deſtroy the Fruits of the Earth, that they might famiſh the *Iſraelites:* Whereupon *David* raiſed an Army to protect and defend them in reaping of their Harveſt, when they went about it.

Unto the Cave of Adullam,] A Place where he had hid himſelf under the Perſecution of *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 1. and where he now fortified himſelf againſt the *Philiſtines:* Who in the Beginning of his Reign came with great Forces againſt him. For it is plain from 1 *Chron.* xi. 15. that there was a Rock, or Stronghold there.

And the Troop of the Philiſtines pitched in the Valley of Rephaim.] See 2 *Sam.* v. 17, 18.

Ver. 14. *And David was then in the Hold*,] As in the Place above-mentioned; near *Adullam*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 4.

And the Gariſon of the Philiſtines was then in Bethlehem.] They had poſſeſſed themſelves of this Place, and put a Gariſon into it.

Ver. 15. *And David longed, and ſaid, O that one would give me drink of the Waters of Bethlehem which are by the gate.*] The Weather being very hot (as it uſed to be in Harveſt-time) *David* was very thirſty, and ſaid to ſome about him, how glad he ſhould be of a Draught of the Waters of *Bethlehem:* Where he was born, and had lived a long time; and therefore had been accuſtomed to them, and knew how very pleaſant and refreſhing they were. But he did not ſpeak this, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, to the end that any Men ſhould venture their Lives, to fetch him ſome of this Water.

Ver. 16. *And the three mighty Men brake through the Hoſt of the Philiſtines, and drew Water out of the Well of Bethlehem, that was by the Gate, and brought it to David:*] This they did without *David*'s knowledge; and the fore-named Author obſerves three wonderful Things in this Action. Firſt, That three Men could break through the whole Hoſt of the *Philiſtines:* And when they had ſo done, durſt ſtay to draw Water out of the Well: And then carry it away with a high Hand, through the ſame Hoſt, and bring it to *David*. To which he might have added a fourth Thing, that they attempted this at the very *Gate of Bethlehem:* Where, no doubt, the Gariſon of the *Philiſtines* kept the ſtrongeſt Guard.

Nevertheleſs he would not drink thereof, but poured it out unto the LORD.] Not in that Place, where it was brought to him: But kept it (as *Abarbinel* thinks) till he had Opportunity to go to the Altar, and there poured it out unto God. Some fancy that now was the Feaſt of *Tabernacles*, when they uſed to draw Water, and pour it out: And *David* made uſe of this for that purpoſe. See 1 *Sam.* vii. 6. There are myſtical Senſes which the *Jews* pleaſe themſelves withal, about this Water, with which I ſhall not trouble the Reader.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid, Be it far from me, O LORD, that I ſhould do this: is not this the Blood of the Men that went in jeopardy of their Lives? therefore he would not drink it.*] He looked upon it no longer as Water, but as the Blood of thoſe Men who fetcht it with the Peril of their Lives: And the Blood of every thing belonged to the LORD; and was proper to be offered unto him. Some carry this ſo far to another Senſe, that they imagine *David* hereby ſhewed, it was not material Water he longed for; but the *MESSIAH*, who had the Water of Life. Who he knew ſhould be born at *Bethlehem:* Which the *Philiſtines* therefore ſhould not be able to deſtroy.

Theſe things did theſe three mighty Men,] They all joined in this hazardous Exploit: But now follows what they did ſingly.

Ver. 18. *And Abiſhai the Brother of Joab, the Son of Zeruiah, was chief among three*;] The chief of thoſe three mighty Men before-mentioned. See 1 *Chron.* xi. 20.

And he lift up his Spear againſt three hundred, and ſlew them, and had the name among three.] That

That is, was moſt eminent and famous of thoſe three.

Ver. 19. *Was he not moſt honourable of them? therefore he was their Captain:*] That is, no doubt he was worthy to be the Leader of them.

Ver. 20. *And Benajah the Son of Jehoiada, the Son of a valiant Man of Rabzeel,*] He was deſcended from valiant Anceſtors; whom he far excelled. *Rabzeel* was in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 21.

Who had done many Acts,] As *Abiſhai* alſo had done (for he ſuccoured *David* when a Giant had like to have killed him) but their greateſt Acts only are here mentioned.

He ſlew two Lion-like Men of Moab:] The *Hebrew* Word *Ariel*, ſignifies *a Lion of God*, that is, a great Lion. And it was the Name among the *Moabites* for a very valiant Man; who at this day among the *Arabians* is called *Aſſedollabi*, a Lion of God, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved out of a great many Authors in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *L.* 3. *Cap.* 1.

He went down alſo and ſlew a Lion in the midſt of a pit, in time of Snow.] This Action was the greater, becauſe in the time of Snow Lions are fiercer for want of Prey, and are then alſo fulleſt of Heat and Vigour. But it is not likely that *Benajah* went to encounter this Lion meerly to ſhew his Bravery; but, as ſome think, this was a Lion that had done much Miſchief to the Country: Which moved him to expoſe himſelf to this Combat with it. But *Bochartus* doth not think this likely; for he needed not have hazarded his Life, but have called others unto his Aſſiſtance to deſtroy this ravenous Beaſt. He thinks therefore that in a deep Snow, the Lion took ſhelter in a *Cave* (for ſo the Word we tranſlate *Pit* ſometimes ſignifies) and that *Benajah* being abroad in that ſnowy Seaſon, came into the ſame Place, to defend himſelf from the Severity of the Weather: Where he was neceſſitated to enter into a Combat with the Lion; whom he found there, and came with open Mouth to devour him: He compares him to *Alexander* the Great, upon whom a Lion of great Bigneſs running, he gave him ſuch a Wound as killed him. So did *Lyſimachus* with another. See *Hieroz. P.* 1. *Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 5. *Abarbinel* obſerves three great Things in this Action. *Firſt*, That he ſlew a Lion, which is the fierceſt of all wild Beaſts. *Secondly*, He ſlew him in a Pit, where he could not turn himſelf as he pleaſed. And *Thirdly*, In a Time of Snow, when his Hands and Feet were cold and numb; which hindred their vital Operations.

Ver. 21. *And he ſlew an Ægyptian, a goodly Man:*] A Perſon of great Stature. See 1 *Chron.* xi. 23.

And the Ægyptian had a Spear in his hand;] See there.

And he went down with a Staff,] Such as Men uſed to walk with.

And plucked the Spear out of the Ægyptian's Hand, and ſlew him with his own Spear.] This ſhews him to have been both a fearleſs Perſon, and of great Skill and Dexterity, in managing a Combat either with Man or Beaſt.

Ver. 22. *Theſe things did Benajah the Son of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighty Men.*] Who the third was is not ſaid plainly, either here, or in the Book of the *Chronicles*. *Abarbinel* thinks he might poſſibly join with the other two, but did no mighty Matter by himſelf; and ſo is not mentioned. But perhaps *Adina*, the Son of *Shiza*, might be the third: Becauſe it is ſaid, 1 *Chron.* xi. 42. that he was *a Captain of the Reubenites, and thirty with him.* Which ſeems to ſignify that he was above the Thirty, as *Abiſhai* and *Benajah* were.

Ver. 23. *He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the firſt three:*] Was not comparable to *Ahino*, and *Eleazar*, and *Shammah:* Who were like Lions; as theſe were like Lions Whelps, as *Strigelius* gloſſes.

And David ſet him over his Guard,] See Chapter viii. 18.

Ver. 24. *And Aſahel the Brother of Joab was one of the thirty;*] Now follow the Names of Thirty valiant Men, but not equal to the Worthies before-named. *Aſahel* ſeems to have been the Chief of the Thirty: And ſo ſome tranſlate the Words, *he was above the Thirty*; and ſo might be the laſt of the three of the ſecond Order of Worthies.

Elhanan the Son of Dodo of Bethlehem,] Concerning whom we find nothing recorded but this, That he was born and bred (it is likely) in the ſame Place with *David*.

Ver. 25. *Shammah the Harodite, Elika the Ancorite,*] The firſt of theſe is called *Shammoth* in 1 *Chron.* xi. 27. and he is ſaid to be an *Harorite*. Which is a very ſmall Variation, *Reſh* being put in the place of *Daleth*, as is very common in Scripture, according to the various Pronunciation of Words in divers Parts of the Country. There is a greater Difference in the Name that follows, and in many others: It being common, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, for Men to have two Names. But it is plain the ſame Perſons are here mentioned, that are in the Book of *Chronicles:* Though there (as he notes) are more added. For the Author of that Book reckons up all the chief Commanders in the Army; ſo that, though they were not heroical Perſons in themſelves, yet being great Commanders over others, *Ezra* thought fit to mention them. But here, in the Book of *Samuel*, the Prophet only numbers thoſe that were of themſelves great Heroes, not minding the chief Commanders in the Army, who were not ſo.

Ver. 26. *Helez the Paltite, Ira the Son of Ikketh the Tekoite,*] None of the memorable Acts of theſe, or of the following Worthies, are recorded; therefore all that I can ſay of them is this: That when God intended to raiſe a King to a great Height, as he did *David*, he raiſed up the Spirits of ſeveral great Men to aſſiſt him. Thus he did with *Alexander* the Great, who had *Clitus*, *Parmenio*, *Antigonus*, *Ptolemæus*, *Seleucus*, *Craterus*, and other brave Men to accompany him in all his Enterprizes: But *David* (it may be truly obſerved) in a leſs Kingdom, had far more.

Ver. 27. *Abiezer the Anethothite, Mebunnai the Huſhathite,*

Ver. 28. *Zalmon the Ahothite, Maharai the Netophathite,*

Ver. 29. *Heleb the Son of Baanah a Netophathite, Ittai the Son of Ibai out of Gibeah of the Children of Benjamin,*

Ver. 30.

Ver. 30. *Benajah the Pirathonite, Hiddai of the Brooks of Gaash,*

Ver. 31. *Abi-albon the Arbathite, Azmaweth the Barhumite,*

Ver. 32. *Eliahba the Shaabonite; of the Sons of Joshen, Jonathan.*

Ver. 33. *Shammah the Hararite, Ahiam the Son of Sharah the Hararite,*

Ver. 34. *Eliphelet the Son of Ahasbai, the Son of the Maachathite, Eliam the Son of Ahitophel, the Gileonite,*

Ver. 35. *Hezrai the Carmelite, Paarai the Arbite.*

Ver. 36. *Igal the Son of Nathan of Zobah, Bani the Gadite,*

Ver. 37. *Zelek the Ammonite, Naharai the Beerothite, Armour-bearer to Joab the Son of Zeruiah,*

Ver. 38. *Ira an Ithrite, Gareb an Ithrite,*

Ver. 39. *Uriah the Hittite: thirty and seven it all.*] Here are only thirty and six named; therefore *Joab* is supposed, by *Abarbinel*, to be the other: Who was the Head of them all.

CHAP. XXIV.

Verse 1. *AND again the Anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel,*] Because they had followed *Absalom*, says *Abarbinel*, and afterwards *Sheba* the Son of *Bichri*: For which they had not been yet sufficiently punished. But it is more likely, it was for their Luxury, now that Plenty was restored to them, after the sore Famine that fell upon them upon the score of the *Gibeonites*.

And he moved David against them,] Or, *David was moved*; that is, by *Satan*, as it is expounded in the first Book of the *Chronicles*, xxi. 1. But *Abarbinel* thinks it is as if he had said, the Anger of the LORD which was kindled against *Israel*, moved *David*, &c. That is, the same Sin which made God angry with *Israel*, was the Cause that *David* was seduced in this Thing, that they might be punished.

To say, Go number Israel and Judah.] To give Command that an Account should be taken of the Number of all the People.

Ver. 2. *For the King said to Joab the Captain of the Host*] Accordingly it no sooner came into his Heart, but he gave Orders about it to the principal Commander of his Army.

Which was with him,] Who always, when they were in War, attended on him.

Go now through all the Tribes of Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba,] From one End of the Country to the other. For *Dan* (as I have before observed) was the utmost Bounds of it in the North, as *Beer-sheba* was in the South.

And number ye the People, that I may know the Number of the People.] *Joab* was to take proper Officers with him, to assist him in this Business: So that there might be an exact Account given. See *ver.* 4.

Ver. 3. *And Joab said unto the King, Now the LORD thy God add unto the People (how many soever they be) an hundred fold, and that the Eyes of my Lord the King may see it:*] It appears by this, that *Joab* was a great Courtier, as well as a great Captain: Who knew how to divert the King from what he did not like; if good Words and Wishes would have done it.

But why doth my Lord the King delight in this thing?] For which he thought there was no Reason; and as it would be troublesome and chargeable, so there might be much Danger in it; as he expresses it in 1 *Chron.* xxi. 3.

Ver. 4. *Notwithstanding the King's word prevailed against Joab, and against the Captains of the Host:*] Who joined, it seems, with *Joab* to divert the King from this Purpose: In which he was fixed and immoveable.

And Joab and the Captains of the Host went out from the Presence of the King, to number the People of Israel.] It is most likely that their inferiour Officers went with the Captains; to expedite the Business.

Ver. 5. *And they passed over Jordan,*] They went first into the Eastern Part of the Country: and so by the Northern Coasts to the West; and then to the South.

And pitched in Aroer,] These Words seem to import, that they pitched their Tents in the Field; and thither summoned the neighbouring Towns to come in to them: Which was very troublesome, and at last proved grievous; as appears by the Book of *Chronicles*.

On the right side of the City, that lieth in the midst of the river of Gad, and towards Jazer.] We no where read of such a River: Which in the Margin is translated the *Valley of Gad*. But *Jazer* was a Town in that Tribe, *Numb.* xxxii. 35.

Ver. 6. *And they came to Gilead, and to the Land of Tathtimhodshi;*] It is in vain to seek after this Land; which is not mentioned in the Book of *Joshua*, but it is likely was near to *Gilead*; and had been lately recovered, some think, from other People, and now inhabited by the *Israelites*. See the Margin of our Bibles.

And they came to Dan-jaan, and about to Zidon.] Not to the City of *Zidon*, for that was not in their power; but to the Coast about it.

Ver. 7. *And came to the Strong-hold of Tyre,*] To the Territory near it.

And to all the Cities of the Hivites, and Canaanites:] Who lived in those North-West Parts of the Country.

And they went out to the South of Judah,] Having taken account of all the Towns upon the Sea-Coast (which was in the West) they turned to the South, into the Tribe of *Judah*.

Even to Beer-sheba.] Which was in the utmost Limits of the Country on that Side.

Ver. 8. *So when they had gone through all the Land,*] But not numbered all the People: For the Work grew so tedious, that they omitted *Levi*, and *Benjamin*; as we read, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 6.

They came to Jerusalem at the end of nine months and twenty days.] They could not well dispatch it in less Time; an Account being to be taken of every City and Village in the whole Country.

Ver. 9. *And Joab gave up the number of the People unto the King:*] All the Officers brought in their particular Sums to *Joab:* Who cast them up, and they amounted in all to the Number following.

And

And there were in Iſrael eight hundred thouſand valiant Men that drew the Sword;] They did not, it ſeems, reckon Women, and Children, and old Men; nor ſuch as were not fit for War.

And the Men of Judah were five hundred thouſand Men.] There is a great Difference between this Account and that in the *Chronicles*. For there (1 *Chron.* xxi. 5.) the Men of *Iſrael* are ſaid to be three hundred Thouſand more than are here mentioned; and, on the contrary, the Men of *Judah* are ſaid to be thirty Thouſand leſs. Of the former of which there is a plain Account, that in this Book the ſtanding Legions are not numbred: Which were very well known, they ſerving under twelve Commanders ſo many Months, 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 1, &c. But in the Book of the *Chronicles* all theſe are taken into the Number there mentioned. For the *Jews* obſerve in *Halicoth Olam*, that there being twenty-four Thouſand who waited every Month (which makes in all two Hundred eighty-eight Thouſand) allowing a Thouſand Officers (as we cannot well allow leſs) to every twenty-four Thouſand, there will be the twelve Thouſand wanting; which added to the two Hundred eighty-eight thouſand, make juſt three Hundred Thouſand: Which added to the eight Hundred Thouſand here mentioned, make up the eleven Hundred Thouſand mentioned in the *Chronicles*. The like Account *Bochartus* gives of the next Difficulty, that if twenty-four Thouſand Legionary Soldiers be added of the Tribe of *Judah* to the four Hundred and ſeventy Thouſand, it comes near to five Hundred Thouſand, *Hieroz. Pars* I. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 38. But others think there is no need of this; it being uſual in Scripture to mention a round Sum; either of Men or of Years, when ſome were wanting. So that though there were no more than four Hundred and Seventy Thouſand, yet they might be ſaid to be five Hundred Thouſand. Or, as they ſay in *Halicoth Olam*, the Tribe of *Benjamin* (who were Neighbours to *Judah*) are reckoned here in this Book, who were omitted in the *Chronicles*. 1 *Chron.* xxi. 6.

Ver. 10. *And David's Heart ſmote him, after that he had numbred the People:*] When he ordered it, he was poſſeſſed with other Thoughts; and did not ſeriouſly reflect upon what he had done, till God touched his Heart with a Senſe of his Guilt after the Sin was committed.

And David ſaid unto the LORD, I have ſinned greatly, in that I have done:] It is made a great Doubt by Interpreters what this Sin was, and wherein the Heinouſneſs of it conſiſted. The common Opinion is, That as there was ſomething of Vanity and Oſtentation in him, when he had a mind to know how populous his Country was, ſo it quite made him forget the half Shekel that was due upon ſuch Occaſions, by the Appointment of the Law, *Exod.* xxx. 12. And this was no ſmall Sin, not to pay God his Dues, in ſuch Plenty and Abundance as they now enjoyed. But if that was the Meaning of *Moſes*, it cannot well be thought that *David* was either ignorant or unmindful of it, having made the Law his Study day and night. *Bertram* therefore thinks his Fault was, that he numbred thoſe who were under twenty Years old, contrary to the Order in the Law, *Exod.* xxx. 14. xxxviii. 26, &c. But I ſee no Foundation for this; but rather the quite contrary is aſſerted in the Book of the *Chronicles*. Therefore Dr. *Lightfoot* fancies *David* had a covetous Project in his Mind, to lay a Capitation-Tax (as we now ſpeak) upon every Poll throughout the Kingdom. But ſuch Conjectures being without ground, ſome reject all other Interpretations, and rely upon this; that the numbering of the People was a thing contrary to the Fundamental Promiſe made by God to *Abraham*, that his Seed ſhould increaſe ſo, as to be like the Stars for Multitude: Which is given as a Reaſon why the Number of the People was not taken exactly, 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 23. and ſeems to imply, that there was a general Notion received among the *Jews*, that ſince God promiſed to increaſe them beyond Number, none ought to go about to take the Number of them, for this might ſeem to favour of Infidelity, and Miſtruſt of God's Promiſe. But thoſe Words on which this Reaſon relies (in 1 *Chron.* xxvii. 23.) only give a Reaſon why *David* did not number all from twenty Years old, and under: Which if he had gone about to do (*i. e.* reckon the whole Nation) it might have ſeemed to croſs the Promiſe: But ſince it was only thoſe who were above twenty years old, whom he ordered to be numbred, I cannot look upon it as a Contempt or Miſtruſt of God's Word: But, after all, I think we muſt content our ſelves with what *Ralbag* ſays (whom *Abarbinel* after the Examination of other Opinions follows) that *David* being the Anointed of the LORD, and the ſweet Singer of *Iſrael*, made Fleſh his Arm, and confided in the Number of his People: In which ſuch a King as he ſhould not have placed his Confidence, but in the LORD his God whom none can reſiſt, and can ſave by few as well as by many. Unto which *Abarbinel* adds, that the Greatneſs of a Sin is not always to be meaſured by the Sin it ſelf, but by the Quality and Dignity of him that committeth it: As *Moſes* and *Aaron* were puniſh'd for a ſmall Sin, which excluded them from the good Land: Which was not proportionable to the Sin, but to the Condition of the Offenders, who ſhould have given a better Example to the People. Thus he.

And now I beſeech thee, O LORD, take away the Iniquity of thy Servant, for I have done very fooliſhly.] Since he condemned himſelf, and begg'd pardon, he hoped he might eſcape the Puniſhment which he deſerved. But he was deceived; becauſe not only he, but his People had offended, and upon other accounts deſerved to be puniſhed.

Ver. 11. *For when David was up in the Morning, the Word of the LORD came unto the Prophet Gad, David's Seer, ſaying,*] The Words ſeem to import that *David* was not touched in Conſcience, 'till *Gad* came and told him how angry God was with him. He is called *David's Seer*; becauſe he was his Domeſtic Prophet, (who is the ſame with a *Seer*, 1 *Sam.* ix. 9.) with whom he was wont to adviſe in all difficult Caſes, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 5. and kept a Record of his memorable Acts, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 29.

Ver. 12. *Go, and ſay unto David, Thus ſaith the* LORD, *I offer thee three things; chooſe one of them, that I may do it unto thee.*] Now it had been a proper Time, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, for *David* to have fallen down before God, and deprecated his Diſpleaſure in thoſe Words, *ver.* 10. *I have ſinned greatly in what I have done*, &c. But he ſaw the Sentence was paſſed upon him abſolutely; and therefore he ſubmits unto it.

Ver. 13. *So Gad came and told him,*] That he was ſent by God with a Meſſage to him.

And ſaid unto him, Shall ſeven Years of Famine come unto thee in thy Land?] In the Book of the *Chronicles* only *three* Years of Famine are propounded; which is far more likely than *ſeven*: For it better agrees with the three Months Flight before his Enemies, and the three Days Peſtilence. And therefore not only *Grotius*, but *Bochartus* alſo here read *three years*, following the LXX, who have ἔτη τρία, whom moſt of the Ancients follow, as *Bochartus* obſerves in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 38. Yet *Joſephus* here hath *ſeven* Years: And many think that *Gad* at firſt propounded ſeven Years; but afterwards at *David*'s Prayer ſhortened them to three. Other Solutions are in every Interpreter, who adhere to this reading of *ſeven* Years. See *Buxtorf*'s *Vindic. Verit. Hebr. P.* 2. *Cap.* 2. and *Cap.* 8. *p.* 523.

Or wilt thouflee three Months before thine Enemies while they purſue thee? or that there be three Days Peſtilence in the Land?] Theſe were the three ſore Judgments wherewith God commonly afflicted them for their Sins; who now was ſo gracious, as to give him his Choice which of them he would ſuffer: For one of them was peremptorily reſolved.

Now adviſe, and ſee what anſwer I ſhall return to him that ſent me.] There ſeems to be no great need to take Time to conſider which of theſe to chooſe; the laſt being the ſhorteſt, and an immediate Stroke from the Hand of God, who is full of tender Mercy and Compaſſion. But in this *Gad* expreſſes the Clemency of God, who would not haſtily inflict any Puniſhment upon him.

Ver. 14. *And David ſaid unto Gad, I am in a great ſtrait: let us now fall into the Hand of the* LORD *(for his Mercies are great) and let me not fall into the Hand of Man.*] He ſeems to leave it to God to ſend either Famine or Peſtilence (for both come from God's Hand) and deſires only that Men might not be the Inſtruments of his Puniſhment. For as they are wont to be cruel, ſo they make no Diſtinction between good and bad, but deſtroy all alike. This is admirably expreſſed by the Son of *Sirach* in *Ecclus.* ii. 17, 18. *They that fear the* LORD *will prepare their Heart, and humble their Souls in his ſight, ſaying; We will fall into the Hands of the* LORD, *and not into the Hands of Men; for as his Majeſty is, ſo is his Mercy.*

Ver. 15. *So the* LORD *ſent a Peſtilence upon Iſrael,*] The Symptoms of which were very diverſe, if we may believe *Joſephus*. For ſome, he ſaith, died ſuddenly in intolerable Pain: Others waſted away and left nothing to be buried but Skin and Bones, their Bodies being conſumed by the Diſeaſe: Others were ſuddenly choaked, or ſtruck blind, *&c.*

From the Morning.] From that Time when *Gad* delivered the Meſſage, and *David* made his Choice; which was in the Morning, as we read before, *ver.* 11.

Even to the time appointed:] There are thoſe who by *the time appointed* underſtand to the End of three Days mentioned by *Gad*, as the Time appointed by the LORD for the Continuance of this Plague. But this is quite contrary to what follows, that God repented him of the Evil; and commanded the Angel that ſmote the People to ſtay his Hand. Therefore the LXX tranſlate it better, ἕως ὥρας ἀρίς-ου, *'till Dinner-time*: And ſo *Procopius Gazæus*. Certain it is, that *Moed* ſignifies ſome part of that Day when the Plague began: And that muſt be either Noon, or the Evening. But, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved, the Morning and Evening are the Parts of the Day moſt oppoſite in Scripture (of which he gives many Inſtances) and therefore ſo he here underſtands it, that it continued from Morning to the Evening. For *Moed* properly ſignifies an Aſſembly: And therefore the *Time Moed* he thinks is the Time when the People met for Evening Prayer; about the *Ninth* Hour of the Day. Which Prayer, before the building of the Temple, was made at the Tabernacle, or in their Synagogues. And therefore the Tabernacle is frequently called *Obel Moed*: And the Synagogues are called in *Pſal.* lxxiv. 18. *Moade El.* So that he makes account this Peſtilence laſted no more than Nine Hours: Which was the eighth Part of three Days.

And there died of the People from Dan to Beer-ſheba, ſeventy thouſand Men.] If it had raged three Days, and in every Nine Hours had killed ſo many, above the third part of thoſe who had been numbred, would have died by this Plague. But, as *Kimchi* here obſerves, by the great Mercy of God, the Time was contracted. It is a frivolous Obſervation of ſome of the *Jews*, that becauſe it is not ſaid ſeventy Thouſand *Anaſhim*, but only *Iſch*, which commonly ſignifies a ſingle Perſon, that *Abiſhai* died of this Plague who was worth ſeventy Thouſand of the common People. Nor doth the Obſervation of *Grotius* ſeem to be altogether true; who in his ſecond Book, *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, *Cap.* 21. *Sect.* 17. ſaith, *Hæc pœna erat non populi, ſed Davidis*; this was the Puniſhment not of the People, but of *David*: Quoting that Saying of an ancient Chriſtian Writer (*Quæſt. ad Orthodoxos*) Πικροτάτη τιμωρία τῶν ἡμαρτηκότων βασιλέων, ἡ τιμωρία τοῦ λαοῦ, the bittereſt Puniſhment of delinquent Kings, is that which is inflicted upon their People. But it is certain the People here had alſo offended: For it is ſaid in the very Beginning of this Chapter, that God was angry with *Iſrael*. And as for what *David* ſaith, *ver.* 17. *Theſe Sheep what have they done?* it is ſpoken out of his great Affection to them; whoſe Offences he did not know ſo well as his own: And therefore deſired they might be ſpared, and he puniſhed.

Ver. 16. *And when the Angel ſtretched out his Hand upon Jeruſalem to deſtroy it, the* LORD *repented him of the evil, and ſaid unto the Angel that deſtroyed the People, It is enough; ſtay now thine Hand.*] God did not change his Mind, but only

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ly revoked that which he had decreed upon a certain Condition; which was, that three Days Peſtilence ſhould come upon the Country, unleſs *David* and the People repented; which he ſeeing they did, (1 *Chron.* xxi. 16.) he ſhortned the Time, and would not let the Angel proceed above an eighth Part of it.

Ver. 17. *And David ſpake unto the* LORD, *when he ſaw the Angel that ſmote the People, and ſaid, Lo, I have ſinned, and I have done wickedly: but, theſe Sheep, what have they done?*] Like a good Man he reflected only on his own Sin, in numbring the People; but did not think of theirs in depoſing him lately, and ſetting up *Abſalom* (which *Theodoret*, *Procopius Gazæus*, and others think was the Crime for which they were puniſhed) which he had forgiven, but God thought fit to puniſh; who by their Silence may be thought to have approved the Fact of *David*. And beſides, the Loſs of ſo many People was a Puniſhment of the King himſelf, as was before obſerved.

Let thy Hand, I pray thee, be againſt me, and againſt my Father's Houſe.] That is, againſt his Kindred, who did not diſſuade him from the Vanity of numbering the People, but perhaps encouraged him in it.

Ver. 18. *And Gad came that day to David, and ſaid unto him,*] By the expreſs Command of the LORD, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 18, 19.

Go up, rear an Altar to the LORD *in the Threſhing-floor of Araunah the Jebuſite.*] This Threſhing-floor was on the Mount *Moriah*; the Place where *Abraham* offered up his Son, and where the Temple was built by *Solomon*. See 2 *Chron.* iii. 1. Of which *Eupolemus*, an Heathen Writer, takes notice, ſaying, that God ſhewed *David* by an Angel the Place where the Temple ſhould be built. See *Euſebius*'s *Præpar. Evang. Lib.* 9. *Cap.* 30. The *Jews* will have it, that it was here *Abel* and *Cain* offer'd their Sacrifices, (ſee *Selden Lib.* 3. *de Synedr. p.* 199, and 431.) Nay, that it was the Place where *Adam* was created; according to a Saying of their Doctors, *Adam was created out of the Place of his Expiation.* See *G. Vorſtius* upon *Pirke Elieſer*, *p.* 163.

Ver. 19. *And David, according to the ſaying of Gad, went up as the* LORD *commanded.*] That is, he went the next Moment after he received the Command.

Ver. 20. *And Araunah looked, and ſaw the King and his Servants coming on towards him; and Araunah went out, and bowed himſelf before the King, on his Face upon the Ground.*] As the Manner was, and ſtill is, in the Eaſtern Countries.

Ver. 21. *And Araunah ſaid, Wherefore is my Lord the King come up unto thy Servant?*] It may be he thought it too great an Honour; and therefore deſired to know the Meaning of it.

And David ſaid, To buy the Threſhing-floor of thee, to build an Altar unto the LORD, *that the Plague may be ſtayed from the People.*] By offering a Sacrifice to appeaſe his Anger; as he himſelf had ordered, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26, 27.

Ver. 22. *And Araunah ſaid unto David, Let my Lord the King take and offer up what ſeemeth good unto him: Behold, here be Oxen for Burnt-ſacrifices, and threſhing Inſtruments, and other Inſtruments of the Oxen for Wood.*] For when the Angel appeared there, he was threſhing Wheat, which he offered likewiſe to *David* for a Meat-offering, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 20, 23. And the *Inſtruments of the Oxen* were their Yokes, and ſuch as they drew after them to preſs forth the Corn.

Ver. 23. *All theſe things did Araunah, as a King, give unto the King:*] The Words in the *Hebrew* are, *theſe things gave Araunah the King unto the King.* From whence ſome infer, that before the taking of *Jeruſalem* he was the King of the *Jebuſites*; or, a Man of the greateſt Authority among them, like a King; or was deſcended from the Blood Royal of the *Jebuſites*, as Dr. *Lightfoot* expreſſes it. But neither the *Greek*, nor the *Syriack*, nor the *Arabick* Copies have the word *King*: Nor was it in many of the *Vulgar* 'till *Sixtus*'s Correction; nor in the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* in the Time of *Kimchi*, who cites it thus; *Araunah gave to the King what the King aſked of him.* And, as *Bochartus* obſerves, *Araunah* (or *Ornan*) being mentioned fourteen times in the Holy Books, it is a wonder he ſhould not be ſtiled a King, but only here. *Hieroz. P.* 1. *L.* 1. *Cap.* 38. But it is likely he was a very rich Man, as *Joſephus* reports; whom the King ſpared when he took the Fort of *Zion*: Either becauſe he was a Lover of the *Iſraelites*; or had done ſome good Office unto *David*.

And Araunah ſaid unto the King, The LORD *thy God accept thee.*] He thought himſelf abundantly ſatisfied, if God pleaſed to grant *David*'s Requeſt; which he beſeeched him to do: for no doubt he was a Proſelyte, earneſtly deſiring the Happineſs of the Nation, into which he was incorporated.

Ver. 24. *And the King ſaid unto Araunah, Nay, but I will ſurely buy it of thee at a Price: neither will I offer Burnt-offerings unto the* LORD *my God of that which coſt me nothing.*] Whence is that of *Solomon*, *Prov.* iii. 9. *Honour the* LORD *with thy Subſtance*; which the *Greek* thus tranſlates, Τίμα τὸν Κύριον ἀπο τῶν δικαίων πόνων. *Honour the* LORD *out of thy honeſt Labours*, that is, out of that which thou haſt acquired by thy honeſt Induſtry.

So David bought the Threſhing-floor, and the Oxen, for fifty Shekels of Silver.] In the *Chronicles* we read, according to our Tranſlation, that he gave him *ſix hundred Shekels of Gold by weight*, which *Bochartus* thus reconciles; that in one Place he ſpeaks of Shekels of Gold, and in the other of Shekels of Silver. Whoſe Proportion is Twelve-fold; ſo that fifty Shekels of Gold are in Value as much as ſix hundred Shekels of Silver. He quotes a Place out of *Plato* in his *Hipparchus*, which proves that Gold and Silver held this Proportion. And then he thus tranſlates this Place in *Samuel*, he bought the Floor and the Oxen *Beceſeph* for Money, *viz.* for fifty Golden Shekels. So the word *Ceſeph* often ſignifies *Money* in general, of whatſoever Metal it be; as appears from this very Hiſtory, wherein *David* tells *Ornan* that he will buy the Field of him, *Beceſeph Malo*, which we tranſlate, *At its full Price*, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 24. And then it follows, he gave *Ornan Shikle Zahav*, Shekels of Gold, *Miſhkall Sheſh Meoth*, in Value ſix hundred Vulgar, or Silver Shekels. See *Hierozoi-*

con, *P.* 1. *L.* 2. *Cap.* 38. where the word *Miſhkall* he acknowledges commonly ſignifies *Weight*; yet here denotes *Value*: As in the 2d of *Sam.* xii. 30. The Deſign of *Ezra* being to ſhew that the fifty Shekels he gave for the Floor and Oxen, were not Silver (which were moſt common) but Shekels of Gold; every one of which was worth Twelve of Silver: So that thoſe fifty Shekels were equivalent to ſix hundred Silver ones.

But there is a ſhorter Way of ſolving this Difficulty, by ſuppoſing, that for the Threſhing-Floor and the Oxen he gave only fifty Shekels of Silver: But all the Ground about it (out of which, the Courts of God's Houſe were afterwards made) coſt him ſix hundred Shekels of Gold.

Ver. 25. *And David built there an Altar unto the LORD, and offered Burnt-offerings, and Peace-offerings.*] Burnt-offerings were Prayers to God that he would remove this Plague: And Peace-Offerings were Acknowledgments of God's Goodneſs, who had already given *David* Hopes of this Mercy.

So the LORD was intreated for the Land, and the Plague was ſtayed from Iſrael.] As plainly appeared by God's ſending Fire down from Heaven to conſume the Sacrifices: And the Angel alſo, who appeared with a flaming Sword over *Jeruſalem*, being commanded to put it up into his Sheath, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26, 27. From hence *David* concluded God would be more placable in this Place than any other; and therefore took Counſel to build the Temple here.

A COM-

A COMMENTARY UPON THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THESE two following Books contain the Hiſtory of the Kings of Iſrael *and* Judah, *from the Beginning of* Solomon's *Reign down to the Captivity of* Babylon: *For the Space of near Six Hundred Years; taking into the Account the Hiſtory of the two foregoing Books. It is highly probable that they were compoſed by* Ezra, *who extracted them out of the publick Records: Which were kept of what paſſed in that Nation; as we read of the Book of the Acts of* Solomon, *in this very Book,* xi. 41. *And frequently, of the Books of the Kings of* Iſrael, *and of the Kings of* Judah; *and of the Book of* Jehu, *in which was written the Acts of* Jehoſhaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 34. *And* Iſaiah *we read wrote the Acts of* Uzziah *firſt and laſt,* 2 Chron. xxvi. 22. *Out of which, and ſuch like Books,* Ezra *compoſed this brief Hiſtory. In which there are ſeveral things that Heathens themſelves have taken Notice of, as* Huetius *obſerves in his* Demonſtratio Evangelica, *Prepoſ.*4. *Where he anſwers the trifling Objections, which ſome have made againſt the Antiquity of theſe Books.*

CHAP. I.

Verſe 1. *NOW David was old and ſtricken in years;*] For he was Seventy Years old, as we learn from 2 *Sam.* v. 4, 5.

And they covered him with Cloaths, but he got no Heat.] His Blood was ſo chill'd, that he could not be warm in his Bed: Much leſs when he was up. Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks he was ſtruck with a dead Palſy.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore his Servants*] His Phyſicians, it is moſt likely, that attended him.

Said unto him, Let there be ſought for my Lord the King] Thoſe are the Words of the Prime Phyſician, in the Name of the reſt.

A young Virgin, and let her ſtand before the King,] Or miniſter unto him in the Day-time: For the very Sight of a beautiful Virgin very much excites the Natural Spirits.

And

And let her cheriſh him, and let her lie in thy Boſom,] Become his Wife, and in the Night lie in the ſame Bed cloſe to him.

That my Lord the King may get Heat.] For nothing more effectually procures Heat and healthful Concoction, than the Application of a young Body, even of a Puppy, to the Stomach all night: As *Galen* obſerves in his Fifth Book of *the Power of ſimple Medicines*. For συμφυλότερα, καὶ οἰκειότερα πολὺ, this Warmth is nearer of kin to us, and more proper than any other that can be invented: As *Victorinus Strigelius* hath taken notice.

Ver. 3. *So they ſought for a fair Damſel throughout all the Coaſts of Iſrael, and found Abiſhag the Shunamite, and brought her to the King.*] She being young, ſprightly, and willing to be taken into his Bed: For his other Wives were grown too old to put any Life into him.

Ver. 4. *And the Damſel was very fair,*] Of an amiable Countenance.

And cheriſhed the King, and miniſtred to him: but the King knew her not.] Did not enjoy her as his Wife; but ſhe remain'd ſtill a Virgin: Being his Bedfellow only to keep him warm.

Ver. 5. *Then Adonijah the Son of Haggith exalted himſelf, ſaying, I will be King:*] Taking advantage of his Father's Age and Weakneſs (who he thought could not oppoſe it) he reſolv'd to take poſſeſſion of the Kingdom: But the Crown, as the *Jews* fancy, would not fit his Head.

And he prepared himſelf Chariots and Horſemen, and fifty Men to run before him.] Juſt as *Abſalom* had done when he began to conſpire againſt his Father, 2 *Sam.* xv. 1.

Ver. 6. *And his Father had not diſpleaſed him at any time, in ſaying, why haſt thou done ſo?*] This was one of *David*'s great Faults, extraordinary Indulgence unto his Children: Of whom he was ſo fond, that he ſeems to have overlooked their Errors, and never to have chidden them for any thing they did amiſs. And now in his old Age this Wickedneſs was more apparent; he growing naturally more remiſs, careleſs and ſluggiſh.

And he alſo was a very goodly Man;] And ſo the more likely to draw the People after him. For a noble Aſpect was always a Qualification for the Royal Authority; as appears by the Hiſtory of *Saul*, *David*, and *Abſalom*.

And his Mother bare him after Abſalom.] He pretended to the Crown, becauſe *Abſalom* being dead, he was next to him in order of Birth. See 2 *Sam.* iii. 3, 4.

Ver. 7. *And he conferred with Joab the Son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the Prieſt:*] Whom, it is likely, he knew to be two diſcontented Perſons: The former upon the account of *David*'s putting *Amaſa* in his place; and the other becauſe he ſaw *Zadok* in greater Favour than himſelf.

And they following Adonijah, helped him.] Furthered him in his Deſign: As a means to ſecure themſelves with the next Heir.

Ver. 8. *But Zadok the Prieſt, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the Prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty Men which belonged unto David, were not with Adonijah.*] The three firſt of theſe are well known to have been great Favourites of *David*: And therefore *Adonijah* knew would not be for his Turn. The two next, it is likely, were Perſons of Note, who were perfectly in *David*'s Intereſt: And *Shimei* poſſibly may be the Perſon whom *Solomon* preferred to a great Office, iv. 18. though *Abarbinel* thinks he was *Shimei* who curſed *David*. See upon the next Chapter, *ver.* 8. the *mighty Men* here mentioned are thoſe named in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. and his Guards who had ſerved under *David* ſo long, and done ſuch mighty Acts in his Reign, and under his Conduct, that *Adonijah* had no hope of drawing them into his Party.

Ver. 9. *And Adonijah ſlew Sheep, and Oxen, and fat Cattle,*] Of the *Hebrew* word *Meri*, which we tranſlate *fat Cattle*, ſee upon 2 *Sam.* vi. 13.

By the Stone of Zoheleth which is by Enrogel,] The *Hebrew* word *Zohel* ſignifies a ſlow Motion, as *Bochart* obſerves in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 9. From whence this Stone had its Name; The Fullers here preſſing out the Water, which dropped from the Cloaths that they had waſhed in this Well, called *Rogel*. *Joſephus* ſaith the King's Gardens lay near this Well: Which, out of him, is alſo affirmed by *Procopius Gazæus*.

And called all his Brethren the King's Sons,] Whoſe Names are mentioned in 2 *Sam.* iii. 4, 5. and more largely in 1 *Chron.* iii. 4, 5, *&c.*

And all the Men of Judah the King's Servants.] Except thoſe before mentioned, *ver.* 8. and again excepted, *ver.* 10. But all the reſt of the Family of *David*, and the principal Perſons of the Tribe of *Judah*, with the High-Prieſt, and the Captain of the Hoſt being preſent, there ſeemed to be nothing wanting to the making of him King; but only his anointing. For this ſeems to have been a Fœderal Feaſt; wherein they ſware Allegiance to *Adonijah*.

Ver. 10. *But Nathan the Prophet and Benaiah, and the mighty Men, and Solomon his Brother he called not.*] It was a Feaſt, I ſuppoſe, upon a great Sacrifice: Unto which none came, but they who were invited.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore Nathan ſpake unto Bathſheba the Mother of Solomon, ſaying, Haſt thou not heard that Adonijah the Son of Haggith doth reign,*] It ſeems they were ſo bold as to proclaim him King.

And David our Lord knoweth it not?] For it was ſecretly contrived between him, and *Joab*, and the reſt: Without the Privity of *David* or of *Bathſheba*.

Ver. 12. *Now therefore come, let me I pray thee give thee Counſel, that thou mayeſt ſave thy own Life, and the Life of thy Son Solomon.*] Whom he knew they would endeavour to cut off: As the Perſon deſigned by *David* to be his Succeſſor.

Ver. 13. *Go, and get thee in unto King David, and ſay unto him, Didſt not thou my Lord, O King, ſwear unto thy Handmaid, ſaying, aſſuredly Solomon thy Son ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my Throne. Why then doth Adonijah reign?*] We do not read any where elſe of this Oath; but no doubt he had ſolemnly ſworn to her, that he would make her Son his Succeſſor: God himſelf having deſigned him to that Honour; as appears from 2 *Sam.* vii. 12. Where

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God promiſes by *Nathan* to ſet upon his Throne a Son that ſhould proceed from him. Which plainly ſignified, none of his Sons already born were to be the Perſon. But more plainly, 1 *Chron.* xxii. 8, 9, 10, *&c.* he declares that God told him *Solomon* ſhould reign after him, and build him an Houſe; and thereupon he commanded all the Princes of *Iſrael* to be aſſiſtant to him, *ver.* 17. And ſee xxviii. 5, 6. All this, I doubt not, was known to *Adonijah*; which made his Crime the greater, in ſetting himſelf againſt the Decree of Heaven: And he himſelf confeſſes as much in the next Chapter, *ver.* 15.

Ver. 14. *Behold, while thou yet talkeſt there with the King, I alſo will come in after thee, and confirm thy Words.*] Which he knew would quicken the King to give ſpeedy Orders about this Matter.

Ver. 15. *And Bathſheba went in unto the King, into the Chamber:*] Being the King's Wife, ſhe had the Privilege to come into his Bed-Chamber, without aſking Leave, as *Kimchi* obſerves. Whereas *Nathan* did not appear before the King 'till they told him he was there to wait upon him, *ver.* 23.

And the King was very old;] And could not diſcern who it was that entred into the Chamber.

And Abiſhag the Shunamite miniſtred unto the King.] And informed him, it is likely, that *Bathſheba* was come into the Room to ſpeak with him.

Ver. 16. *And Bathſheba bowed, and did obeiſance to the King:*] Firſt bowed her Head, and then her Body: As the manner was even for their Wives, as well as other Perſons.

And the King ſaid, What wouldeſt thou?] She had ſignified, I ſuppoſe, to *Abiſhag*, that ſhe had ſome Petition to make to him.

Ver. 17. *And ſhe ſaid unto him, My Lord, thou ſweareſt by the* LORD *thy God unto thy Handmaid, ſaying, Aſſuredly Solomon thy Son ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my Throne:*] *David* ſware this, as *Abarbinel* thinks, when *Abſalom* his eldeſt Son rebelled againſt him. And the rather, becauſe *Nathan* had told him (as I obſerved before) a Child ſhould proceed from him that ſhould ſit upon his Throne: who therefore was then unborn. But all the reſt, except *Solomon*, were born before this Promiſe, and therefore he concluded were none of them deſigned by God to be his Succeſſors.

Ver. 18. *And now behold Adonijah reigneth; and now, my Lord the King thou knoweſt it not.*] This ſhe ſaith, that ſhe might not ſeem to accuſe *David* of breaking his Oath: And that ſhe might aggravate the Crime of *Adonijah*, in preſuming to uſurp the Throne while his Father was alive, and without his Knowledge.

Ver. 19. *And he hath ſlain Oxen and fat Cattle, and Sheep in abundance, and hath called all the Sons of the King, and Abiathar the Prieſt, and Joab the Captain of the Hoſt: But Solomon thy Servant hath he not called.*] She very ſubmiſſively calls her ſelf his *Handmaid*, and her Son his *Servant*: The more to win upon his Affection unto thoſe that humbly depended upon his Pleaſure.

Ver. 20. *And thou, my Lord, O King, the Eyes of all Iſrael are upon thee, that thou ſhouldſt tell them who ſhall ſit upon the Throne of my Lord the King after thee.*] This ſhe ſaid all *Iſrael* expected from the King, that ſhe might free him from all Fear of ſuch a Rebellion as *Abſalom* raiſed; the People not being joined to *Adonijah*, but continuing in Suſpence, 'till the King had declared his Mind about his Succeſſor. Thus *Abarbinel*. And this Power of naming a Succeſſor continued for ſome time after him, as appears by the Story of his Grandſon *Rehoboam*: Who though no great Man, yet took upon him this Authority of nominating a Succeſſor, and made one of his youngeſt Sons, *viz.* *Abijah*, King after him. See 2 *Chron.* xi. 20, 22, *&c.* But this Cuſtom did not laſt long; not being in uſe among their Neighbours: As the Story of the *Moabites* ſhews, 2 *Kings* iii. 27. Yet it was the Manner of excellent Princes among the *Romans* to appoint their Succeſſor, whom the People gladly received. So *Auguſtus* did: And *M. Aurelius* commends *Nerva* for ſo doing.

Ver. 21. *Otherwiſe it ſhall come to paſs, when my Lord the King ſhall ſleep with his Fathers, that I and my Son Solomon ſhall be accounted Offenders.*] Guilty of Death for aiming at the Kingdom.

Ver. 22. *And lo, while ſhe talked with the King, Nathan the Prophet alſo came in.*] To confirm what ſhe had ſaid, according to his Promiſe, *ver.* 14.

Ver. 23. *And they told the King, ſaying, Behold, Nathan the Prophet.*] Whereupon *Bathſheba*, it is likely, withdrew, as if ſhe ſuppoſed he had ſome private Meſſage to deliver unto *David*.

And when he was come in before the King, he bowed himſelf before the King, with his Face to the Ground. The Prophets themſelves, as well as other Men, gave the profoundeſt Reverence to the King (as *Maimonides* obſerves) that they might teach all his Subjects their Duty. Nor was the High-Prieſt excepted. See *Schickard de Jure Regn. Cap.* 4. *Theorem* 13. The *Hebrew* Word is us'd for *Religious* Worſhip, in *Pſalm* xlv. 12. xcv. 6. But very often, only for *Political*, and that very anciently, in *Gen.* xxiii. 7. *Ruth* ii. 10. 2 *Sam.* xvi. 14. and many other Places.

Ver. 24. *And Nathan ſaid, My Lord, O King, haſt thou ſaid Adonijah ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my Throne?*] He knew very well he had given no ſuch Order; but he ſaid this to awaken the King, to conſider how preſumptuous *Adonijah* was.

Ver. 25. *For he is gone down this Day, and hath ſlain Oxen, and fat Cattle, and Sheep in abundance, and hath called all the King's Sons, and the Captain of the Hoſt, and Abiathar the Prieſt, and behold they eat and drink before him, and ſay, God ſave King Adonijah.*] By this time *Nathan* had received perfect Intelligence, what was the Deſign of that great Feaſt; and they had not only conſulted to raiſe *Adonijah* to the Throne, but actually proclaimed him King. Which was more than *Bathſheba* had told him.

Ver. 26. *But me, even me thy Servant, and Zadok the Prieſt, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and thy Servant Solomon hath he not called.*] For he knew they

they were all faithful to King *David*; and would follow his Directions.

Ver. 27. *Is this thing done by my Lord the King, and thou haſt not ſhewed it unto thy Servant, who ſhall ſit upon the Throne of my Lord the King after him?*] In a matter of this Importance, he could not believe the King would act without his Advice: Whom he was wont to conſult on other occaſions; and who had acquainted him with the Mind of God concerning *Solomon*.

Ver. 28. *And King David anſwered and ſaid, Call me Bathſheba:*] Who was withdrawn, as I ſaid, into another Room, upon the coming in of *Nathan:* Or ſtood at a diſtance in the Room where they were.

And ſhe came into the King's Preſence, and ſtood before the King.] To underſtand his Pleaſure.

Ver. 29. *And the King ſware and ſaid, As the LORD liveth, that hath redeemed my Soul out of all diſtreſs,*] Unto whom he was ſo much indebted, that it could not be thought he would take his Name in vain: But ſhe might truſt him now that he ſo ſolemnly ſware again to her.

Ver. 30. *Even as I ſware unto thee by the LORD God of Iſrael, ſaying, Aſſuredly thy Son ſhall reign after me, and he ſhall ſit upon my Throne in my ſtead; even ſo will I certainly do this day.*] He had not forgotten his former Oath, which he now renews; and reſolves immediately to put in execution.

Ver. 31. *Then Bathſheba bowed her Face to the Earth, and did reverence to the King,*] Moſt humbly acknowledged his Goodneſs; by a lower Reverence than ſhe made before, *ver.* 16.

And ſaid, Let my Lord the King live for ever.] There could be no higher Expreſſion of Love and Thankfulneſs, than to deſire never to ſee *Solomon* on the Throne, if it were poſſible for *David* always to enjoy it.

Ver. 32. *And King David ſaid, Call me Zadok the Prieſt, and Nathan the Prophet, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada. And they came before the King.*] They were ſuch truſty and reſolute Perſons, that he knew would not fear to execute his Commands.

Ver. 33. *And the King ſaid unto them, Take with you the Servants of your Lord,*] His conſtant Guards, the *Cerethites* and *Pelethites*. See *ver.* 38.

And cauſe Solomon my Son to ride upon my own Mule,] The reſt of *David*'s Sons were wont to ride upon Mules, when they went abroad, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 29. And *Abſalom* rode upon a Mule, when he was hanged in the Oak, xviii. 9. But *David* had a Mule peculiarly reſerved for himſelf alone; on which *Solomon* being ſet, it was the Beginning of his Royal Authority: For no private Perſon whatſoever, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, might ride upon the King's Mule. He alſo further notes, that *David* ordered him to ride upon a *Mule*, and not upon an *Horſe*, becauſe an Horſe is prepared for Battel (*Prov.* xxi. 31.) but a Mule is a quiet Creature: Signifying the Peace, Tranquillity, and Security, which they enjoyed in *Solomon*'s Reign. But the firſt is the more pertinent Obſervation: For it was capital (as *Maimonides* obſerves) to ride upon the King's Horſe or Mule; or ſit in his Throne; or uſe his Scepter, *&c.* without the King's Order. As on the contrary, to have the Honour to ride upon his Horſe, by his Order, was accounted the higheſt Dignity among the *Perſians*, as appears by the Story of *Mordecai* in the ſixth of *Eſther*.

And bring him down to Gihon.] A Fountain on the Weſt-ſide of *Jeruſalem*, which divided it ſelf into two Streams, as ſome ſay, and made two Pools: That of *Siloam*, and that of *Solomon* mentioned by *Joſephus*, *Lib.* 6. *De Bello Judaico*, *Cap.* 38. But *Kimchi*, and *Abarbinel* alſo, take them only for different Names for one and the ſame Rivulet; which was called *Gihon*, and alſo *Siloam*, as the *Targum* hath it. Hither they were ordered to bring down *Solomon*, for it is a Maxim among the *Jews*, that *they do not anoint a King, but near a Fountain:* Though they have no Authority for it, that I know of, but from this Chapter: Where we read of *Adonijah*'s going to *Enrogel*, ver. 9. and *Solomon*'s being brought to *Gihon*; which was a Fountain, or Brook near *Jeruſalem:* For thereabouts a great Number of People uſed always to be; whom they would have to obſerve it. The *Jews* give another Reaſon for it, in the *Talmud*; that it might be a Signification and good Omen of the Perpetuity of the Kingdom: Which ſhould continue like a Fountain, which runs perpetually. See *Schickard* in his *Jus Regium*, *Cap.* 1. *Theor.* 4. But from what is ſaid here of *Solomon*, we cannot ſafely make a general Concluſion that all Kings were anointed at Fountains. For *Saul* the firſt King was not; and in the Hiſtory of *David*, who was anointed three times, there is no mention of it.

Ver. 34. *And let Zadok the Prieſt, and Nathan the Prophet, anoint him there King over Iſrael:*] One of them poured out the Oil, and the other anointed him, as the forenamed *Schickard* thinks it probable. Or, as others will have it, *Zadok* (as Vicar of the High-prieſt, who in his Abſence performed all his Offices) did both: And *Nathan* the Prophet was Witneſs of the Divine Revelation and Promiſe that *Solomon* ſhould ſucceed in the Kingdom. For *Abarbinel* is of opinion, that no King was anointed but by the Authority of a Prophet: Which is hard to be proved out of Scripture, as *Carpzovius* obſerves. See *ver.* 39.

And blow ye with the Trumpet, and ſay, God ſave King Solomon.] Proclaim him to be the King of *Iſrael*. The Hiſtory of *Abſalom* ſhews that he was proclaimed King by the Sound of the Trumpet, 2 *Sam.* xv. 10. And when God proclaimed his Law, and himſelf the King of *Iſrael*, the Sound of the Trumpet preceded with great Vehemence, *Exod.* xix. 16. And hence many Places in the *Pſalms* are explained, which ſay, God went up with the Sound of the Trumpet, when, after the manner of Kings, he triumphed over his Enemies, xlvii. 5. xcviii. 6.

Ver. 35. *Then ye ſhall come up after him, that he may come and ſit upon my Throne;*] Attend upon him to *Jeruſalem*, and give him actual Poſſeſſion of the Throne.

For he ſhall be King in my ſtead, and I have appointed him to be Ruler over Iſrael, and over Judah.] To have the ſame Authority over all the People that *David* had.

Ver. 36.

Ver. 36. *And Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada answered the King, and said, Amen:*] Gave his Consent in the Name of all the reſt: And I ſuppoſe ſware Allegiance to him.

The LORD God of my Lord the King ſay ſo too.] They all ſaid the ſame, *ver.* 47. Nothing doubting God would eſtabliſh his Authority.

Ver. 37. *As the LORD hath been with my Lord the King, even ſo be he with Solomon, and make his Throne greater than the Throne of my Lord King David.*] He knew *David* loved his Children ſo paſſionately, and deſired their Happineſs ſo much, that he was aſſured he ſhould not offend him with this Wiſh. In the *Targum* it is, *As the WORD of the LORD hath helped my Lord the King*, &c.

Ver. 38. *So Zadok the Prieſt, and Nathan the Prophet, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and the Cerethites, and the Pelethites,*] This (and in *ver.* 43.) is the laſt Time that the *Cerethites* and *Pelethites* (whom *Procopius Gazæus* here calls *Funditores & Sagittarios*, Slingers and Archers) are mentioned in the holy Scriptures: For we read no more of them after the Death of *David*. Which makes it probable, that in their room, *David* himſelf in the Concluſion of his Reign had appointed thoſe Troops, which we read of in 1 *Chron.* xxvii. to attend upon him every Month under their ſeveral Commanders: Which is the Conjecture of *Corn. Bonaventura Bertram de Republ. Judaica.* Cap. 10. p. 133. And theſe are they he thinks who guarded *Joaſh*, 2 *Kings* xi. 4, &c. called *Ceri*, or *Cerim*, i. e. *Ariates* (not much different from *Crethi*) and *Ratzim*, which he tranſlates *Curſores*. But I leave this to better Judgments.

Went down, and cauſed Solomon to ride on the King's mule, and brought him to Gihon.] According as King *David* had ordered, *ver.* 34.

Ver. 29. *And Zadok the Prieſt*] Here the anointing of him is attributed to the Prieſt alone. And indeed the Unctions which are ſaid to be made by a Prophet, as *Samuel* anointed *Saul* and *David*, were private, but not publick: Which was always done by the Prieſt, as *Fortunatus Scacchus* hath endeavoured to ſhew in his Third *Myrothecium*, *Cap.* 49, and 50. It muſt be confeſſed that the Prophet anointed *Saul* in *Gilgal*, when he was publickly declared King. But then they offered Sacrifice, which could not be without the Prieſt: And the *Iſraelites* made a Covenant with *David*, when they anointed him in *Hebron*; which muſt be by feaſting upon a Sacrifice offered by the Prieſt. Yet a great many of the *Jews* are confident that no Man, no not the High-prieſt, could anoint a King, but only a Prophet, as *Samuel* did *David*, and *Nathan* (*Abarbinel* here affirms) did *Solomon*, and *Ahijah* did *Jeroboam*.

Took an Horn of Oil] A Veſſel of Oil, as the *Arabick* tranſlates it: Which Veſſel was made of an Ox's Horn, as *Bochartus* obſerves, *L.* 2. *Hierozoicon*, *Cap.* 37. *P.* 1. They commonly made Cups of ſuch Horns; whence the *Greek* Word κεράσαι to mingle Wine with Water. See *Fortunatus Scacchus*, *Myrothec.* 1 *Cap.* 48.

Out of the Tabernacle, and anointed Solomon:] This made his Unction more ſolemn, and his Perſon more ſacred; becauſe anointed with holy Oil. Though the *Jews* are generally of Opinion, that it was not neceſſary to anoint their Kings with this holy Oil made by *Moſes*. And indeed they all agree there was no Neceſſity of anointing them at all (the Son being ſufficiently anointed by the Unction of his Father) unleſs there aroſe a Controverſy about the Succeſſion of the Crown. Thus *Solomon* was anointed becauſe of the Function of *Adonijah*, *Joaſh* becauſe of *Athaliah*, and *Jehu* becauſe of *Joram*. See *Selden* L. 2. *de Succeſſ. in Pontif.* Cap. 9. and *Schickard* his *Jus Regium*, *Cap.* 1. *Theorem* 4. *Fortunatus Scacchus* alſo hath ſpent a whole Chapter, of a good length, to ſhew that private Unction might be made with any Oil: But a publick, by Oil taken from the Tabernacle. Whence it is ſaid of *David*, *with my holy Oil* have I anointed thee. Yet he thinks that this Oil preſerved in the Tabernacle for that Purpoſe, was not the ſame with the Oil made by *Moſes*; where-with the High-prieſt alone was anointed. This he confirms by no contemptible Arguments, in his *Myrothecium* 3. *Sacror. Elæochriſm.* Cap. 48.

And they blew the Trumpet, and all the People ſaid, God ſave King Solomon.] After the Unction followed the Acclamation of the People. See *ver.* 34.

Ver. 40. *And all the People came up after him,*] From *Gihon* unto *Jeruſalem*.

And the People piped with Pipes, and rejoiced with great joy,] To ſee a King ſettled by *David*'s Appointment: which they hoped might prevent all Conteſts about the Succeſſion.

So that the Earth rent with the ſound of them.] An hyperbolical Expreſſion, to ſignify the very loud Noiſe the People made with their Shouts and their Pipes: Which were Inſtruments that had their Name among the *Hebrews*, from the many Holes that were in them: As the Illuſtrious *Spanhemius* obſerves upon *Callimachus* his Hymn *ad Dianam*, *ver.* 244. where he notes great Variety of them.

Ver. 41. *And Adonijah and all the Gueſts that were with him, heard it as they had made an end of eating:*] But, perhaps, were not yet riſen from the Table. See *ver.* 49.

And when Joab heard the ſound of the Trumpet, he ſaid, wherefore is this noiſe of the City, being in an uproar?] By this time *Solomon* was got into *Jeruſalem*; from whence they could hear the Shouting, and the Sound of the Trumpet and Muſick. Which *Joſephus* ſaith was accompanied with a great Feaſt: Which is agreeable to 1 *Chron.* xxix. 21, 22. *Joab* was moſt concerned to enquire what the matter was; for if the City was in an Uproar, as he ſeems to ſuſpect, it was his Buſineſs, as Captain of the Hoſt, to ſuppreſs it.

Ver. 42. *And while he yet ſpake, behold Jonathan the Son of Abiathar the Prieſt came,*] He had been employed by *David* to bring him intelligence (2 *Sam* xv. 27.) and it is likely was now left in *Jeruſalem* by his Father's Order, to bring him News of what paſſed there.

And Adonijah ſaid unto him, Come in, for thou art a valiant Man, and bringeſt good tidings.] Or rather, *thou art a virtuous Man:* For ſo the Word we here tranſlate *valiant* is rendred in *Prov.* xii. 4. And ſo the *Targum* in this Place, *thou art a Man that feareſt to ſin:* And being a good Man, he hoped brought good Tidings, like himſelf.

Ver. 43. *And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah, Verily our Lord King David hath made Solomon King.*] He tells him (according to his Character) he would not flatter him, but tell him the plain Truth: That *David* had not only declared *Solomon* should succeed him in the Throne; but actually made him King: and related the whole History of his Proceedings, in the following Words.

Ver. 44. *And the King hath sent with him Zadok the Priest, and Nathan the Prophet, and Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and the Cerethites, and Pelethites, and they have caused him to ride on the King's Mule.*

Ver. 45. *And Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet have anointed him King in Gihon:*] By Authority from God, which *Nathan* I suppose pronounced; and then *Zadok* anointed him.

And they are gone up from thence rejoicing, so that the Earth rang again: This is the noise that ye have heard.

Ver. 46. *And also Solomon sitteth on the Throne of the Kingdom.*] He was in actual Possession of the Kingdom: Though his Father was alive. For to sit upon the Throne was proper to the King: and none else, on pain of Death, might be placed there. So *Valerius Maximus* speaks of the *Persians*, *Lib.* 5. *Cap.* 16.

Ver. 47. *And moreover, the King's servants came to bless King David, and said, God make the name of Solomon greater than thy name, and make his Throne greater than thy Throne:*] See *ver.* 37.

And the King bowed himself upon the Bed.] Worshipped God, and prayed it might be so.

Ver. 48. *And also thus said the King, Blessed be the* LORD *God of Israel, which has given one to sit on my Throne this day, mine Eyes even seeing it.*] He gave a solemn Thanks to God for the Happiness of seeing *Solomon* begin his Reign, with such Affection of his People, as they expressed by their Joy at his Inauguration. *Jonathan*, it appears by this, had been a diligent Observer of every thing that had been done in this Matter: For he omits nothing; but gives them a full and faithful Account.

Ver. 49. *And all the guests that were with Adonijah were afraid and rose up, and went every Man his way.*] They rose from Table where they were sitting, and departed every Man to his own Home in great haste; that it might not be known they had been with *Adonijah:* Who wanted those Marks of Royalty which were bestowed on *Solomon:* For he neither rode on the King's Mule, nor was he anointed; nor sat on the Throne of the Kingdom: Nor do we read of any Forces that he had with him to maintain his Title. Yet *Fortunatus Scacchus* thinks *Adonijah* wanted none of the Marks of Royalty (insomuch that *Bathsheba* told *David* he reigned, *ver.* 18.) but this one alone. Which Defect threw down all the Regal Majesty of *Adonijah*, scattered all his Forces, and translated the Possession of the Kingdom to *Solomon*, as soon as he was consecrated, by this holy Unction, *Lib.* 3. *Myrothec. Cap.* 47. *p.* 571.

Ver. 50. *And Adonijah feared because of Solomon, and arose, and went and caught hold of the horns of the Altar.*] He thought he had committed a Crime worthy of Death, by usurping the Kingdom without his Father's Consent, and against the known Design of God: And therefore he fled to the Altar for Safety and Protection. It being a privileged Place; not by the Appointment of the Law, but by the Custom of all Nations. It is a Question to what Altar he fled; whither to that at the Tabernacle in *Gibeon*; or to that newly built in the Threshing-floor of *Araunah* the *Jebusite*. Some think to this last, which was neareſt; and it is expresly said of *Joab* in the next Chapter (*ver.* 29.) that he fled to the Tabernacle of the LORD; which is not said here.

Ver. 51. *And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feared King Solomon: for lo, he hath taken hold of the Horns of the Altar, saying, Let Solomon swear to me to-day, that he will not slay his servant with the sword.*] He offered to surrender himself, and make no Opposition, if he might but be secured of his Life: Which he humbly begged by taking Sanctuary at the Altar. These Words, *to-day*, signify that he desired him from henceforth he would not punish him for what was past.

Ver. 52. *And Solomon said,*] He did not swear unto him, as he desired, but only declared.

If he will shew himself a worthy Man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the Earth:] He gave him a full Pardon for what was past; on condition he behaved himself as became a good Subject for the Time to come.

But if wickedness be found in him, he shall die.] If he did any thing (as *Abarbinel* glosses) which shewed that he had still a rebellious Mind, this Pardon should signify nothing: Because he had broken the Condition of it.

Ver. 53. *So King Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the Altar; and he came and bowed himself to King Solomon:*] He owned him for his Sovereign.

And Solomon said unto him, Go to thine House.] There to lead a private Life; and not go abroad with such an Equipage as he had done, *ver.* 5.

CHAP. II.

Verse 1. *NOW the days of David drew nigh, that he should die;*] As he himself was sensible.

And he charged Solomon his Son, saying,] After the Example of *Abraham*, the Father of the Faithful, *Gen.* xviii. 19.

Ver. 2. *I go the way of all the earth:*] And so was unable to govern any longer.

Be thou strong therefore, and shew thy self a Man.] In Wisdom and in Courage.

Ver. 3. *And keep the charge of the* LORD *thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his Statutes, and his Commandments, and his Judgments, and his Testimonies,*] Under these four Words are comprehended all the Laws of *Moses: Statutes*, being such Constitutions as had not their Foundation in Reason, but in the Will and Pleasure of God: As not to sow two Seeds of different kinds together, *&c.* (See *Drusius* and *Grotius* upon *Numb.* xix. 2. and *Masius* upon *Joshua* xxiv. 25.) *Commandments*, were moral Duties,

Duties which had a manifeſt Reaſon, as not to ſteal, *&c. Judgments* were the Laws belonging to Civil Government, in Things between one Man and another: Such as are mentioned *Exod.* xxi. and the following Chapters. And *Teſtimonies* were ſuch Laws, as preſerved the Remembrance of ſome great Things; and teſtified to them the Loving-kindneſs of the LORD; as the Sabbath, the Paſſover, and all the reſt of the Feaſts.

As it is written in the Law of Moſes,] Which their Kings were bound not only to read, but to write a Copy of it with their own Hands, for their own Uſe; that they might learn to fear the LORD, *&c. Deut.* xvii. 18, 19.

That thou mayeſt proſper in all that thou doſt, and whitherſoever thou turneſt thyſelf:] Or, *that thou mayeſt do wiſely*, &c. as it is in the Margin. For there is no Policy like true Religion and Piety.

Ver. 4. *That the LORD may confirm his word which he ſpake concerning me, ſaying, If thy Children take heed to their ways, to walk before me in truth with all their heart, and with all their ſoul, there ſhall not fail thee (ſaid he) a Man upon the Throne of Iſrael.*] To engage him to keep the Charge of the LORD, he repreſents unto him the gracious Promiſe which God had made him, to perpetuate the Kingdom in his Family without interruption (2 *Sam.* vii. 15, 16. *Pſalm* cxxxii. 12.) provided his Children ſincerely and heartily ſerved God, in faithful Obedience to his Commands.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, thou knoweſt alſo what Joab the Son of Zeruiah did unto me,*] After he had given him his general Charge, he proceeded to direct him to do ſome particular Pieces of Juſtice and Kindneſs. And firſt of all bids him remember how *Joab* had uſed him: How inſolently, for inſtance, he had treated him in his great Affliction, and threatned a new Rebellion (2 *Sam.* xix. 7.) and lately had ſet up *Adonijah* to reign, while he was yet alive. Or this may refer to what follows.

And what he did to the two Captains of the Hoſts of Iſrael, unto Abner the Son of Ner, and Amaſa the Son of Jether, whom he ſlew,] For this was a great Diſhonour to *David*, who had given *Abner* ſafe Conduct; and paſſed his Word to *Amaſa* that he ſhould be Commander in chief of all his Forces: And therefore he might ſay *it was done to himſelf.* But it is an idle Conceit of the *Jews in Talkut*, and in other Books: Which refer theſe Words, *what he did to me*, unto his ſhewing the Letter which *David* wrote him concerning *Uriah*, unto the great Commanders in the Army (2 *Sam.* xi. 15.) and thereby expoſed the King as a Murderer of one of his beſt Subjects. *D. Kimchi* mentions this upon this Place.

And ſhed the Blood of War in peace; and put the Blood of War upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his ſhoes that were on his feet.] This was an high Aggravation of his Crime, that he did not only ſhed that Blood in Peace (ſpeaking to them in a friendly manner when he ſhed it) but after he had done, he was not at all aſhamed of it, but appeared with their Blood upon his Belt, and in his Shoes: As if he thought it a Glory to him, that he had ſlain them in a Battle with them.

Ver. 6. *Do thou therefore according to thy wiſdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace.*] It was not ſafe to give any countenance to ſo bold a Man as *Joab*, who was of great Authority among the Soldiers: In a new Kingdom, and a young Man being King. Therefore if there was a fair Occaſion, and he could do it prudently, he adviſes *Solomon* to cut him off. For *David* had not remitted his former Crimes (nor could he by the Law) but only deferred the Puniſhment of a Man who was very powerful, and very ſerviceable in his Wars. Though *Abarbinel* is of opinion, he was not cut off for thoſe old Crimes: But the new one in following *Adonijah* would not be forgiven; becauſe he had deſerved ſo ill before on other accounts. But ſome move a Doubt, how *Solomon* being but a Youth could cut off *Joab*; which *David* durſt not do, when he moſt flouriſhed. Which will eaſily be reſolved, if it be conſidered that now it was a Time of Peace, when *Joab* was leſs neceſſary: And *Solomon*'s Reputation grew continually (*ver.* 12.) and ſo he was more reſpected than *Joab*; who now declined in his Intereſt, by reaſon of his Age.

Ver. 7. *But ſhew kindneſs unto the Sons of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of thoſe that eat at thy table:*] As *Mephiboſheth* had done: Who, it is likely, was now dead, for otherwiſe he would not have forgotten him. *David*'s Gratitude here is very remarkable; which extended it ſelf to all the Sons of *Barzillai*: Who only deſired him to be kind to *Chimham*, 2 *Sam.* xix. 37.

For ſo they came to me, when I fled becauſe of Abſalom thy Brother.] That is, ſuch Kindneſs they ſhewed to *David*, inviting him to *Barzillai*'s Houſe, who ſuſtained him in his great Diſtreſs, 2 *Sam.* xix. 32.

Ver. 8. *And behold, thou haſt with thee Shimei the Son of Gera, a Benjamite,*] Theſe Words, *thou haſt with thee*, are underſtood by *Abarbinel* as if *David* had ſaid, I ſee that thou art very familiar with *Shimei*; whom thou loveſt and adviſeſt withall. But that he might not truſt him, he remembers him how bitterly he was curſed by him in his Diſtreſs: And therefore might do as much by *Solomon*, as if he ſhould fall into the like Trouble. And he thinks *Solomon* being young, might the more eaſily be drawn in to hearken to ſuch a crafty Man's Counſel; becauſe he did not follow *Adonijah*: for he takes him to be the *Shimei* mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 8. But the plain Senſe of his having *Shimei with him*, is, that he was in his power, being one of his Subjects.

Which curſed me with a grievous curſe, in the day when I went to Mahanaim:] 2 *Sam.* xvi. 5, 6, 7.

But he came down to me at Jordan, and I ſware to him by the LORD, ſaying, I will not put thee to death with the Sword.] 2 *Sam.* xix. 18, 19, *&c.*

Ver. 9. *Now therefore hold him not guiltleſs: For thou art a wiſe Man, and knoweſt what thou oughteſt to do unto him; but his hoar head bring down unto the grave with Blood.*] His Intention was not, as *Abarbinel* gloſſes, that he ſhould put him to death for his curſing him: But he admoniſhes *Solomon* not to truſt him, nor follow his Advice, but if (ſaith he) he do to thee,

as he did to me, that is any ways offend thee, do not forgive him as I did. *But bring down his hoar Head*, &c. that is, though he be an old Man, let not that move thee to Clemency towards him: But puniſh him according to his Deſerts. And *David* knew his Humour ſo well, that he did not doubt he would give *Solomon* Occaſion to cut him off, and that he was ſo wiſe as not to ſpare him. In ſhort, he did not bid him cut him off for curſing him; but only that he ſhould cautiouſly obſerve him: And if he committed any new Offence worthy of Death, not pardon him as he had done.

Ver. 10. *So David ſlept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of David.*] The Author before-mentioned is a little too conceited in his Interpretation of the firſt Part of theſe Words: Which he will have to ſignify not that *David* died (which is the common Import of this Phraſe) but that his Soul reſted in the other World, with thoſe juſt and good Men that had been before him. But he obſerves well enough, that the latter part of this Verſe informs us he was not buried in the Sepulchre of his Father (as *Saul* was, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 12, *&c.*) for that was in *Bethlehem:* But he being a great King, was buried in the chief City of the Kingdom; which he himſelf had founded, and where was the Throne of the Houſe of *David*, *Pſal.* cxxii. 5. He tells alſo out of *Joſephus*'s Antiquities (ſee *Lib.* 7. *Cap.* 12.) that there was a great Vault over his Sepulchre, in which was hid an immenſe Treaſure: Unto which no body knew the Way, but thoſe that underſtood the Artifice wherewith it was built. Out of this Vault they took in the Time of *Antiochus* ſo much Money as made him withdraw his Army from them. Which *Procopius Gazæus* alſo mentions. And *Herod* took out of it a great many Talents for the building of the Temple: But in following Times there was no Man to be found to whom the Secret was communicated, how to open it; ſo that no more Money was taken out from that Time. What Credit is to be given to this, I ſhall not determine, but ſuſpect its Truth.

Ver. 11. *And the Days that David reigned over Iſrael, were forty Years: ſeven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty three years reigned he in Jeruſalem.*] The very ſame Account is given in 1 *Chron.* xxix. 27. But in 2 *Sam.* v. 5. it is ſaid he reigned ſeven Years and ſix Months in *Hebron* (and the ſame is ſaid before, Chapter ii. *ver.* 11.) which, with the three and thirty Years in *Jeruſalem* make forty Years and an half. To ſolve this Difficulty (as ſome of the *Jews* eſteem it) they have deviſed this Conceit: That *David* had a Leproſy ſix Months, to puniſh him for his Adultery with *Bathſheba:* All which time he being as a Dead Man, it is not accounted to his Reign. But they did not conſider that the ſix Months was part of his Reign in *Hebron*, before he committed that Adultery in *Jeruſalem.* Which ſhews that this is a frivolous Fancy; and the true Account of this Matter is, that the Scripture is wont to reckon only compleat Years (as *Kimchi* obſerves upon that Place of *Samuel*) and therefore omits the ſix Months, being but a Part of a Year. See vi. 38.

Ver. 12. *Then ſat Solomon upon the Throne of David his Father, and his Kingdom was eſtabliſhed greatly.*] This *Abarbinel* thinks may refer to the ſecond ſolemn Inveſtiture of *Solomon* by all the Eſtates of the Realm. Who confirmed that which had been done by a few (though by *David*'s Order) at *Gihon*, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 22, 23.

Ver. 13. *And Adonijah the Son of Haggith came to Bathſheba the Mother of Solomon; and ſhe ſaid, Comeſt thou peaceably? And he ſaid, Peaceably.*] She had ſome Reaſon to diſtruſt him: Becauſe by her Means he had loſt the Kingdom.

Ver. 14. *He ſaid moreover, I have ſomething to ſay unto thee: And ſhe ſaid, Say on.*] He did not pretend to come to make her a Viſit; but about ſome Buſineſs.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid, thou knoweſt that the Kingdom was mine,*] By right of Primogeniture. *And that all Iſrael ſet their faces on me, that I ſhould reign:*] The Kingdom, he pretends, was his by the Inclination of the Generality of the People to him, as *David*'s Succeſſor.

Howbeit the Kingdom is turned about, and become my Brother's: for it was his from the LORD.] Leſt he ſhould imagine he meant any Harm, or was inwardly diſguſted at his being diſappointed of the Kingdom, he calls *Solomon* his Brother; and intitles God to the Change: and therefore would not have her think he affected another Change; which would be to oppoſe the LORD.

Ver. 16. *And now I aſk one petition of thee, deny me not: And ſhe ſaid, Say on.*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *turn not away my Face:* Which ſignify, that he ſhould be very much aſhamed, if ſhe did not grant his Petition.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid, Speak I pray thee to Solomon the King (for he will not ſay thee nay) that he give me Abiſhag the Shunamite to wife.*] Both he and ſhe ſurely were not ignorant, that it was unlawful for any Man to marry his Father's Wife: But they thought, becauſe *David* knew her not, the Marriage was not compleated.

Ver. 18. *And Bathſheba ſaid, Well; I will ſpeak for thee to the King.*] For ſhe did not underſtand the Drift of this Deſire: But was only forward to do Courteſies to a Man, fallen from very great Hopes.

Ver. 19. *Bathſheba therefore went unto king Solomon, to ſpeak unto him for Adonijah: and the King roſe up to meet her, and bowed himſelf unto her,*] For the high Honour to which he was advanced, did not make him forget the Honour due to a Parent: Unto whom he was alſo much indebted for his Preferment to the Kingdom.

And ſat down in his Throne, and cauſed a ſeat to be ſet for the King's Mother;] In the *Hebrew* it is, a *Throne* to be ſet for her: It being a Seat in the form of a Throne, though not ſo glorious as the King's.

And ſhe ſat on his right Hand.] Which was the moſt honourable Place, next to himſelf, *Pſalm* xlv. 9. cx. 1.

Ver. 20. *Then ſhe ſaid, I deſire one ſmall Petition of thee; I pray thee ſay me not nay.*] It is likely it was the firſt Petition ſhe had made to him; and, as ſhe thought, would coſt him nothing: Which made her call it, *a ſmall Petition.*

And

And the King said, Ask on, my Mother, for I will not say thee nay.] If the Thing were fit, and safe to be granted.

Ver. 21. *And she said, Let Abishag the Shunamite be given to Adonijah thy Brother to wife.*

Ver. 22. *And King Solomon answered and said unto his Mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunamite for Adonijah? ask for him the Kingdom also;*] He gently reprehends her Ignorance: For it is as if he had said, Do you call this a small Petition? You had as good ask the Kingdom for him.

(For he is my elder Brother)] And hath that Pretence to the Kingdom: Unto which he would add this.

Even for him, and for Abiathar the Priest, and for Joab the Son of Zeruiah.] Who were all in this Plot. So the *Hebrew* Words, in the Opinion of *Lud. de Dieu*, are better rendered by the *Chaldee* Paraphrast, than by any other Interpreter. *Was not he, and Abiathar, and Joab in this Counsel?* The LXX more plainly, *with him are Abiathar the Priest, and Joab the chief Commander of the Army:* That is, they are his Complices, and have laid their heads together to give him this Counsel.

Ver. 23. *And King Solomon sware by the LORD, saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have not spoken this Word*] Made this Request, which he knew came originally from him.

Against his own Life.] For he looked upon it as a treasonable Design, to ask *David*'s Wife might become his. For according to the Custom of the *Hebrews*, no Man who had been the Servant of the King, might serve any other Master; nor might any Man ride upon the King's Horse; nor sit on his Throne, nor use his Scepter: As they say in the Title *Sanhedrin*, *Cap.* 2. *Sect.* 2, 5. Much less might any private Person marry the King's Widow: who belonged only to his Successor. Therefore God gave *David* all the Wives of *Saul*, 2 *Sam.* xii. 8. All which the *Gemara* upon that Place *(Cap.* 2. *Sect.* 14.) applies unto this History of *Adonijah*; whose Desire to marry the King's Widow (which was not lawful for any private Person) was looked upon as an affecting the Kingdom. So *Cocceius* glosses upon that Place. And indeed *Adonijah* seems to have understood well enough, that *Abishag* was wholly in the power of *Solomon*; and did not return to her Father's House, after the Death of *David*: But remained with him in his Possession, as one of those Things that were appropriated to him. Which moved *Adonijah* (as *Abarbinel* observes) to desire her of *Solomon*; and not address himself to her, or to her Relations; but to him, because she belonged to the Crown. See *Selden Lib.* 1. *De Uxor. Hebr. Cap.* 10.

Ver. 24. *Now therefore, as the LORD liveth, which hath established me in the Throne of my Father, and hath made me an House,*] That is, a Royal Family.

As he promised,] In 2 *Sam.* vii. 12, 13.

Adonijah shall be put to death this day.] He repeats the Oath, to signify it was his unalterable Resolution he should not live; but be put to death, without delay: Which in such Cases is very dangerous.

Ver. 25. *And King Solomon sent by the Hand of Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, and he fell upon him that he died.*] For such Executions were there done not by mean Persons, but by Men of Eminence: Who at the King's Command cut off Offenders. See *Judges* viii. 20.

Ver. 26. *And unto Abiathar the Priest the King said, Get thee to Anathoth, thine own field,*] This was a City of the Priests *(Josh.* xxi. 18.) Where he commanded him to lead a private Life: Either in that Part of the Suburbs, which fell to his share; or in some Land which he had purchased, as *Jeremiah* afterwards did, *Jerem.* xxxii. 6, 7, 8.

For thou art worthy of Death: But at this time I will not put thee to death,] He seems now only to reprieve him; that he might keep him upon his good Behaviour; for if hereafter he gave just Cause, he might put him to death, as well as now put him out of his Office.

Because thou barest the Ark of the LORD God before David my Father,] He was faithful to him in the Rebellion of *Absalom*: When he brought the Ark from *Jerusalem* to accompany him, 2 *Sam.* xv. 24, 29.

And because thou hast been afflicted in all wherein my Father was afflicted.] Underwent all the Hardships that *David* endured, all the Time of his Exile under *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 20, 21, *&c.*

Ver. 27. *So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being Priest unto the LORD, that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the House of Eli in Shiloh.*] Which might partly move *Solomon* to deprive him. See 1 *Sam.* ii. 31, *&c.*

Ver. 28. *Then tidings came to Joab,*] That *Adonijah* was put to death, and *Abiathar* banished.

(For Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he had not turned after Absalom)] The Reason of which, *Abarbinel* thinks, was, because *Solomon* was very young, and not fit, he thought, to manage publick Affairs: And his Mother also had a Blot upon her.

And Joab fled unto the Tabernacle of the LORD,] Which was at *Gibeon*. See the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 51. This makes it appear that *Joab* had a hand in the Counsel before mentioned, *ver.* 22. as *Solomon* suspected.

And caught hold on the Horns of the Altar.] Which were four, at each Corner thereof: In Height, as the *Jews* say, five Hand-breadths; that is, a common Cubit. Here he thought to save himself, according to the Custom of all Nations, who fled to their Altars, when they were guilty of any great Crime, and were in great Danger. But *Jewish* Doctors say, *Joab* was mistaken in two Things. *First*, in fancying there was Security from thence for a wilful Murderer: And *Secondly*, in that he looked for Safety by taking hold of the Horns of the Altar, whereas the Refuge of the Altar (as *Kimchi* saith) was on the Top of it only. But I look upon this as frivolous; *Rasi*'s Opinion is better: That as God appointed them Cities of Refuge whither the Man-slayer should flee, when they came into the Land of *Canaan*, *Exod.* xxi. 13. so while they were in the Wilderness, the Camp of the *Levites* served for that purpose. And the following Words, *ver.* 14. declaring

declaring that if a Man committed a preſumptuous Murder, he ſhould be taken from the Altar and put to death: It not only confirms what he ſaith, but intimates, that even in the Land of *Canaan* the Altar continued a Refuge for thoſe that fled to it. But then this Queſtion ariſes, Why *Joab* (who, as the *Jews* fancy, was Preſident of the great *Sanhedrin*, and underſtood the Law) ſhould think to find Shelter here, being a wilful Murderer. To which the *Jews* anſwer, that he hoped hereby to ſave his Eſtate, which otherways would have been forfeited. So they ſay in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. 6. N. 7. He hoped to be condemned by the Judgment of the *Sanhedrin*, and then his Goods would go to his Heirs: Whereas if he was cut off by the King, they would fall to him. See *Cocceius* there, *Annot.* 2. Others ſay, he hoped to obtain Burial by this means. But I take theſe to be meer Conceits. It is more probable, that, as Dr. *Lightfoot* conjectures, he hoped to obtain a Pardon, as *Abiathar* had done; by conſecrating himſelf to God and to his Service: As he did, he thinks, by this ſolemn Ceremony. For the laying hold of the Altar had a Vow in it for the future, as well as the Hope of preſent Safety. Which may be argued from the Name of the Altar: Which made that which touched it to be holy. See his Treatiſe *of the Temple*, Chap. 34. Sect. 3.

Ver. 29. *And it was told King Solomon that Joab was fled unto the tabernacle of the LORD, and behold he is by the Altar. Then Solomon ſent Benaiah the Son of Jehoida, ſaying, Go fall upon him.*] Which Puniſhment, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, was not inflicted on him for killing *Abner* and *Amaſa:* Though the Remembrance of that innocent Blood which he ſhed moved him not to pardon the Faults he had newly committed: *Firſt*, in ſetting up *Adonijah* to be King while his Father was living, which was no better than Rebellion; being done without *David*'s Order: And *Secondly*, in this new Attempt to pretend to the Kingdom, by adviſing him to beg *Abiſhag* for his Wife. *Solomon* did not puniſh him for the former, becauſe he had pardoned *Adonijah:* And therefore would not be ſevere againſt his Adherents. But he renewing his traitorous Deſigns, he thought fit to cut them both off: And *Joab* thought he deſerved no leſs, as appears by his flying to the Altar. Which was an Acknowledgment that he was guilty of that Crime which *Solomon* charged upon him; in being one of the wicked Counſellors of *Adonijah:* And therefore deſerved to die. Thus he.

Ver. 30. *And Benaiah came to the Tabernacle of the LORD, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the King, come forth:*] The forenamed Author thinks that *Benaiah* had a mind to bring him to *Solomon*, and try to get his Pardon; ſo far as to have him only depoſed from his Office, as *Abiathar* was.

And he ſaid, Nay, but I will die here.] Which he ſaid, that he might bring *Solomon* into the People's Hatred, for ſtaining the Houſe of God with Blood.

And Benaiah brought the King word, ſaying, Thus ſaid Joab, and thus he anſwered me.] This Interpreters generally take to be but the Repetition of the ſame Thing in different Words: But *Abarbinel* takes them for two diſtinct Anſwers of *Joab*; in which he refuſes to come from the Place where he was; and pronounces the Sentence upon himſelf, and deſires no Pardon. For thoſe Words, *thus ſaith Joab*, reſpect (he thinks) the Sentence which he pronounced on himſelf, that he would die: And thoſe Words, *thus he anſwered*, ſignify he would not come from the Altar.

Ver. 31. *And Solomon ſaid to Benaiah, Do as he hath ſaid, and fall upon him; and bury him;*] Kill him at the very Altar, where he reſolves to die: After which he would not deny him Burial ſuitable to his Quality, *ver.* 34. But many think, he did not kill him at the very Altar; but dragged him from thence, and then ſlew him. For what Need was there to defile the Holy Place with Blood? And ſo the Command is, *Exod.* xxi. 14. Though others are of opinion, that *Solomon* did think fit to have him killed at the very Altar; to let all Men ſee that no Place, though ever ſo Holy, ſhould ſecure any Man from the Hand of Juſtice.

That thou mayeſt take away the innocent Blood which Joab ſhed,] He means the Blood of thoſe two Perſons mentioned in the next Verſe: Whoſe Murder (as I ſaid before) was not the immediate Reaſon of *Joab*'s Death: But the Words of *Solomon* are to be underſtood (*Abarbinel* thinks) as if he had ſaid to *Benaiah*, Do not imagine thou ſhalt offend God, by killing *Joab* at the very Altar, but rather perform an acceptable Service to him: By cutting off a Man who deſerves to die, not only upon the account of *Adonijah*; but of the innocent Blood which he ſhed heretofore. So the Buſineſs of *Adonijah* was the principal Cauſe of his Death: The other only the ſecondary; which he remembers, that he might warrant *Benaiah* to kill him in the Tabernacle.

From me, and from the Houſe of my Father.] The Crimes of *Joab* in killing thoſe two Men could not be puniſhed by the Houſe of Judgment, becauſe there were no Witneſſes of that Murder: But *David* might have done it by ſuch Proofs as ſatisfied him of his Guilt. Yet he omitted it, becauſe *Joab* was ſo potent in the Army: And ſo *Solomon* feared the Guilt might ſtick upon his Family if it were not wiped off by this Execution upon *Joab*.

Ver. 32. *And the LORD ſhall return his Blood upon his own Head,*] Make him alone bear the Puniſhment of his Iniquity.

Who fell upon two Men more righteous and better than he, and ſlew them with the Sword, my Father not knowing thereof; to wit, Abner the Son of Ner, Captain of the Hoſt of Iſrael, and Amaſa the Son of Jether, Captain of the Hoſt of Judah.] His Crime was the more heinous, becauſe it brought a Suſpicion upon *David*, as if it had been done by his Order: Which Calumny he laboured to wipe off, by the unfeigned Grief he expreſſed for *Abner*, 2 *Sam.* iii. 37.

Ver. 33. *Their Blood therefore ſhall return upon the Head of Joab, and upon the Head of his Seed for ever:*] Why doth he repeat what he ſaid before? *Abarbinel* anſwers, it is not a meer Repetition; but *Solomon* pronounces that the Curſe of *David* ſhould come upon him: So that *Joab*'s own Death ſhould not

not expiate the Guilt; but his Posterity should suffer for it in future Generations, according to what *David* said, 2 *Sam.* iii. 28, 29.

But upon David, and upon his Seed, and upon his House, and upon his Throne shall be peace for ever before the LORD.] He prays and propheſies that his Family and Kingdom might never ſuffer upon this Account: NOW that the Sin which had not been puniſhed in *David*'s Life-time, had received a juſt Puniſhment from him.

Ver. 34. *So Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and ſlew him;*] He is ſaid to *go up*, becauſe *Gibeon*, where *Joab* was at the Tabernacle, was an high Place.

And he was buried] It is not ſaid who took care of his Burial; but it is likely *Benaiah*. (See *ver.* 21.) Becauſe *Joab* was a Man of Dignity, and one of the Royal Family.

In his own Houſe in the Wilderneſs.] He did not bury him in the Houſe, but in ſome Ground belonging to it, and accounted a part of the Habitation: Which was in the Wilderneſs. So they called thoſe Parts of the Country which were but thinly inhabited. And *Abarbinel* is of Opinion, that here *Joab* had built an Hoſpital, where he provided in ſeveral Rooms, a Bed, a Table, and a Candleſtick for poor Travellers.

Ver. 35. *And the King put Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada in his room over the Hoſt; and Zadok the Prieſt did he put in the room of Abiathar.*] It is evident that *Zadok* was a great Man before this; at leaſt the Vicar of the High-prieſt *Abiathar*. Who was, as ſome of the *Jews* fancy, deprived by *David* himſelf, or ſuſpended from his Office, upon his anointing *Adonijah*. But no ſuch Anointing is mentioned in the Story of *Adonijah*: Nay, it is moſt likely (as I before obſerved) that he wanted it: And therefore he remained High-prieſt, 'till now that *Solomon* removed him, and tranſlated that great Office from the Family of *Ithamar* to that of *Eleazar* (according to the Threatning againſt *Eli*, 1 *Sam.* ii. 30.) in which it continued 'till the Time of the Captivity; no Notice being taken of *Jonathan* the Son of *Abiathar* mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 42. and in 1 *Sam.* xv. 27. See *Selden de Succeſſion. in Pontif. Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 4, 5. and *Grotius De Imperio Sum. Poteſtat.* Where he obſerves (*Cap.* 10.) that the *Sagan* or Vicar of the High-prieſt, had rather a *Hope*, than a *Right* to ſucceed in the Office of High-prieſt. For *Maimonides* ſaith, the *Sanhedrin* choſe him out of the Family of *Aaron*; but here it is plain the King diſpoſed of that Office: For otherwiſe it could not be ſaid truly, that *Solomon* put *Zadok* in the room of *Abiathar*; by the ſame authority that he put *Benaiah* in the room of *Joab*. *Bellarmin* indeed, for fear Kings ſhould be thought ſuperior to the High-prieſt, ſaith, *Solomon* did this not as a King but as a Prophet. *Lib.* 2. *de Pontifico, Cap.* 29. But *Solomon* was not yet a Prophet; and all they who had Royal Authority in the Time of the *Macedonians*, and *Romans*, and the Poſterity of *Herod*, challenged to themſelves this Power of making an High- prieſt: Though they left to the *Jews* an αὐτονομία (the Government of themſelves by their own Laws) in other things.

Ver. 36. *And the King ſent and called for Shimei, and ſaid unto him, Build thee an Houſe in Jeruſalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither*] It was fit to confine ſuch a turbulent Man as *Shimei* was; and not ſuffer him to go about whither he pleaſed, throughout the Tribes of *Iſrael*, where he might ſtir up Sedition. But it was very kind to confine him to ſuch a pleaſant Place as *Jeruſalem*, and the Suburbs of it: Which made *Abarbinel* renew his Conceit (from thoſe Words of *David*, *thou haſt with thee Shimei*) that *Solomon* had a great Love to him, and made him his Familiar. But it is more reaſonable to think that *Solomon* ſuſpected his Fidelity; and therefore would have him always in his eye, in the Royal City.

Ver. 37. *For it ſhall be, that on the Day thou goeſt out, and paſſeſt over the Brook Kidron, thou ſhalt know for certain, that thou ſhalt ſurely die:*] He mentions the Brook *Kidron*, becauſe that was in the way to *Baharim*; where *Shimei* dwelt: As appears by comparing 2 *Sam.* xv. 23. with xvi. 5. But *Solomon*'s Intention was, that if he went out of *Jeruſalem* any way, to a greater Diſtance than *Kidron* was from thence, he ſhould die for it. For when he went to *Gath* after his Servants, he went directly the quite contrary Way; that City lying Weſtward of *Jeruſalem*, as *Kidron* did Eaſtward.

Thy Blood ſhall be on thine own head.] He ſhould be guilty, and no body elſe, of his Death: For it was in his power to preſerve his Life.

Ver 38. *And Shimei ſaid unto the King, The ſaying is good:*] He confeſſes the King's Kindneſs in this Injunction; and that he was beholden to him, for laying no greater Burden upon him.

As my Lord the King hath ſaid, ſo will thy Servant do.] Which he confirmed by an Oath, *ver.* 42. 43.

And Shimei dwelt in Jeruſalem many days.] Three Years, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 39. *And it came to paſs at the end of three Years, that two of Shimei's Servants ran away unto Achiſh the Son of Maachar King of Gath: and they told Shimei, ſaying, Behold, thy ſervants be in Gath.*] *Achiſh* had been ſo great a Friend to *David*, that though *David* had conquered the *Philiſtines*, yet he ſuffered *Achiſh* ſtill to retain the Title of King, and to be only tributary to him: ſo that there was a friendly Correſpondence between his City and *Jeruſalem*; where *Shimei* might eaſily hear, by ſomebody or other, who had been at *Gath*, that his Servants were there.

Ver. 40. *And Shimei aroſe, and ſaddled his Aſs, and went to Gath, to Achiſh, to ſeek his Servants:*] In three Years time he thought *Solomon* might have forgotten his Injunction; or he preſumed he would not hold him ſtrictly to it: eſpecially ſince he did not go from *Jeruſalem* for his Pleaſure, but to recover what he had loſt; which he thought was pardonable. For theſe Servants, it is likely, were worth a great deal of Money: Wherewith he had purchaſed them.

And Shimei went and brought his Servants from Gath.] Where *Achiſh* would not protect them: being in Friendſhip with the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 41.

Ver. 41. *And it was told Solomon that Shimei had gone from Jeruſalem to Gath, and was come again.*] If *Solomon* had not conſtant Spies about *Shimei*, to watch his Motions; yet ſuch a Journey as this could not be well undertaken ſo ſecretly, but ſome or other would obſerve it, and inform againſt him.

Ver. 42. *And the King ſent and called for Shimei, and ſaid unto him, Did I not make thee ſwear by the LORD, and proteſted unto thee, ſaying, Know for certain, that on the day thou goeſt out, and walkeſt abroad any whither, thou ſhalt ſurely die? and thou ſaidſt unto me, the word that I have heard, is good.*] He repeats their Agreement; and only adds that he made *Shimei* ſolemnly ſwear that he would ſtand to it, and did thankfully accept it.

Ver. 43. *Why then haſt thou not kept the Oath of the LORD, and the Commandment that I have charged thee with?*] He lay under a double Guilt of breaking his Oath to God, and of diſobeying the King's Command.

Ver. 44. *And the King ſaid moreover to Shimei, Thou knoweſt all the wickedneſs that thine heart is privy to, that thou didſt to David my Father:*] He knew upon what wicked Principles he curſed *David*, and what inward Hatred and Malice he had to him: And what villanous Deſigns againſt him, if he could have accompliſhed them.

Therefore the LORD ſhall return thy wickedneſs upon thine own head;] Upon which, if he reflected, he could not but ſee the Juſtice of God, in letting him fall into other Crimes, which deſerved Death.

Ver. 45. *And King Solomon ſhall be bleſſed, and the Throne of David ſhall be eſtabliſhed before the LORD for ever.*] To which *Shimei* wiſhed Confuſion: But the LORD turned his Curſes into Bleſſing, as *David* hoped, 2 *Sam.* xvi. 12.

Ver. 46. *So the King commanded Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, which went out, and fell upon him, that he died:*] He went out from the Preſence of the King, and carried *Shimei* along with him: And then did Execution upon him.

And the Kingdom was eſtabliſhed in the hand of Solomon.] By the Removal of theſe bad Men before mentioned: And by the Alliances he made, mentioned in the next Chapter, *&c.*

CHAP. III.

Verſe 1. *AND Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh King of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's Daughter,*] To be his Wife. Which was not unlawful, if ſhe was firſt made a Proſelyte to the *Jewiſh* Religion; as in all probability ſhe was. For though his Wives drew him in to worſhip ſtrange Gods; yet the Gods of the *Egyptians* are not reckoned among them, xi. 5, 6, *&c.* which is a Sign ſhe was not a Worſhipper of other Gods. Hitherto alſo *Solomon* loved the LORD, as it is ſaid, *ver.* 3. and was beloved of him, as his appearing to him in *Gibeon* ſhews, *ver.* 5.

And brought her into the City of David,] Unto his Palace at *Jeruſalem:* Which was after he had begun to build the Temple, as they ſay, in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 15.

Until he had made an end of building his own Houſe, and the Houſe of the LORD,] After which he built an Houſe on purpoſe for this Wife to dwell in, ix. 24. 2 *Chron.* viii. 11. But firſt he built God's Houſe, then his own, and then the Walls of *Jeruſalem.*

And the Wall of Jeruſalem round about.] If *David* incompaſſed it with a Wall, as ſome think is ſignified, 2 *Sam.* v. 9. *Solomon* made another Wall, and thereby made it ſtronger than *David* left it. Or elſe, he repaired the Wall which *David* had built and raiſed it higher.

Ver. 2. *Only the People ſacrificed in high Places, becauſe there was no Houſe built unto the name of the LORD, until thoſe days.*] This is a ſhort Account of the Happineſs of *Solomon*'s Reign hitherto, that there was nothing in it blameable, but only the People's ſacrificing in high Places. Which having been ancient Places of Worſhip (in Groves or Woods, on the top of Hills) the People continued to reſort thither, to perform that Worſhip which God had appointed. So that there was no fault in the Worſhip it ſelf, but only in the Place of it. And he gives the Reaſon why the People took this Liberty, becauſe there was not an Houſe built, to be a ſettled Place for Worſhip: The Tabernacle alſo had been removed from Place to Place a long Time; and was not fixed 'till it came to *Jeruſalem.* Concerning *high Places*, ſee upon *Deut.* xii. 2. *Cornel. Bertram* indeed fetches the Original of them from the Cities of the *Levites*, where they kept Schools, and had Places for Prayer: And where he thinks the People at laſt ſacrificed in the higheſt part of the City: *De Repub. Judaica*, Cap. 15. But this Cuſtom ſeems, more likely, to have been derived from the ancient *Patriarchs*, and was imitated by the *Gentiles* as well as *Jews.*

Ver. 3. *And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in all the Statutes of David his Father:*] Following his Directions, who commanded him carefully to obſerve all God's Laws, ii. 2, 3.

Only he ſacrificed and burnt incenſe in high Places.] Which *David* his Father had never done (as far as appears by his Hiſtory) which renders *Solomon*'s Fault the greater, in following the common Practice of all the Nations, rather than the Example of his pious Father.

Ver. 4. *And the King went to Gibeon to ſacrifice there; for that was a great high Place:*] Becauſe the Tabernacle was there, and the great Brazen Altar which *Moſes* made. For after *Shiloh* was deſtroyed, it was carried to *Nob:* And the Prieſts being there ſlain by *Saul*, it was carried to *Gibeon*, 2 *Chron.* i. 3. Where the *Jews* ſay, there was the greateſt Synagogue in all the Land.

A thouſand Burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that Altar.] It is not eaſy to apprehend how ſo many Sacrifices ſhould be conſumed upon an Altar, which was but five Cubits ſquare: For I ſuppoſe he ſpeaks of *Moſes* his Altar, which was of no larger Dimenſions. But *Kimchi* hath well obſerved, that we muſt not fancy they were all offered upon one Day: But during the Time he ſtayed at *Gibeon* before he returned to *Jeruſalem.* Yet if we ſuppoſe this was at ſome of the great Feſtivals, none of which laſted above ſeven Days, it muſt be acknowledged a wonderful thing, that ſo many ſhould be conſumed,

ſumed, though offered both at Morning and Evening Sacrifice. The *Jews* therefore do acknowledge a Miracle herein, as there were many, they ſay, continually at the Temple: Which are diſbelieved, becauſe the *Jews* are accounted fabulous Writers: But if well conſidered, ſome of them at leaſt carry good Reaſon in them. For Inſtance, they ſay the Smoak of the Sacrifices went always directly up to Heaven in a ſteady Pillar, and was not blown about with every Puff of Wind, as Smoak commonly is. For if it had not been ſo, when there was a vaſt Number of Sacrifices offered, no Man would have been able to ſtand in the Court of the LORD's Houſe: The Fire alſo upon the Altar was exceeding quick and devouring, being Cœleſtial Fire, which diſpatched the Sacrifice ſooner than ordinary Fire would have done: So Dr *Lightfoot* obſerves in his Treatiſe *of the Temple*, Cap. 34. Sect. 1. From whence it was called *Ariel*, the Lion of God, becauſe it was ſo devouring. And therefore after the Return from their Captivity from *Babylon* (as *L'Empereur* obſerves out of the *Gemara*) the Altar was made larger; becauſe the Fire burnt more ſlowly, when they wanted that Heavenly Flame, which was ſtrong and powerful. *Annot. in Cod. Middeſh.* Cap. 1. Sect. 1. pag. 103.

Ver. 5. *In Gibeon God appeared to Solomon in a dream by night:*] Perhaps he thought he ſaw the Divine Glory ſhine round about him: Or elſe the Meaning is, God revealed himſelf in a Dream, as the *Targum* here expreſſes it, *the LORD was revealed to Solomon* by Night. When Men have often ſeen that repreſented to them, which they found true when they were awake. As *Tully* ſhews by many Inſtances; eſpecially out of *Ariſtotle*'s famous Story of the two Men that travelled together to *Megara:* One of which being killed in his Inn, the other, who lay in a Friend's Houſe, had all the Fact repreſented clearly and diſtinctly to him, in his Dream, as if he had ſeen it done; ſo that he found out the Murderers in the Morning. See Lib. 1. *De Divinatione*, Cap. 24, 25, 26, *&c.*

And God ſaid, Ask what I ſhall give thee.] He heard a Voice ſpeaking to him, and bidding him aſk what he deſired, and it ſhould be beſtowed upon him. This Voice he took to be from God (as appears by his Anſwer) who herein ſhewed himſelf very gracious to *Solomon*, and alſo made a Trial of his Inclinations.

Ver. 6. *And Solomon ſaid, Thou haſt ſhewn unto David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth and righteouſneſs, and in uprightneſs of heart with thee; and thou haſt kept for him this great kindneſs, that thou haſt given him a ſon to ſit upon his throne, as at this day.*] Thankful Acknowledgments of Mercies already received (as St *Chryſoſtome* notes) invite new Bleſſings to be beſtowed upon us. *Uprightneſs of heart*, here aſcribed to *David*, doth not ſignify that he was without Fault (for the contrary is evident, that he was guilty of great Tranſgreſſions againſt the Moral Law) but it is ſpoken in Oppoſition to *Saul*, who was rejected for controuling the Orders of God.

Ver. 7. *And now, O LORD my God, thou haſt made thy ſervant king, inſtead of David my father; and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out, or how to come in.*] There are thoſe, particularly *Raſi*, who think he was but twelve Years old when he ſpake theſe Words; and therefore calls himſelf *Naar* a Child. But *Abarbinel* hath ſhewn that they ground this upon an uncertain Computation: And that if he was but a Child of twelve Years old now, he muſt have begun to reign when he was but ſeven or eight Years old: For he had ſat ſome Time upon the Throne, as appears by the foregoing Story, when he had this Dream. And his Father calls him *a wiſe Man* when he left the Throne to him, Chap. ii. 6, 9. And from many other ſtrong Arguments he concludes him to have been at leaſt Twenty Years old when he began to reign; and therefore calls himſelf here a Child, with Reſpect only to his Skill in managing publick Affairs; as is ſignified in the laſt Words, *I know not how to go out, &c. i. e.* to govern ſo great a People, for want of Experience. Thus *Benjamin* is called a Child, *Gen.* xlvi. 20. and *Moſes* calls *Joſhua* by the ſame Name (*Exod.* xxxii. 10.) though they were above Thirty Years old. And the Sons of *Eli*, when they miniſtred as Prieſts, 1 *Sam.* ii. 17.

Ver. 8. *And thy ſervant is in the midſt of thy people which thou haſt choſen; a great people, that cannot be numbred or counted for multitude.*] And conſequently great Abilities were required to do exact Juſtice to them all.

Ver. 9. *Give therefore thy ſervant an underſtanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may diſcern between good and bad: for who is able to judge ſo great a people?*] That is, without the Divine Guidance and Aſſiſtance, he thought it impoſſible to underſtand what was Law in all Caſes; ſo as dexterouſly to diſpatch Buſineſs, and decide all Differences. For young Men, as *Ariſtotle* obſerves, are unfit for Government; becauſe in them, τὸ βελευτικὸν ἀτελὲς, their conſultive Power is very imperfect, as he ſpeaks in the firſt Book of his *Politicks*, Cap. 7. And therefore in his Book *ad Nichomachum*, he will not ſo much as admit a young Man to the Lectures of Politicks; τῆς πολιτικῆς ἐκ εἴην ἀκροατὴς οἰκεῖος ὁ νεός. But this is not univerſally true, as we ſee not only in the Example of *Solomon*, who was extraordinarily accompliſhed by God in his Youth for the greateſt Things: But by ſome Examples among the Heathen, of young Men who managed the weightieſt Affairs with as much Prudence as they who were of the greateſt Experience. Witneſs *Scipio*, and *Octavianus Auguſtus*. But ſuch Perſons were rarely found: So that *Solomon* himſelf ſaith, *Wo to the land whoſe king is a child*, Eccleſ. x. 16.

Ver. 10. *And the ſpeech pleaſed the LORD, that Solomon had asked this thing.*] For it was a Token of a virtuous Mind, and a publick Spirit: That deſired above all Things the Honour of God, and the Good of his People.

Ver. 11. *And God ſaid unto him, Becauſe thou haſt asked this thing, and haſt not asked for thy ſelf long life, neither haſt asked riches for thy ſelf, nor haſt asked the life of thine enemies,*] Which are Things of which Men are naturally moſt deſirous.

But haſt asked for thy ſelf underſtanding to diſcern judgment;] As far tranſcending long Life, Wealth, and Victory over Enemies.

Ver. 12. *Behold, I have done according to thy words: Lo, I have given thee a wiſe and underſtanding heart, ſo that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee ſhall any ariſe like unto thee.*] For other wiſe Men gather their Knowledge by Study, and Obſervation, and other Helps (as *Aberbinel* here notes) but *Solomon* had his by Inſpiration: So that he went to Bed an ignorant Man, but awaked in the Morning like an Angel of God. At once, as his Words are, he who was like other Men, was made like the Son of God. For he had not only the Skill of Government imparted to him; but a general Knowledge of all other things, as the following Hiſtory tells us. Whence he fancies he calls himſelf *Agur*, *Prov.* xxx. 1. becauſe in him there was a *Collection* of all manner of Wiſdom and Knowledge, and this imparted from God. Which is the Reaſon, he imagines, why he does not call himſelf *Oger*, which is an active Word, but *Agur*, which is a paſſive: Becauſe he did not gather all his Wiſdom himſelf, but it was given him from the Hand of God.

Ver. 13. *And I have alſo given thee that which thou haſt not asked, both riches and honour:*] Theſe are abſolutely promiſed him: But here is no mention of long Life; for that depended upon the Condition of his ſtedfaſt Obedience to God, as it follows in the next Verſe.

So that there ſhall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.] He promiſes he ſhould excel all the Kings that were in his Time, in Riches and Renown: Though there were richer in future Ages, as *Alexander* and others were.

Ver. 14. *If thou wilt walk in my ways, and keep my ſtatutes and commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.*] This God himſelf mentions, in the firſt Place, (*ver.* 11.) as the greateſt Worldly Bleſſing; eſpecially when accompanied with great Riches and Honour: Which *Solomon* was not to expect, unleſs he continued obedient to God.

Ver. 15. *And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream:*] He ſaw and heard all the foregoing things ſo clearly and diſtinctly in his Sleep, as if he had been awake; and did not know 'till he awoke, that all was done in a Dream; which was one Way of God's revealing himſelf to his Prophets. But *Maimonides* I think is here a little too curious; for from theſe Words, *Behold it was a dream*, he concludes this was an inferior Degree of Prophecy from what others had in Dreams. For they that propheſied in Dreams, do not call it afterwards a Dream; but ſimply ſay, it was a Prophecy. So when the Patriarch *Jacob* awoke out of a Dream of Prophecy, he did not ſay it was a Dream, but ſaith abſolutely, *Surely God is in this place*, &c. *Gen.* xxviii. 16. *More Nevoch.* Lib. 2. Cap. 45.

And he came to Jeruſalem, and ſtood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD,] Which was there in a Tabernacle which *David* pitched for it (2 *Sam.* v. 17.) though the Tabernacle which *Moſes* made remained at *Gibeon*; where *Solomon* had been to worſhip.

And offered burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings,] Giving Thanks to God, that he had been pleaſed to ſpeak with him, and reveal himſelf to him.

And made a feaſt for all his ſervants.] Upon the Sacrifices of Peace-Offerings it is likely, which he had offered: Whereby he endeared himſelf unto them. For nothing more wins Mens Affection than Bounty, Affability, Clemency, and ſuch like Virtues.

Ver. 16. *Then came two women that were harlots, unto the king,*] They kept an Houſe of publick Entertainment, as the *Targum* tranſlates it, and perhaps were alſo common Women: But then, the *Jews* ſuppoſe they were not *Iſraelites*, but Strangers; and ſo not comprehended in the Law, *Deut.* xxiii. 17.

And ſtood before the king.] As they uſed to do, who brought any Cauſe before a Court to be judged.

Ver. 17. *And the one woman ſaid, O my Lord, I and this woman dwell in one houſe, and I was delivered of a ſon with her in the houſe.*] This Caſe, as *Abarbinel* thinks, ſhould have been firſt brought into ſome of the inferior Courts, near the Place where they lived; and if they could not have determined it, then to the great *Sanhedrin:* And if they found it too hard for them, then they ſhould have brought it to the King: Who otherwiſe might have eaſily erred, no Inquiſition having been made into the matter, if a Divine Spirit had not directed him. But this Opinion of *Abarbinel* is grounded on another Fancy, that there was a great *Sanhedrin* in theſe Days, which cannot be proved.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs that the third day after I was delivered, that this woman was delivered alſo:*] Of another Son: Which being born ſo ſoon after the other, they could not be diſtinguiſhed by their Age.

And we were together; there was no ſtranger with us in the houſe, ſave we two in the houſe.] So that there was no Witneſs of what paſſed between them; but all relied on their own Credit: Which made the Caſe more difficult.

Ver. 19. *And this woman's child died in the night; becauſe ſhe overlaid it.*] Some Marks upon the Body, it is likely, diſcovered, that it was ſmothered: And *Kimchi* here notes, that if it had died of a Diſeaſe, it would have cried, and the Neighbours been called in, and the thing been known.

Ver. 20. *And ſhe roſe at midnight, and took my ſon from beſide me, while thy handmaid ſlept, and laid it in her boſom, and laid her dead child in my boſom.*] This made the Matter obſcure: For how ſhould ſhe know what her Companion did, when ſhe was aſleep?

Ver. 21. *And when I aroſe in the morning to give my child ſuck, behold it was dead: but when I had conſidered in the morning,*] When it was perfect Day; which it was not when ſhe aroſe to ſuckle the Child.

Behold, it was not not my ſon which I did bear.] There was ſome Reſemblance, it is likely, in the Features of the two Children; ſo that the Neighbours did not know the one from the other: But the Mother, who had carefully obſerved it, knew by ſome Tokens that this dead Child was none of her's.

Ver. 22. *And the other woman ſaid, Nay; but the living is my ſon, and the dead is thy ſon: and this ſaid, No; but the dead is thy ſon, and the living is mine. Thus they ſpake before the king.*]

One affirming what the other denied; but having no Evidence to make Proof of what they ſaid.

Ver. 23 *Then ſaid the king, The one ſaith this is my ſon that liveth, and thy ſon is the dead: and the other ſaith, Nay, but thy ſon is the dead, and my ſon is the living.*] From hence the *Jews* argue, that the Judges before they pronounced Sentence, were bound to ſum up the Evidence that had been given on both Sides: That it might be ſeen they had obſerved and underſtood their Allegations, and accordingly gave Judgment. For thus *Solomon* doth in this Caſe, where there was no more than he repeated; there being no Witneſſes on either Side.

Ver. 24. *And the king ſaid, Bring me a ſword: and they brought a ſword to him.*] As much as to ſay, here is nothing but affirming on one Part, and denying on the other, without any Proof: I muſt therefore try ſome other Way to decide this Controverſy.

Ver. 25. *And the king ſaid, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.*] For both pretended to it, and this he thought the beſt Way to end the Diſpute. For he knew the Woman, whoſe the Child really was, would be moved with ſuch tender Compaſſion to it, that ſhe would never ſuffer it to be divided: And ſo he ſhould diſcover the true Mother. Thus Interpreters commonly expound it. But *Abarbinel* thinks this would have been no extraordinary Proof of *Solomon*'s Wiſdom above other Mens; nor have begot ſuch a Fear in the *Iſraelites* as this Judgment did. Therefore he thinks *Solomon* made a Diſcovery of the Truth, antecedent to this Experiment; by obſerving the Countenance, the manner of Speech, and all the Motions of the Women, whereby he diſcerned the Secrets of their Hearts, and penetrated to the Bottom of the Buſineſs; which this Command to divide the Child diſcovered to all.

Ver. 26. *Then ſpake the woman whoſe the living child was, unto the king (for her bowels yearned upon her child) and ſhe ſaid, O my Lord, give her the living child, and in no wiſe ſlay it: but the other ſaid, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it.*] Natural Affection clearly diſcovered the Truth, without any other Evidence.

Ver. 27. *Then the king ſaid, Give her the child, and in no wiſe ſlay it: for ſhe is the mother of it.*] As appeared by the Pity which her Love excited to it.

Ver. 28. *And all Iſrael heard of the judgment which the king had judged, and they feared the king,*] Very much reverenced, and ſtood in Awe of him.

For they ſaw that the wiſdom of God was in him, to do judgment:] That is, ſaith *Abarbinel*, the Wiſdom proper to God; which ſearches the Reins, and trieth the Hearts. Therefore they *feared him*, perſwading themſelves, they could not have a Thought of any evil Deſign againſt him, which he would not diſcover.

CHAP. IV.

Verſe 1. *SO king Solomon was king over all Iſrael.*] Reigned with the full Conſent of all the Tribes of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 2. *And theſe are the princes which he had,*] The principal Officers imployed under him.

Azariah the ſon of Zadok the prieſt:] He was the Son of *Ahimaaz* the Son of *Zadok*; and therefore was *Zadok*'s Grandſon, 1 *Chron.* vi. 8, 9. But ſuch are uſually called Sons in Scripture, as *Raſi* obſerves upon *Gen.* xx. 12. And *Zadok*, it is probable, in his old Age, bred him up in his Houſe, as his Child. It is not ſaid here what Office he had, unleſs we tranſlate the Word *Prieſt*, as we do in the Margin, *chief Officer*, or prime Miniſter of State. But this *Abarbinel* thinks is a Miſtake, and he takes him to have been one of the Scribes, together with thoſe two that follow in the next Words, *Elihoreph*, and *Ahiah*. For thus he thinks the Words ſhould be tranſlated, *Azariah the ſon of Zadok the prieſt, and Elihoreph, and Ahiah the ſon of Shiſha were ſcribes*; there wanting a *Vau* before *Elihoreph*, as is frequent in Scripture, *Exod.* i. 1, 2. And theſe three Secretaries had each their ſeveral Employments. One, he thinks, was in Matters of Judgment, the other in the Revenue, and the third was concerned in writing Annals, keeping the Records, and a publick Regiſter.

Ver. 3. *Elihoreph and Ahiah, the ſons of Shiſha, ſcribes: Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Ahilud, the recorder.*] Or Maſter of Requeſts. So *Raſi* underſtands the Word *Hammasker*: One that heard all Mens Cauſes, and brought them before the King.

Ver. 4. *And Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada was over the hoſt: and Zadok and Abiathar were the prieſts.*] That is, the Principal, or High Prieſts. *Kimchi* thinks this was not that *Abiathar* whom *Solomon* ejected, and placed *Zadok* in his Room (ii. 35.) but another of that Name. But *Ralbag* takes him to be the ſame that was thruſt out of the Prieſthood; yet ſuffered to miniſter, when *Zadok* was not well, or could not attend: And *Abarbinel* approves of this Opinion. Or, perhaps, *Solomon* permitted him, upon his Petition, to come to *Jeruſalem*, not to officiate as High-prieſt, but to live upon the Altar (according to the Prediction, 1 *Sam.* ii. 36.) and he retained the Name and Title of High-prieſt, though *Zadok* only enjoyed the Office. *L'Empereur* thinks he is here joined with *Zadok*, becauſe in the Beginning of *Solomon*'s Reign he did diſcharge the Office of High-prieſt: And after he was depoſed he retained the Title of that Dignity as long as he lived, becauſe of his precedent Function. *Annot.* upon *Bertram de Rep. Jud.* p. 420.

V. 5. *And Azariah the ſon of Nathan was over the Officers:*] That is, the twelve Officers mentioned below, *ver.* 7, 8, *&c.* who gave Accounts unto him, who was their Overſeer.

And Zabud the ſon of Nathan was principal officer, and the king's friend.] The Word *Cohen* ſignifies here, as it doth 2 *Sam.* viii. 18. *Miniſter of ſtate*, among whom *Zabud* was the chief: One whom the King intruſted with the Management of all Affairs, and with his moſt ſecret Counſels; he being always with him, as *Abarbinel* obſerves. Dr *Hammond* notes upon St *Matthew* ix. Annot. 2. that the King's Friend was an Officer of Nearneſs to the King: As Mr *Selden* obſerved before him in his *Uxor. Hebr.* Lib. 2. Chap 16. p. 201, 202. For *Nathan* having bred

up *Solomon* (ſee 2 *Sam.* xii. 25.) it was eaſy for him to get his Sons preferred by him to the higheſt Dignities under him, when he came to be King: Eſpecially ſince he was very inſtrumental in placing him upon the Throne.

Ver. 6. *And Abiſhar was over the houſhold:*] Lord High Chamberlain (as we ſpeak in our Language) who took in, and diſplaced Officers in the Family.

And Adoniram the ſon of Abda was over the tribute.] Which was impoſed on the People, for the Support of the Goverment. Such Contributions were raiſed ſeveral Ways in ſeveral Kingdoms: But good and wiſe Princes took Care not to lay Burdens on ſuch things as were neceſſary for the Livelihood of the Poor; and that they were not too heavy upon any thing: As *Solomon's* were, if the Peoples Complaints were juſt, after his Death: But perhaps this Word *Tribute*, which we tranſlate *levy* in the Margin, may refer not to the levying of Money, but of Men. Concerning which we read in the next Chapter, ver. 13, 14. where *Adoniram* is ſaid to be over the Levy: And ſo he might be over both, of Men and Money.

Ver. 7. *And Solomon had twelve officers over all Iſrael, which provided victuals for the king and his houſhold: Each man in his month made proviſion.*] The Country being divided into twelve Parts, there were ſo many Perſons (called *Nitzavium*, becauſe there they were placed) conſtituted to buy Proviſions for the King and his Family; at the beſt Hand, and every thing in its proper Seaſon: To be ſent to the Place where the King reſided, by every one in his Month. By which means there was great Plenty for all that belonged to the Court; both for his Houſe, and his Stables of Horſes; for Domeſticks, and for all Foreigners that came thither about Buſineſs, or to hear his Wiſdom: Who were there entertained without any Grievance to his People.

Ver. 8. *And theſe are their names: The ſon of Hur,*] He tells only the Name of the Father, who it ſeems was more illuſtrious than the Son: Unleſs we tranſlate theſe Words, *Ben-hur*.

In Mount Ephraim.] And the Territory belonging to it: Which muſt be underſtood of the reſt of the Places mentioned in the following Verſes.

Ver. 9. *The ſon of Dekar,*] Or *Ben-Dekar*, as thoſe that follow may be tranſlated: Though it is probable, as I ſaid before, that the Fathers are named, not the Sons; becauſe they were very illuſtrious Perſons, and better known: Who managed perhaps this Affair by their Sons.

In Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and Bethſhemeſh, and Elon-beth-hanan.] It is not material in what Country theſe places were; and therefore I ſhall not enquire after them.

Ver. 10. *The ſon of Heſed, in Aruboth: To him pertained Sochoh, and all the land of Hepher.*] There were more *Sochohs* than one, as we find *Joſh.* vi. 35, 48. It is uncertain which are here meant. The Land of *Hepher* poſſibly may be the Portion given to the Daughters of *Hepher*, *Joſh.* xvii. 3, &c.

Ver. 11. *The ſon of Abinadab, in all the region of Dor, which had Taphath the daughter of Solomon to wife.*] *Solomon* had no Daughters marriageable when theſe Officers were made: But in Proceſs of Time this Man, and *Ahimaaz* mentioned *ver.* 15. had behaved themſelves ſo well in their Office, that *Solomon* did them the Honour to give them two of his Daughters to be their Wives.

Ver. 12. *Baanah the ſon of Ahilud, to him pertained Taanach and Megiddo, and all Bethſhean, which is by Zartanah beneath Jezreel, from Bethſhean to Abel-meholah, even unto the place that is beyond Jockneam,*] Theſe Places have been named in the foregoing Books: Where I have noted as much as I can find about them. Here the Author names the Perſon himſelf that was employed (as he doth in ſome of the following Verſes) and not meerly the Father. The Reaſon of which I cannot give, unleſs it were that he was a very noted Perſon.

Ver. 13. *The ſon of Geber in Ramoth-Gilead: to him pertained the towns of Jair the ſon of Manaſſeh, which are in Gilead: to him alſo pertained the region of Argob, which is in Baſhan, threeſcore great cities with walls, and brazen bars.*] Theſe Countries beyond *Jordan* are alſo well known, being often mentioned in the foregoing Books.

Ver. 14. *Ahinadab the ſon of Iddo had Mahanaim.*] And the Territory belonging to it, which was very fertile: But this ſeems to ſome not to bear proportion to the reſt, being not a twelfth Part of the whole Country. Therefore they follow the marginal Tranſlation *to Mahanaim*: That is, all the Territory from the Places before-named unto this Place.

Ver. 15 *Ahimaaz was in Naphthali; he alſo took Baſmath the daughter of Solomon to wife.*] As *Ahinadab* had married another of his Daughters, ſee *ver.* 11.

Ver. 16. *Baanah the ſon of Huſhai was in Aſher and in Aloth.*] This Man perhaps was the Son of *Huſhai* the Friend of *David*; and therefore preferred by *Solomon*.

Ver. 17. *Jehoſhaphat the ſon of Parvah in Iſſachar.*] It appears by this, and the foregoing and following Verſe, that ſome of theſe Officers had whole Tribes aſſigned them for their Province.

Ver. 18. *Shimei the ſon of Elah in Benjamin.*] Concerning this Perſon, ſee Chap. i. ver. 8.

Ver. 19. *Gebar the ſon of Uri was in the country of Gilead, in the country of Sihon king of the Amorites, and of Og king of Baſhan;*] That is, in the reſt of the Country of *Gilead* before mentioned, *ver.* 13.

And he was the only officer which was in the land.] There is nothing in the *Hebrew* anſwering to thoſe Words *he was*: Therefore this doth not relate to the Officer before mentioned; but the Meaning is, as *Abarbinel* expounds it, that beſides all thoſe Officers before named, there was another who took Care of Strangers, who were going to Court, or coming from it: As the other twelve took Care of his Family, and all belonging to it. This Officer made Proviſion in that Country where the King then dwelt; and therefore is not named, becauſe he was not fixed and ſettled in his Office, as the other were; but choſen by the Citizens of that City, where the King reſided.

Ver. 20. *And Judah and Iſrael were many, as the ſand which is by the ſea in multitude,*] The

ſame

ſame *Abarbinel* thinks this and the next Verſes explain the Reaſon why this Officer was appointed: *Firſt*, becauſe *Iſrael* and *Judah* were ſo great a People; and *Secondly*, becauſe Strangers came from ſeveral Regions, to bring Preſents, or about other Buſineſs. And therefore it was neceſſary this Officer ſhould ſet a reaſonable Price upon all things ſold in the Market; that they might not exact upon any body, when they ſaw a Multitude of Buyers, which might tempt them to ſell their Commodities too dear.

Eating and drinking, and making merry.] In perfect Security; and being well pleaſed and highly ſatisfied.

Ver. 21. *And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms, from the river to the land of the Philiſtines, and unto the border of Egypt:*] The Bounds of his Kingdom were *Euphrates* on the Eaſt, the Country of the *Philiſtines* on the Weſt, and *Egypt* on the South. For ſo God promiſed that their Dominion ſhould be extended, *from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates*, *Gen.* xv. 18. And accordingly *David* conquered ſo far, and *Solomon* maintained his Conqueſts.

They brought preſents, and ſerved Solomon all the days of his life.] This explains what went before: Which is not to be underſtood as if all thoſe Countries had no other King than *Solomon*; but that their Kings were Tributaries to him, and made him Preſents in token of their Subjection.

Ver. 22. *And Solomon's proviſion for one day, was thirty meaſures of fine flour, and ſixty meaſures of meal,*] By *Meal* is meant a coarſer ſort of Flour for inferior Servants: And the Meaſure here ſpoken of contained ten *Ephahs*. So here was Bread enough provided for near three thouſand Perſons, as ſome compute it.

Ver. 23. *Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the paſtures, and an hundred ſheep,*] This and the foregoing Verſe *Abarbinel* thinks is added, to ſatisfy ſome Queſtions that ariſe about the Conſtitution of ſo many Officers: For why might he not be ſupplied out of the Neighbouring Cities and Towns? Which he ſhews here could not be; becauſe of the vaſt Quantity of Proviſion which was neceſſary for one Day. And it is obſervable, that *Oxen* are here mentioned in the firſt Place (both thoſe fatted at Home, and thoſe fatted in the Paſtures) being anciently eſteemed the moſt noble Meat: As appears by *Homer*'s Heroes. Who, as *Dioſcorides* notes, never had any thing in their Feaſts, no not at Marriages, but fat Oxen. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1 *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 32. where he mentions the great Entertainments made by *Agamemnon*, *Menelaus*, *Neſtor*, *Alcinous*. Nor did they that courted *Penelope*, though the moſt voluptuous of all Men, eat any other Meat.

Beſides harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow deer,] Which were Meats highly eſteemed among the *Jews*, and mentioned next to the foregoing, *Deut.* xiv. 4, 5.

And fatted fowl.] Many reſtrain the Word *Barburim* to Birds, or Fowl, as we do: And ſome think they were *Capons*: *Kimchi and* others ſay, fatted Fowl out of *Barbary*; from whence they had the Name of *Barburim*. But the Name of *Barbary* was not known in *Solomon*'s Time: And therefore *Bochart* thinks the Word ſhould be tranſlated, *the choiceſt of all fatted things*, *Hieroz. P.* 2. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 19. and ſo *Gouſſet* in his late *Commentaries of the Hebrew Tongue*.

Ver. 24. *And he had dominion over all the regions on this ſide the river,*] It might be objected to what was ſaid before, that all the Country of *Iſrael* could not afford ſuch a conſtant Supply of Proviſions: Which he prevents by this Obſervation, that his Dominion extended to a great many other Regions, from whence they might be furniſhed with more than his own Country afforded.

From Tiphſah even unto Azzah, over all the kings on this ſide the river:] This is an Explication of what is ſaid *ver.* 21. that he reigned from the River, that is *Euphrates*, to the Land of the *Philiſtines*: For *Tiphſah* is the ſame with the City *Tapſaeus*; where there was a Bridge, and a Ferry over *Euphrates*, as *Strabo* teſtifies in many Places (ſee *Lib.* 16. *p.* 747.) and the very Name implies as much, for פסח is *tranſire*, to paſs over, in the *Hebrew* Language.

And he had peace on all ſides round about him.] None of his Neighbours gave him any Diſturbance: So that the *Iſraelites* had nothing to divert them (as *Abarbinel* obſerves) from improving their Lands, and increaſing their Rents; whereby there was a greater Plenty of all things. *Machiavel* magnifies thoſe who by Force of Arms atchieved mighty things, and raiſed themſelves to a great Height of Glory: But *Hermannus Conringius* well corrects him with this Obſervation, that *Solomon* among the *Jews*, and *Numa Pompilius* among the *Romans*, got a more laſting Name in all future Age by the Art of Peace. For which he refers to *Cicero*, *L.* 2. *de Officiis*.

Ver. 25. *And Judah and Iſrael dwelt ſafely, every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, from Dan even to Beerſheba,*] This he ſaith (the ſame Author thinks) to ſhew the great Plenty of Corn and Wine and Oil, as well as of Cattle and all other things: *Vines* and *Fig-trees* are particularly mentioned; becauſe they were planted in *Judæa* more than any other Trees: For the Sweetneſs of their Fruit, and the Benefits of their Shade.

All the days of Solomon.] That is, 'till the End of his Life. When ſome Adverſaries were ſtirred up againſt him: But for ſo ſhort a Time, in his old Age, that he had Peace the far greater part of his Reign, 1 *Chron.* xxii. 9.

Ver. 26. *And Solomon had forty thouſand ſtalls of horſes for his chariots,*] In 2 *Chron.* ix. 25. it is ſaid he had but four thouſand. But there is no Diſagreement between theſe two Places: For he ſpeaks here of his Horſes, and there of their Stall or Stables; there being ten in every Stable, which make forty thouſand, as *Abarbinel* obſerves. But this doth not ſatisfy *Bochartus*, who rather inclines to *Jacobus Capellus*'s Opinion, that the *Hebrew* Word *Arbaim* here ſignifies *four* not forty, *Hierozoicon*, *Lib.* 2. *Pars* 1. *p.* 155, &c. But this is without Example, therefore others think that in the *Chronicles* the Author ſpeaks of thoſe Stalls for

Horſes which he had in *Jeruſalem* for his conſtant Guard, which were but four thouſand: Whereas here he ſpeaks of thoſe which were diſperſed throughout his whole Kingdom.

And twelve thouſand horſemen.] Which were diſtributed, it is likely, in every Tribe; to keep them in Peace, and to be ready to oppoſe any Enemy that might invade them: Wherein *Abarbinel* thinks that *Solomon* did not offend againſt the Law in *Deuteronomy*, which commanded them not to multiply Horſes (xvii. 16.) becauſe he did it not out of Pride and Vanity; but to preſerve Peace, by keeping all his Neighbours in Awe. And he profeſſes not to truſt in them, *Prov.* xxi. 31.

Ver. 27. *Theſe officers provided victuals for king Solomon, and for all that came to king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.*] This is repeated, to ſhew their Diligence, Exactneſs, and Care, which was remarkable: Eſpecially ſince they took Care of his Stable, as well as of his Houſhold, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 28. *Barley alſo and ſtraw*] Barley was anciently Horſe Corn, as appears by many Places in *Homer*; which *Bochartus* hath obſerved in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 9.

For the horſes and dromedaries] The *Hebrew* Word *Recheſh* ſignifies ſwift Horſes, as *Abarbinel* thinks. See *Eſther* viii. 14. But others take them for *Mules*, as we tranſlate it in the Margin. *Bochartus* thinks it certain, that this Word imports a kind of Horſe, *Micah* i. 13. See *Hieroz. P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 6. & 21.

Brought they unto the place where the officers were,] Or rather, *where the Beaſts were.* For there is no Word for *Officers* in the *Hebrew.*

Every man according to his charge.] Which laſted for a Month, every Year.

Ver. 29. *And God gave Solomon wiſdom and underſtanding, exceeding much,*] Knowledge of all manner of Things; and Prudence in the Adminiſtration of the Government.

And largeneſs of heart,] A Mind very comprehenſive of all ſort of Knowledge; and an Heart to do a vaſt deal of Good.

Even as the ſand that is on the ſea-ſhore.] As the Sand there incloſes a vaſt Body of Waters; ſo his Mind contained an Ocean of Knowledge, as the Lord *Bacon* ſomewhere ſpeaks.

Ver. 30. *And Solomon's wiſdom excelled the wiſdom of all the children of the eaſt country,*] Some, by theſe Eaſtern Sages underſtand the *Chaldæans:* Who were rather a Northern People, as *Jeremiah* deſcribes them (i. 14.) and were not famous for Learning in *Solomon*'s Time; nor began to be ſo 'till the Reign of *Nabonaſſar:* Nor are the *Tyrians* here meant, as *Pineda* imagines; for they were a Weſtern People: But the Oriental *Arabians*; who were famous for Wiſdom in antient Times, as appears by the Book of *Job.* And in After-ages *Porphyry* reports (as St *Cyril* tells us, *Lib.* 10. *contra Julianum*) that *Pythagoras* travelled into this Country, to improve himſelf in Learning: Where were many of thoſe wiſe Men called *Magi*, as well as among the *Perſians.* Thus *Conringius* in his *Supplementum* 5. *ad L. de Antiq. Academicis.* But after all, *Abarbinel* takes the Word *Kedem* not to ſignify *Eaſt*, but *antient Time.* And ſo *the Children of Keden* are thoſe who were born in the Days of Old: When Men lived ſome Hundreds of Years; and ſo improved themſelves in Knowledge (eſpecially in Aſtronomical Learning) far more than it was poſſible for Men to do, after their Lives became very ſhort. This makes our Wiſdom defective, as was obſerved by *Hippocrates* in his Aphoriſms, *Art is long, and Life is ſhort.* But *Solomon*, by a ſpecial Gift of God, was more knowing than they who lived above ten Times as long as he did. But this is a forced Senſe, as appears by the next Words, concerning *Egypt.*

And all the wiſdom of Egypt.] Which Country was celebrated for Wiſdom in *Moſes*'s Time, as appears from *Acts* vii. 22. and in after-times *Macrobius* calls *Egypt*, *Matrem Artium, the* Mother of Arts. But it was famous eſpecially for the Knowledge of the Motions of the Heavenly Bodies: For he ſaith (*Lib.* 1. *Saturnal. Cap.* 15.) *Primos omnium Cœlis ſcrutari, & metiri auſos fuiſſe*; that they were the firſt who attempted to ſearch and meaſure the Heavens: For which the great Serenity of their Air gave them Opportunity. As for their Civil Prudence, it is ſufficiently indicated in the Words of *Iſaiah*, xix. 11.

Ver. 31. *And he was wiſer than all men*;] Of that Age wherein he lived. But ſome extend this to all Men that were before him, or ſhould come after him. For in *Midraſch Koheleth* (upon *Eccleſiaſtes* vii. 24.) they thus gloſs, Wiſer than *Col Adam*, all Men (this is the firſt *Adam*), and than *Ethan* (this is *Abraham*), and than *Heman* (this is *Moſes*). But *Maimonides* diſcreetly confines the Words to the Men of that Age, whom he mentions, *Ethan*, *Heman*, *&c.* and will by no Means allow him to have been wiſer than *Moſes.* See *More Nevochim*, *Pars* 3. *Cap.* 4.

Than Ethan the Ezraite, than Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda,] If theſe were the Sons of *Zerah* the Son of *Judah*, mentinoned 1 *Chron.* ii. 6. then it is not true that *Solomon* is compared only with the wiſe Men of his Age: For theſe lived long before him. And the two former are thought to have been endued with the Spirit of Prophecy, being the Authors, as ſome think, of two *Pſalms.* For *Pſalm* lxxxviii is ſaid to be an inſtructive Pſalm of *Heman* the *Ezraite*, and the next (lxxxix) of *Ethan* the *Ezraite.* Of this Opinion is Dr *Lightfoot.* But it is more probable that other Men are here meant; for we read of *Heman* the Grand-child of *Samuel*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 33. who was alſo a Prophet, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 5. and in the ſame Time there was one *Ethan* a Levite of the Poſterity of *Merari*, 1 *Chron.* vi. 46. who is joined with *Heman* and *Aſaph* as principal Singers, 1 *Chron.* xv. 17. Now the forementioned *Pſalms* may more reaſonably be aſcribed to them; there being expreſs Mention of *David* and his Kingdom in one of them: and then *Solomon* is compared only with the wiſe Men of his own Time, and not with thoſe that lived before *Moſes.* They that think otherwiſe of theſe Men, were miſled by the *Jews*, who would have ſome Pſalms to have been compoſed before *David.* This they began to ſuppoſe (as a moſt learned Friend of mine,

Dr *Alix*, hath obſerved to me) after the Times of the Apoſtles, as *Juſtin Martyr* affirms in his Apology, *pag.* 76.

The ſons of Mahol :] This confutes thoſe that make them the Sons of *Zerah :* Unleſs we ſuppoſe him to have had two Names, as it muſt be confeſſed was common among the *Jews*. And this laſt Name might be given him, becauſe he was a ſkilful Muſician: For *Mahol* ſignifies a *Pipe*.

And his fame was in all nations round about.] All the neighbouring Countries heard the Fame of his Wiſdom.

Ver. 32. *And he ſpake three thouſand proverbs :*] Being an excellent Moral Philoſopher, as well as a Natural. St *Hierom* thinks theſe are thoſe we read in the Book of the *Proverbs*, which doth not contain ſo many: But is more probable than what *Joſephus* affirms, that he wrote three thouſand Books of *Proverbs:* Which is an extravagant Conceit; for the Scripture mentions only three thouſand Proverbs, many of which we muſt confeſs to have been loſt, as other Compoſures of his are.

And his ſongs were a thouſand and five.] He was a great Poet alſo: For anciently wiſe Men were wont to give good Inſtructions in Songs; which made them to be more eaſily remembred. But none of theſe Compoſitions were thought to be divinely inſpired, but only the *Song of Songs*: Which was therefore joined to the Sacred Books. The reſt were not adapted to ſtir up a Senſe of Piety; as the *Pſalms* of *David* were: Who is therefore called the *Sweet Singer of Iſrael*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1.

Ver. 33. *And he ſpake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyſſop that ſpringeth out of the wall :*] That is, of all ſorts of Plants, from the greateſt to the ſmalleſt. For *Ezub* (which we commonly tranſlate *hyſſop*) ſeems to be the ſame with the *Ethiopian* Word *Azub*, which ſignifies *Mint*; and is more agreeable to this Place, being more directly oppoſed to the Cedar than Hyſſop: Which hath a Stalk, and ſometimes of great Strength, as *de Dieu* and *Job Ludolphus* have obſerved. And for this Reaſon *Hottinger* (in his *Smegma Oriental.* p. 580.) takes it for the Wall-flower, which is leſs than Hyſſop. But *Bochartus* maintains Hyſſop to here meant; of which the *Jews* here reckoned four Sorts: And one of them may well be thought to grow upon Walls. Though there is no Neceſſity, he thinks, to put that Interpretation upon the Word *Bekir*, which we tranſlate *on the Wall:* Which may ſignify, as the Particle *Beth* doth in many Places, *near* or *hard by* the Wall. Of *Jeruſalem*, that is, which was incompaſſed with Mountains: And the *Arabians* obſerve that Hyſſop grew in the Mountains, eſpecially about *Jeruſalem*. See *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 50. From *Solomon*'s great Skill in the Properties and Virtues of all Plants, *Nachmanides* makes bold to conclude that he wrote a Book of Medicine.

And he ſpake alſo of beaſts, and fowl, and creeping things, and fiſhes.] This ſhews the Vaſtneſs of his Learning: Which comprehended the whole Hiſtory of Animals, as well as of Plants; whoſe Nature and Qualities he underſtood. Some *Jews* fancy that *Ariſtotle* ſaw theſe Books, and publiſhed them in his own Name, in his *Hiſtoria Animalium*. It is a Rule given by thoſe who write Books of *Civil Prudence*, that they who apply themſelves to the Management of publick Affairs, ſhould not follow other Studies: Which by their Delight may draw their Minds too much from Buſineſs: But *Solomon* had ſo vaſt a Genius, that he purſued all manner of Knowledge, while he governed his Kingdom with great Prudence. For he compoſed a great Number of Songs, and diſcourſed of all ſorts of Creatures, both in the Sea and in the Land: Which belonged to contemplative, not to practical Studies. So that in his Days the Wiſh of *Plato* was fulfilled, that *either Philoſophers might be Kings, or Kings be Philoſophers.*

Ver. 34. *And there came of all people to hear the wiſdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wiſdom.*] It is a Conceit of *Kimchi* that Kings came from all Parts of the Countries round about, to hear his Wiſdom: And their People, when they returned, came to their Kings to learn what *Solomon* had ſaid. But this is not the literal Senſe of the Words; nor is it probable that any but the Queen of *Sheba*, came in Perſon to hear his Wiſdom: For they would have been mentioned, as ſhe is. Therefore the plain Meaning is, that People came from all the neighbouring Nations, being ſent by their Kings, who heard of his Fame: Nay, their own natural Deſires might carry them to him. For as *Dion Pruſæus* obſerves (*Orat. de Regno*, p. 6.) there is no Spectacle ſo grateful, as a wiſe and good King. All Men flock to ſee him, and partake, τῆς καλῆς διανοίας καὶ ἀγαθῆς, of his good and pious Mind. Eſpecially if he be mild and gentle, there is no Spectacle ſo ſweet and lovely: Inſomuch that they who ſee him, are loth to leave him (as he ſpeaks a little before) and they that hear him, ἐπιθυμοῦσιν ἰδεῖν, &c. are deſirous to ſee him, more than Children are to find their unknown Father.

CHAP. V.

Verſe 1. *AND Hiram king of Tyre ſent his ſervants unto king Solomon;*] That is, he ſent Embaſſadors to condole with King *Solomon* the Death of his Father (as the manner was) and to congratulate his Acceſſion to the Throne. *Eupolemus* calls this King *Suron* (as he is called *Huram* in the Book of the *Chronicles*) and makes mention of thoſe Letters which were ſent by theſe Embaſſadors. See *Euſebius* in his *Præpar. Evang. Lib.* 9. *Cap.* 33, 34.

(*For he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father*) *for Hiram was ever a lover of David.*] And therefore was deſirous to continue in Friendſhip with his Son.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon ſent to Hiram, ſaying,*] There were three Embaſſies paſſed between them, as *Abarbinel* obſerves: For *Hiram* began, and *Solomon* returned it; and then *Hiram* ſent to him again, *ver.* 8. But two only are mentioned in the Book of the *Chronicles*, 2. ii. 3, 11. For *Ezra* there (as he obſerves) minded only what concerned the building of the Temple:

And

And ſo omitted the firſt Embaſſy, which was no more than a Compliment.

Ver. 3. *Thou knoweſt how that David my father could not build an houſe to the name of the* LORD *his God, for the wars which were about him on every ſide, until the* LORD *put them under the ſoles of his feet.*] This was one Reaſon; but not the chief: For God commanded him to deſiſt, when he had it in Deſign.

Ver. 4. *And now the* LORD *my God hath given me reſt on every ſide, ſo that there is neither adverſary, nor evil occurrent.*] Nothing to make him fear any Diſturbance.

Ver. 5. *And behold, I purpoſe to build an houſe unto the name of the* LORD *my God,*] For his Worſhip and Service.

As the LORD *ſpake unto David my father, ſaying, Thy ſon, whom I will ſet upon thy throne in thy room, he ſhall build an houſe unto my name.*] This he ſpake by the Prophet *Nathan*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 13.

Ver. 6. *Now therefore command them,*] That is, his Servants who were ſkilled in ſuch Work.

To hew me cedar trees] Which were the moſt firm and durable, as well as moſt fragrant of all other.

Out of Lebanon,] Which was, if not all, yet a great Part of it within the Dominion of *Solomon*. Who therefore doth not aſk Trees of him which were his own; but only that his Servants ſhould hew and prepare them for his Uſe, which they underſtood better than the *Iſraelites*.

And my ſervants ſhall be with thy ſervants:] To aſſiſt them, as they ſhould be directed by them; and to receive the Timber from them, and convey it to *Solomon*, when it was prepared.

And unto thee will I give hire for thy ſervants, according to all that thou ſhalt appoint:] Pay them what Wages they pleaſed to demand for their Work.

For thou knoweſt there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like the Sidonians.] Both *Tyre* and *Sidon* were now under one and the ſame King: And both of them very ingenious in Mechanicks: Eſpecially the *Sidonians*: Whom *Homer* calls πολυδίδαλους, excellent Artiſts in divers Things: For he aſcribes to them all the neater ſort of Work, both in his *Iliads* and his *Odyſſey*, as *Bochartus* obſerves in his *Phaleg. Lib.* 4. Cap. 35. By which Arts they grew very rich, in a Time of long Peace, which they enjoyed, as we learn from *Judges* xviii. 7. where the *Sidonians* are made the Example of thoſe that lived very ſecurely. But as for the *Iſraelites* they did not mind Manufactures, but applied themſelves wholly to Agriculture and feeding of Cattle. There had been moſt admirable Workmen among them, who knew how to cut and engrave precious Stones, to caſt and work up Metals, *&c.* but this was before they came into the Land of *Canaan*, in the Time of *Moſes*, when *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* excelled in many different Arts, which were neceſſary for the Work of the Tabernacle. But the Scripture acquaints us, that they had their Skill by Inſpiration from God; and it doth not appear that they had any Succeſſors: So that in the Time of *Solomon* there were no profeſſed Artificers who could undertake the Work of the Temple.

Ver. 7. *And it came to paſs, that when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly,*] Which demonſtrates a more than ordinary Friendſhip which he had for King *David* and the People of *Iſrael*.

And ſaid, Bleſſed be the LORD *this day, which hath given unto David a wiſe ſon over this great people.*] If he was not become a Proſelyte to the *Jews* Religion (which one would have expected ſhould have been recorded if he had) yet he had a great Veneration for the God of *Iſrael*, who was properly called the LORD: And it is likely, he worſhipped him together with his own God.

Ver. 8. *And Hiram ſent to Solomon, ſaying, I have conſidered the things which thou ſenteſt to me for: and I will do all thy deſire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir.*] The Word which we tranſlate *Fir*, others think ſignifies *Pine* or *Cypreſs*. For Fir ſeems not ſo fit for this Work, being a light Wood, and not durable, and apt to take Fire. Their Conjecture is moſt reaſonable, who think it was a kind of *Cedar*: And therefore comprehended under that Name, *ver.* 6. where *Solomon* deſires of him only, that his Servants might hew him *Cedar-trees*.

Ver. 9. *My ſervants ſhall bring them down from Lebanon unto the ſea:*] The Mediterranean Sea; in which his City ſtood.

And I will convey them by ſea in flotes,] Some think they were tied together, and drawn in the Water by Veſſels; as the manner now frequently is: But they wanted not Veſſels wherein to convey them; for *Diodorus Siculus* ſaith, (*Lib.* 6.) that *Sidon* had in his Time, τειήρεις καὶ πεντήρεις πλείως τῶν ἑξακοσιων, more than an hundred Three Oar and Five Oar Veſſels belonging to it: And that City was but two thouſand Furlongs from *Tyre*, as *Strabo* ſaith.

Unto the place that thou ſhalt appoint me,] Which was at *Joppa*: A famous Sea-port in the Country of *Iſrael*, 2 *Chron.* ii. 16.

And will cauſe them to be diſcharged there, and thou ſhalt receive them:] When they were landed in that Place.

And thou ſhalt accompliſh my deſire, in giving food for my houſhold.] For living in barren Iſlands, they wanted Corn; though they had Plenty of Money; being great Merchants. And in after-times it appears, they were ſupported by Proviſions from *Judea*, *Acts* xii. 20.

Ver. 10. *And Hiram gave Solomon cedar-trees, and fir-trees, according to all his deſire.*] That is, he agreed to give him all that he deſired: But the Trees were not yet cut down and prepared.

Ver. 11. *And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thouſand meaſures of wheat for food to his houſhold, and twenty meaſures of pure oil:*] In 2 *Chron.* ii. 10. it is ſaid twenty thouſand Baths of Oil. How *Corim* and *Bathim* differ I ſhall not examine; but that Place in the *Chronicles* plainly ſpeaks of what was given to the Workmen, who had other things beſides (there mentioned) to ſupport them in their Labours: But here the Prophet ſpeaks of what was given for the Uſe of *Hiram*'s Family, as *Kimchi* and *Ralbag* ſolve this ſeeming Contradiction. *Abarbinel* hath another

Solution. See *Buxtorf*, his *Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis*, Pars 2. Cap. 2. pag. 424.

Thus gave Solomon to Hiram year by year.] During their Lives.

Ver. 12. *And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised:*] His Wisdom appeared more and more, in all his Transactions.

And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and they two made a league together.] It was lawful in ancient Times, before the Law of *Moses* was given, to make Leagues with Strangers to their Religion, for their mutual Benefit: As appears by the Story of *Jacob* and *Laban*, *Isaac* and *Abimelech* (though some doubt whether he was an Idolater) and the Law of *Moses* made no Alteration, as *Grotius* observes, *Lib.* 2. *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. 16. Sect. 9. If *Hiram* therefore worshipped other Gods, *Solomon* might notwithstanding make a League with him (insomuch that *Hiram* calls him Brother, ix. 13.) he being none of the seven Nations of *Canaan*.

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and the levy was thirty thousand men.*] To cut down the Trees, which *Hiram*'s Servants were to hew.

Ver. 14. *And sent them to Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they were in Lebanon, and two months at home:*] That they might not be tired with their Labour; nor neglect their own Families, while they were employed abroad.

And Adoniram was over the levy.] Took Care to raise them, and to see them disposed according to *Solomon*'s Order. See iv. 6.

Ver. 15. *And Solomon had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens,*] *Viz.* Porters, Carters, Seamen, and such like.

And fourscore thousand that were hewers in the mountains:] That is, Hewers of Stone, for Timber was hewed by *Hiram*'s Servants in *Lebanon*. And these hundred and fifty Thousand were not *Israelites*, as the thirty Thousand before-mentioned were; but Strangers of other Nations, as may be gathered from ix. 21, 22. It may seem strange to some, that so many Men should be employed about the Building of so small a Place, as the Temple was: But they must consider that there were many other Works besides, which *Solomon* designed, and which he finished (ix. 15.) for which we read of no other Preparations of Materials, but what was now made.

Ver. 16. *Besides the chief of Solomon's officers which were over the work, three thousand and three hundred which ruled over the people that wrought in the work.*] In 2 *Chron.* ii. 18. they are said to have been three Thousand and six Hundred: For three Hundred were Overseers even of the three Thousand three Hundred, who were to oversee the rest. That is, superior Officers, who surveyed the whole, as *Kimchi* observes. Or, as *Abarbinel* takes it, there were three hundred Supernumeraries, who were employed in the more exquisite sort of Work: or when any of the other failed, were ready to supply their Places.

Ver. 17. *And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.*] All Things being now prepared, *Solomon* himself seems to have been present at the laying of the Foundation of the House; which was not only very strong, but also very magnificent. For he caused Stones of great Bigness to be laid for the Foundation, and some of great Price (such as Marble, some think. See vii. 10.) and those also hewn and polished, not rough; that they might lie more regularly and even: Which shews the Nobleness of his Mind, in making that which was not exposed to open View, suitable to that which was seen.

Ver. 18. *And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them,*] It seems *Solomon*'s Servants learned of *Hiram*'s; or at least were directed by them to assist in the Work.

And the stone-squarers:] Or the *Gibbites*, as it is in the Margin, who are mentioned in *Josh.* xiii. 5. being *Phœnicians*, Inhabitants of *Gabala*, a Promontory mentioned by *Pliny*, (See *Psal.* lxxxiii. 7.) who were the most excellent Artists in those Parts.

So they prepared timber and stones to build the house.] Made all ready not only to lay the Foundation, but to build the House.

CHAP. VI.

Verse 1. *AND it came to pass in the four hundred and fourscore year, after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt,*] These Years are variously computed by the *Jewish* Doctors; with which I shall not trouble the Reader: But only observe, that they are plainly divided into two Intervals, by the Words of *Jepthah* to the *Ammonites*, *Judges* xi. 26. where he tells them the *Israelites* had dwelt in the Land of *Canaan* three hundred Years: Unto which if we add the forty Years wherein they wandered in the Wilderness, there were three hundred and forty Years past at that Time, since they came out of *Egypt*. And so the other Interval from thence unto the Building of the Temple, was an hundred and forty Years: Which is not hard to make out according to Sir *John Marsham*'s Computation. See my Annotations on that Place of the Book of *Judges*.

In the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel,] But why did he not begin the Work sooner, according to the Command of his Father *David*, who left him all Things necessary, Gold, Silver, Brass, *&c.* for the Building of it; and also a Draught of it: So that he might have begun when he began to reign? To which *Abarbinel* answers, that *Solomon* would not make use of what his Father had prepared, but resolved to build the House at his own Cost and Charge; and put into the Treasury of the LORD's House that which *David* had dedicated to this Work, vii. 51. And therefore he stood in need of four Years Time, to gather so much Gold and Silver as was necessary to defray the Charges of this Work.

In the month Zif, which is the second month that he began to build the house of the LORD.] Either to lay the Foundation of it, or to build upon the Foundation before-mentioned.

Ver. 2. *And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD,*] For his Worship and Service: And wherein his Divine Presence might dwell among them, *ver.* 13.

The length of it was ſixty cubits,] Forty of which belonged to the Holy Place; and twenty to the moſt Holy.

And the breadth thereof twenty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits.] The Length and Breadth of it was twice as big (*Abarbinel* and others obſerve) as the Tabernacle of *Moſes*: Which was in Length but thirty Cubits, and in Breadth but ten. Whereas the Temple was twenty Cubits wide through the whole, and ſixty long: Beſides the Porch. When it is ſaid the Height was thirty Cubits; it muſt be underſtood of the Holy Place: For the Holy of Holies was only twenty. See *ver.* 20. And ſo the Height of the Holy Place was three times more than it was in the Tabernacle: For his Temple was to reſemble an high Tower; having Chambers above it, in three Stories one above another, as the *Jewiſh* Doctors obſerve. See 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 11.

Ver. 3. *And the porch before the Temple of the houſe, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the houſe; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof, before the houſe.*] He gives no Account of the Height of it: But in 2 *Chron.* iii. 4. *Ezra* ſeems to ſay, it was an *hundred and twenty cubits.* Which Words *Kimchi* imagines relate to the Porch alone: But *Abarbinel* wonders how this could come into his Head; when this Height belongs to the whole Houſe. For if it belonged only to the Porch, then nothing is there ſaid of the Houſe it ſelf: And beſides, it immediately follows that he *overlaid it with pure Gold.* Which is not true of the Porch (for that was not overlaid with Gold) but only of the Houſe of God. Which from the Foundation to the Covering of it, was thirty Cubits high; and above that Covering were three Stories of Chambers, which were ninety Cubits: and ſo in all the Height of the Houſe was an hundred and twenty.

Ver. 4. *And for the houſe he made windows of narrow lights.*] Or, as it is in the Margin, *broad within and narrow without.* By which Means the Houſe was better ſecured from the Weather; and yet had Lights enough. See *Caſaubon* upon *Athenæus*, p. 363. where he obſerves the *Greeks* call ſuch Windows τοξικὰς, *feneſtras longas & anguſtas, ad emittenda tela, quàm ad lucem admittendum factas*, long, and narrow Windows made to ſhoot out Weapons, than to let in Light. And he tranſlates theſe *Hebrew* Words, *feneſtras, proſpectus clauſas*, viz. from the outward Part.

Ver. 5. *And againſt the wall of the houſe*] Or, *joyning to it*, it is in the Margin: For the Beams were not faſtened in the Walls of the Houſe, as we read in the next Verſe; but a wooden Wall, ſome think, went round the Houſe, unto which theſe Chambers were faſtened.

He built chambers round about againſt the walls of the houſe round about, both of the temple and of the oracle:] But not of the Porch where the Entrance into the Houſe was. It appears out of *Ezekiel* and *Joſephus*, as *Peter Martyr* obſerves, that there were *Twelve* of theſe Chambers on the South-ſide, and as many on the North; and *Six* on the Weſt.

And he made chambers round about.] In the *Hebrew*, he made *Ribs*: By which ſome underſtand Galleries. Which incompaſſed all the forenamed Chambers, as our Ribs do the Entrails of our Bodies. Without which there could not have been a convenient Paſſage to the ſeveral Chambers: Which were made to ſerve the Prieſts to lay their Garments in, and wherein they reſted, and eat of the Sacrifices, and other Uſes.

Ver. 6. *The nethermoſt chamber was five cubits broad, and the middle was ſix cubits broad, and the third was ſeven cubits broad:*] It appears by *ver.* 10. that they were but five Cubits high, and built over one another three Stories: Increaſing in Breadth, every Story, one Cubit, by the Contrivance which follows.

For without in the wall of the houſe he made narrowed reſts round about,] In the Margin we tranſlate it, *Narrowings*, or *Rebatements.* By which ſeem to be meant that the Wall to which they were adjoined, was thicker below, and above narrower: So that there was more Space to make the upper Chambers wider.

That the beams ſhould not be faſtened to the walls of the houſe.] But in that outward Wall which I mentioned before, made of Wood: For he would have no Holes made in the Wall of the Temple. See *L'Empereur* upon *Codex Middoth*, p. 147, 148. and Dr *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, p. 40.

Ver. 7. *And the houſe when it was in building, was built of ſtone, made ready before it was brought thither:*] So fitted for their ſeveral Uſes and Places, that they might be joined together, without any other Labour, but putting them one by, or upon, another.

So that there was neither hammer, nor ax, nor any tool of iron heard in the houſe, while it was in building.] The Senſe is plain, that the Stones were laid without any Noiſe; there being nothing to be done but to join them together. But the *Jews* are ſo fooliſh as to fancy, that they were not hewn nor plained by any Inſtrument before they came thither; but a Worm called *Samir*, which God created on purpoſe, did the Buſineſs: And that the Stones of their own Accord came to the Temple: And there the Angels laid them in their Place and Order. See *L'Empereur* upon *Codex Middoth*, p. 183. Which Fable aroſe from ſomebody that did not underſtand the Word *Samir*, which ſignifies a very hard Stone called *Smiris* (as *Bochartus* hath obſerved) with which Stones might be cut and poliſhed as Diamonds are. See *Hierozoicon*, *Par* 2. *Lib.* 6. *Cap.* 11. An Emblem this was, as all Interpreters note, of that Peace and Quiet which ſhould be in the Chriſtian Church: Where all things ſhould be done without Contention. *Utinam Deus hoc tandem aliquando elargiatur, ut omnes in domo ſuo idem dicamus & ſentiamus*, as *P. Martyr* prays upon this Place.

Ver. 8. *The door of the middle chamber*] By which they were to go into the middle Row of Chambers.

Was in the right ſide of the houſe:] On the South-ſide, which in *Hebrew* is called the *right ſide*, becauſe when Men look toward the Eaſt, the South is on their right Hand. Some think there was the like Door in the North; but it is more likely, that one Door ſerved to carry them round to all the Chambers.

And they went up with winding ſtairs into the middle chamber,] That they might take up the leſs room.

And out of the middle into the third.] There was the like Pair of Stairs into the third Story.

Ver. 9. *So he built the houſe and finiſhed it;*] That is, the Walls of the Houſe.

And alſo covered the houſe.] He alſo covered the Top of it.

With beams and boards of cedar.] In the Margin, the *Vaultings and the Ceilings* of Cedar. That is, the Roof was an Arch within, which made it look more noble, though without it was flat.

Ver. 10. *And then he built chambers againſt all the houſe, five cubits high:*] The Word *then* is not in the *Hebrew*; and being omitted the Senſe is plain, that he gives an Account of the Height of theſe Chambers, as before (*ver.* 6.) of the Breadth. But it is very briefly; and we are to underſtand that thoſe below, and thoſe in the middle, and thoſe above, were every one of an equal Height, *viz.* five Cubits. So they were fifteen Cubits in all: Which was five leſs than the Height of the Houſe, for that was twenty Cubits. Otherwiſe there would have been no room for the Windows: Which, I ſuppoſe, were above all theſe Chambers, in the top of the Houſe.

Ver. 11. *And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, ſaying,*] By the Prophet *Ahijah* the *Shilonite*, as the *Jews* ſay, in *Seder Olam Rabba, Cap.* 20. For it is not ſaid, that God appeared to him now, as he did iii. 5. and ix. 2, 3. In which latter Place it is ſaid, God appeared to him *the ſecond time:* Which is a Proof (as *Abarbinel* notes) that now God did not appear to him, but ſpake to him by a Prophet.

Ver. 12. *Concerning this houſe which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my ſtatutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments, to walk in them: then will I perform my word with thee which I ſpake unto David thy father.*] 2 *Sam.* vii. 13. Here *Abarbinel* makes a Query, why this Prophecy is inſerted in the Middle of the Work, which might ſeem to have been more proper in the Beginning, or after it was ended: But *Solomon* laying the Foundation, and raiſing the Building very firm and ſtrong, which might laſt to many Generations, God would not have him preſume upon its Duration, unleſs he and the People of *Iſrael* were obedient to him: And therefore told him, he had better not proceed, nor be at any further Charge, unleſs he intended to be a good Man, and obſerve all his Laws. And the Continuance of this Houſe, and of God's Preſence among them, depending on this, plainly ſignified, that let him build it ever ſo ſtrong it ſhould be demoliſhed, if he proved diſobedient.

Ver. 13. *And I will dwell among the children of Iſrael,*] As he had done in the Tabernacle, *Exod.* xxv. 8.

And I will not forſake my people Iſrael.] But protect them in the good Land he had given them.

Ver. 14. *So Solomon built the houſe, and finiſhed it.*] God ſpake the foregoing Words, while he was building it, that he might deſiſt, if he did not intend to be obedient to him. But theſe Words import, that notwithſtanding this Admonition, he went on, to build the Houſe, as magnificent and durable as he intended; reſolving to keep God's Commandments.

Ver. 15. *And he built the walls of the houſe within with boards of cedar,*] He wainſcotted, as we now ſpeak, the whole Houſe with Cedar.

Both the floor of the houſe, and the walls of the ceiling:] Or, as we tranſlate it in the Margin, from the Floor of the Houſe, unto the Walls of the Ceiling. That is, from the Bottom to the Top.

And he covered them in the inſide with wood,] The Word *them* is not in the *Hebrew.* Which if we retain, it relates to the Walls of the Ceiling: That is to the top of the Houſe, which in the inſide were covered with Wood, *ver.* 9.

And covered the floor of the houſe with planks of fir.] Or, with another ſort of Cedar, which was a great deal firmer, and more laſting than Fir. See Chap. v. 8.

Ver. 16. *And he built twenty cubits on the ſide of the houſe,*] The *Houſe* here meant, is the moſt holy Place: For he had ſpoken of the other part of the Houſe, called the Sanctuary, in the foregoing Words.

Both the floor, and the walls with boards of cedar:] Or, as the foregoing Verſe, from the Floor to the Walls of the Ceiling.

He even built them for it within, even for the oracle, even for the moſt holy place.] Here he explains what he meant by the *Houſe*, in the Beginning of the Verſe. And this was moſt properly *the Houſe* of all the Parts of the Temple: becauſe here the Divine Glory inhabited, and from hence God gave Anſwer, when he was conſulted. It is called *Debir:* As the outward Houſe is called *Hechal.*

Ver. 17. *And the houſe,*] That is, the holy Place, as the next Words explain it.

That is, the temple before it,] The part of the Houſe, which was before the moſt holy Place. In the *Hebrew* the Words are *before my Face:* That is, before the Place where the Divine Glory appeared.

Was forty cubits long.] As long again as the moſt holy Place. See *ver.* 2. and 16.

Ver. 18. *And the cedar of the houſe within was carved with knops,*] Of an oblong Figure, like an Egg, as *Foſterus* thinks, comparing this Place with 2 *Kings* iv. Where there is the like Words, and there tranſlated *Gourds.*

And open flowers:] Not Buds, but Flowers, ſpread and full blown.

All was cedar, there was no ſtone ſeen.] This relates, I ſuppoſe, to the Knops, and Flowers, which were all of Cedar: And ſo doth not contradict 2 *Chron.* iii. 5.

Ver. 19. *And the oracle he prepared in the houſe within, to ſet there the ark of the covenant of the LORD.*] In the innermoſt part of the Houſe he fitted the moſt holy Place to receive the Ark of God. It ſeems to be called the innermoſt part, becauſe it was furtheſt from the Entrance into the Building. The *Jewiſh* Doctors have a Conceit, that this ſignifies a Room which he made under Ground (under the Floor of the Oracle) where the Ark might be hid,

in caſe the Houſe ſhould be laid deſolate. And he made this Cave in very deep and winding Burrows, putting a Stone upon the Mouth of it, upon which the Ark ſtood. Here *Joſiah* they fancy hid the Ark, and the Pot of Manna, and the Rod of *Aaron*, and the holy Oil, where they were found after their Return from *Babylon*. For which Story there is no Foundation; and it contradicts what they all acknowledge, that there was no Ark in the ſecond Timple. It is far more reaſonable to think that by *Debir*, which we tranſlate *Oracle*, is here meant the Partition which ſeparated the holy Place from the moſt holy: Which *Solomon* is here ſaid to have prepared or eſtabliſhed, *in the midſt of the Houſe*, as the Words are in the *Hebrew*. This *Gouſſet* hath made probable: Though it appears from *ver.* 23. (where the Cherubims are ſaid *to be within the Oracle*) that this Word ſignifies not only the Partition which made the Separation, but the Place it ſelf, which was ſeparated thereby from the Sanctuary, to be God's Dwelling-place.

Ver. 20. *And the oracle in the fore-part.*] That is, in the innermoſt Part before-mentioned: Which is alſo called the fore-part, becauſe it was before him that entered into the Houſe.

Was twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth, and twenty cubits in the height thereof:] It was a perfect Square.

And he overlaid it with pure gold,] Not meerly gilt it, but covered it with Plates of Gold: For the Gold amounted to ſix hundred Talents, as *Ezra* ſaith, 2 *Chron.* iii. 8.

And ſo covered the altar] Of Incenſe, which was before it in the holy Place.

Which was of cedar.] Or, *he covered the altar with cedar*, that the Gold might the better lie upon it.

Ver. 21. *So Solomon overlaid the houſe with pure gold:*] That is, the moſt holy Place (called the Oracle in the foregoing Verſe) which he made as ſumptuous as he could, for the Divine Reſidence.

And he made a partition, by the chains of gold,] The moſt holy Place was ſeparated from the Sanctuary by a Partition: Before which there was a Vail alſo; which hung upon golden Chains. Thus this Paſſage is to be underſtood, for the Partition it ſelf did not depend upon Chains.

And he overlaid it with gold.] That is, overlaid the Partition.

Ver. 22. *And the whole houſe he overlaid with gold,*] This is meant of the Sanctuary, which was overlaid with Gold, as well as the Oracle.

Until he had finiſhed all the houſe:] Some think the very Chambers, which were without the Houſe, were likewiſe made thus ſplendid. But I ſee no Ground to affirm it.

Alſo the altar that was before the oracle he covered with gold.] That is, the Altar of Incenſe; thence called the *Golden Altar:* which was in the upper End of the Sanctuary, near the Entrance in the Oracle. This he covered with Cedar, *ver.* 20. and now overlaid with Gold.

Ver. 23. *And within the oracle he made two cherubims of olive-tree, each ten cubits high.*] Theſe were different from thoſe made by *Moſes*; which were of ſolid Gold: And aroſe out of each End of the Mercy-Seat; being of one Piece with it, and looking one upon the other, *Exod.* xxv. 18, 19. But theſe were made of Olive-wood; or as it is in the *Hebrew*, of *Tree of Oil.* For many ſuch ſorts of Wood there were beſides Olive; as Pine, Cedar, *&c.* And theſe two are plainly diſtinguiſhed; Olive, and Oily-*wood*, in *Nehem.* viii. 15. Here it may be proper to note, that the Word *Debir* (which we conſtantly tranſlate *Oracle*) comes from *Debar*, which ſignifies to *ſpeak*; becauſe God, who dwelt between the Cherubims, declared his Mind from hence, when he was conſulted by the High-prieſt with *Urim* and *Thummim:* And it ſtill retained this Name, though we never read of any Anſwer by *Urim* and *Thummim* while this Temple ſtood, becauſe it had been the Place from whence God had been wont to ſpeak to the High-prieſt. I have obſerved elſewhere, that there might be the Uſe of *Urim* and *Thummim* in this Temple, though it be not recorded: But it is highly probable, that upon their rejecting the Government of God, and turning the *Theocracy* into an Human Government by Kings, God ceaſed to direct and govern them by that Divine Oracle. During the Reign of *David* indeed, there is ſome Footſteps of it, their new Government by Kings being not yet well eſtabliſhed: So that we may think there was a Mixture of the *Theocracy* ſtill with it, as may be gathered from 2 *Sam.* ii. 1. iii. 19, 23. xxi. 1. But after that, there is not the leaſt Glimpſe of it; but they enquired of God by the Prophets, 1 *Kings* xxii. 3. 2 *Kings* iii. 11, 29. xxii. 14. where the High-prieſt himſelf, being ſent by King *Joſiah* to enquire of God, went to *Huldad* the Propheteſs. Which is a Demonſtration, that the Anſwer by *Urim* and *Thummim* ceaſed, when God's Government was caſt off by them: To which that Oracle properly appertained.

Ver. 24. *Aud five cubits was the one wing of the cherub and five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermoſt part of the one wing to the uttermoſt part of the other wing, was ten cubits.*] Whereas thoſe of *Moſes* were only ſo long as to cover the Mercy-Seat. Which was but two Cubits and a half in Length, *Exod.* xxv. 17.

Ver. 25. *And the other cherub was ten cubits: both the cherubims were of one meaſure, and one ſize.*] So that they filled the whole Breadth of the Houſe; which was twenty Cubits.

Ver. 26. *The height of one cherub was ten cubits, and ſo was it of the other cherub.*] They ſtood upon their Feet, upon the Floor of the Houſe (2 *Chron.* iii. 13.) each being ten Cubits high, as was ſaid at the firſt, *ver.* 23. That is, half as high as the Houſe.

Ver. 27. *And he ſet the cherubims within the inner houſe;*] With their Faces toward the Sanctuary: So that they looked upon him that entered into the Oracle.

And they ſtretched forth the wings of the cherubims,] Or rather (as in the Margin) *the cherubims ſtretched forth their wings.*

So that the wings of the one touched the one wall, and the wings of the other touched the other wall:] That is, the South and North Walls of the Houſe. Whereas the Wings of thoſe Cherubims that *Moſes* made, ſtretched from

Eaſt

East to West: For they looked one upon the other over the Mercy-Seat.

And their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.] Where they must needs meet, being five Cubits long on each side (*ver.* 24.) and the House twenty Cubits wide.

Ver. 28. *And he overlaid the cherubims with gold.*] So that there were four Cherubims in the most holy Place of *Solomon*'s Temple. Two lesser made by *Moses* of massy Gold; and two larger made by *Solomon*, overlaid with Gold. Those made by *Moses* were part of the Mercy-Seat, and inseparable from it: These of *Solomon* seem to have spread their Wings over it, being added only for the greater Ornament and Golry of God's House. So *Abarbinel* observes, that *Solomon* did not make a new Ark, which was the only thing made by *Moses*, which *Solomon* did not imitate and make more glorious. But this he durst not presume to open, and to take out the Book of the Law, and put it into an Ark of his own making. It being unlawful for him to touch it, and therefore he let it remain, with its Cover, the Mercy-Seat, and the Cherubims belonging to it: And only placed these new Cherubims over it, as a Covering to it, for the greater Beauty of the House.

Ver. 29. *And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, within and without.*] Both in the most holy Place, and in the Sanctuary.

Ver. 30. *And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, both within and without.*] This hath the same Meaning with the foregoing Words: That the Floor of the whole House, both inner and outward Part, was overlaid with Gold, which made it wonderfully splendid and magnificent.

Ver. 31. *And for the entrance of the oracle, he made doors of olive-tree:*] Or some Tree that was oily. See Dr *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, p. 87.

The lintel and side-posts were a fifth part of the wall.] These Words are very obscure: For the Words *of the wall* are not in the *Hebrew*; but only *a fifth*. Which may be understood to signify, that they held the Proportion of a fifth part of the Doors. But there are those who think, the Meaning is, that this Gate was the fifth in Number belonging to the House. The first they make Account was that which let into the Court of the People: The second, into the Court of the Priests: The third was the Door of the Porch: The fourth, of the holy Place; and this fifth of the Oracle. And accordingly they interpret those Words, *ver.* 33. *the fourth.*

Ver. 32. *The two doors also were of olive-tree;*] Or, as it is in the Margin, *the leaves of the doors:* Explaining what sort of Doors they were, *viz.* Folding Doors, as it follows, *ver.* 34.

And he carved upon them carvings of cherubims, and palm-trees, and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold, and spread gold upon the cherubims and palm-trees.] The Meaning seems to be, that he laid Plates of Gold upon the Doors of the House; and gilt the Cherubims, Trees, and Flowers.

Ver. 33. *So also he made for the doors of the Temple,*] That is, of the holy Place.

Posts of olive-tree, a fourth part of the wall,] See *ver.* 31.

Ver. 34. *And the two doors were of fir-tree:*] Or, of a kind of Cedar; as was before observed.

The two leaves of the one door were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were folding.] Whereby they took up less room, when they were opened.

Ver. 35. *And he carved thereon cherubims, and palm-tres, and open flowers: and covered them with gold, fitted upon the carved work.*] This was said before, *ver.* 32. therefore repeated, I suppose, to signify that both Sides of the Doors were thus carved and covered with Gold. I have not meddled with the mystical Signification of any of these things: In which Mens Fancies differ very much: Though in one thing they all agree; that by the *Cherubims*, which were so plentiful in every part of the House, the Hosts of Angels are represented, there attending upon the Divine Majesty, as his Ministers to execute his Pleasure.

Ver. 36. *And he built the inner court*] Which was that wherein the Priests officiated.

With three rows of hewed stone, and a row of cedar-beams.] That the People who were in the outward Court might see what the Priests did: The Wall which separated the Priests from the Court of the People being but three Cubits high (as most understand these Words) for the Cedar was not laid upon the top of the Wall; but was the facing of it, within-side. The Priests likewise from hence might speak and deliver any Message from God to the People.

I conclude this Account of *Solomon*'s Works with an Observation of *Abarbinel:* That this Divine Writer doth not mention several things belonging to the House of God, as the *Altar of Burnt-Offering*, the *Candlestick*, the *Table*, the *Laver* (though they were ten times as many as *Moses* made. See 2 *Chron.* iii.) because his Intention was only to explain the great things which he did, and such as wrought in Men Admiration: Not things in which there was no Majesty, nor any great Cost bestowed upon them. Therefore he takes notice of the great and precious Stones (that is, Stones of great Price) wherewith he laid the Foundation of the House (*ver.* 17.) and the rest of the things mentioned in this Chapter; which were very chargeable, and which shewed the Greatness of his Mind, his Wisdom, Prophecy (as his Words are) and Riches: But other things, as the Court of the Temple, *&c.* he passes over compendiously. But this Observation is not altogether true; for though this Divine Writer does not take notice of every thing made by *Solomon*, in this Chapter; yet in the next, I think, he omits nothing, save only the *Brazen* Altar of Burnt-offering, which is not mentioned in this Book among *Solomon*'s Works; but taken particular notice of in 2 *Chron.* iv. 1. where its large Dimensions are described. All other things, as the Lavers, the Candlestick, the Table, *&c.* are here mentioned in the following Chapter.

Ver. 37. *In the fourth year was the foundation of the house laid, in the month Zif.*] He repeats this

this (which was ſaid *ver.* 1.) to ſubjoin in the next Words, how long the Houſe was in building.

Ver. 38. *And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul (which is the eighth month).*] As *Zif* was the ſecond.

Was the houſe finiſhed throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the faſhion of it:] Every thing was compleatly finiſhed, according to his Deſign; without any need of Addition or Alteration.

So was he ſeven years in building it.] And an half: But the leſſer Number is omitted, as is uſual in theſe Books, and in other Authors: Particularly half a Year is omitted in the Reign of *David*, who is only ſaid to have reigned forty Years. See the ſecond Chapter of this Book, *ver.* 11. And conſidering the Curioſity of the Work, and the Scarcity of Men of Skill, it is no Wonder that it was ſo long before it was perfected: But rather the Alacrity and Diligence of *Solomon* (as *Abarbinel* notes) is to be admired; who finiſhed this Work with all the Speed he could make; when he was almoſt as many more Years in building his own Houſe, which was not ſo coſtly and ſumptuous. An Account of which is given us, in the Beginning of the next Chapter: Where the Author tells us he built two Houſes, and ſets down the Dimenſions of one of them.

CHAP. VII.

Verſe 1. *BUT Solomon was building his own houſe thirteen years, and he finiſhed all his houſe.*] He did not begin to build his own Houſe 'till he had finiſhed the Houſe of God; that nothing might hinder that holy Work. This appears from ix. 10. where we read he was twenty Years in building both.

Ver. 2. *And he built alſo the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon;*] The fore-named Houſe was in *Jeruſalem:* Near to which he built another, in a cool, ſhady Mountain; which made it reſemble Mount *Lebanon*. And here he dwelt in Summer, as in the other in Winter. But it is not likely it was in Mount *Lebanon*; for that was in the very Extremity of his Kingdom; where he would not have ſet his Throne (as he ſeems to have done in this Houſe, *ver.* 7.) for that was too far diſtant from the uſual Place of his Reſidence. And for the ſame Reaſon he would not have there placed the golden Shields that he made; as we find he did, x. 17. It was therefore near to *Jeruſalem* (appears from xiv. 25, 26.) and called by the Name of the *Foreſt of Lebanon:* Juſt as many pleaſant and delightful Places in that Country were called *Carmel*. Becauſe it was in a lofty Place like *Lebanon*; and the Trees which grew there made it very ſhady and cool.

The length thereof was an hundred cubits,] Which was not longer than the Houſe of God, if we take in all the Courts belonging to it.

And the height thereof thirty cubits,] The Height of the firſt Story was ſo many Cubits: Upon which, in all likelihood, there was another of the like Height.

Upon four rows of cedar pillars,] Which ſupported the Building; and made four Walks under it.

With cedar-beams upon the pillars.] Upon which was laid the Floor of the next Story.

Ver. 3. *And it was covered with cedar above, upon the beams that lay on forty-five pillars, fifteen in a row.*] So there were but three Rows of Pillars in the ſecond Story, which were ſufficient for the Support of the Roof. And we may gueſs from hence that there were threeſcore Pillars below.

Ver. 4. *And there were windows in three rows, and light was againſt light.*] Directly oppoſite one againſt the other: Which we call thorough Lights.

In three ranks.]. Or, on three Sides of the Houſe, the South, the North, and the Eaſt; that it might have the freer Air. On the Weſt Side was the Porch, and ſo no Windows were there. Others interpret it, the Windows were exactly one under another in three Rows.

Ver. 5. *And all the doors and poſts were ſquare, with the windows:*] The Figures of the Doors and of the Windows were one and the ſame, *viz.* ſquare.

And light was againſt light in three ranks.] This is meant of the ſmaller Windows, that were over the Doors: Which it is likely were alſo ſquare.

Ver. 6. *And he made a porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the breadth thereof thirty cubits:*] This was for his Guard, and for People to walk in who came about Buſineſs, (as well as for State and Ornament) and therefore was covered to keep them dry in rainy Weather.

And the porch was before them:] That is, before the Pillars of the great Houſe, before ſpoken of.

And the other pillars, and the thick beams were before them.] That is, they were directly oppoſite one to the other. Or, if we follow the Marginal Tranſlation (*according to them*) the Senſe is, that it had its Pillars and Beams juſt like the great Houſe: And, it is likely, Rooms built upon thoſe Beams for his Servants.

Ver. 7. *Then he made a porch for the throne where he might judge, even the porch of judgment:*] So it was called, becauſe here he ſat to hear and determine the Cauſes that People brought before him. With whom he would not have his Houſe cumbred; but made this Porch without the Houſe, where he diſpatched ſuch Buſineſs.

And it was covered with cedar from one ſide to the other.] In the *Hebrew, from floor to floor:* That is, from the Ground to the Roof of the Porch.

Ver. 8. *And his houſe where he dwelt, had another court within the porch, which was of the like work.*] There was a Court between the Porch and the Houſe, which may be called the inner Court: And then another beyond the Porch, which may be called the outward. So that it ſtood between two Courts, which were both alike.

Solomon alſo built an houſe for Pharaoh's daughter] Near, I ſuppoſe, to his own Houſe; ſhe being a Perſon of the higheſt Quality, and his firſt Wife.

(Which he had taken to wife)] See iii. 1.

Like unto this porch.] Not for Figure, or Bigneſs; but for the Materials of which it was built.

Ver. 9. *All theſe were of coſtly ſtones, according to the meaſure of hewen ſtones, ſawed with ſaws, within and without,*] All the formentioned Buildings were poliſhed on both Sides: So that they appeared both within and without; that is, both on the Inſide which was toward the Palace of *Solomon*, and on the Outſide which was toward the great Court.

Even from the foundation unto the coping,] From the Bottom of the Building to the Top of it.

And ſo on the outſide toward the great court.] Not only on the Front of the Houſe, but on the Back-ſide of it, toward the great Court.

Ver. 10. *And the foundation was of coſtly ſtones, even great ſtones; of ten cubits, and ſtones of eight cubits.*] By coſtly Stones (mentioned here and in the foregoing and following Verſes) are not to be underſtood precious Stones; but Stones that being bigger and firmer, and better poliſhed than others, were of greater Price: As *Bochartus* explains it, both here and v. 17.

Ver. 11. *And above were coſtly ſtones (after the meaſure of hewen ſtones) and cedars.*] The Roof was finiſhed after the ſame Manner; with Stones, and Cedar Beams.

Ver. 12. *And the great court round about*] *Viz.* of *Solomon*'s Palace.

Was with three Rows of hewen ſtone, and a row of cedar beams,] Juſt like the inner Court of the Houſe of the LORD, vi. 36. and ſo the following Words are to be underſtood.

Both for the inner court of the houſe of the LORD,] Or rather, *as* for the inner Court of the LORD's Houſe: For ſo the Particle *Vau* ſometimes ſignifies.

And for the porch of the houſe.] Of *Solomon*'s own Houſe.

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon ſent and ſet Hiram out of Tyre.*] For though he was an *Iſraelite* by Birth, yet he dwelt at *Tyre:* And it is likely had the Privileges of that City, and ſo was one of King *Hiram*'s Subjects. And therefore in 2 *Chron.* ii. 13. that King ſaith he ſent him to *Solomon*: That is, granted his Requeſt, that this Man might come and ſerve him. And accordingly *Solomon* ſent for him and fetcht him to *Jeruſalem.*

Ver. 14. *He was a widow's ſon of the tribe of Naphtali,*] She her ſelf was of the Tribe of *Dan*, 2 *Chron.* ii. 14. but her firſt Huſband was of the Tribe of *Naphtali*: by whom ſhe had this Son.

And his father was a man of Tyre,] When ſhe was a Widow ſhe married a Man of *Tyre:* Who is called *Hiram*'s Father, becauſe he bred him up, and was the Huſband of his Mother.

A worker of braſs:] And in Stone, and Purple, and a great many other Things, as we read in the Place abovementioned. But *Braſs* is only mentioned here; becauſe he is going to ſpeak only of ſuch Works.

And he was filled with wiſdom and underſtanding, and cunning to work all work in braſs;] He had an excellent Genius to this Work; and beſides the Inſtructions of his Father, it is not improbable that God endued him with great Skill in contriving, and alſo working all manner of Work of this Sort.

And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.] He preſently found him to be an excellent Artiſt; and ſo employed him in all his Buſineſs.

Ver. 15. *And he caſt two pillars of braſs of eighteen cubits high a-piece:*] In 2 *Chron.* ii. 15. it is ſaid he made two Pillars of thirty-five Cubits high: Which doth not contradict theſe Words, it being evident that there he ſpeaks of both the Pillars (as *Abarbinel* obſerves) which were thirty-five Cubits. But here he ſpeaks of them ſingle, which were each but eighteen Cubits. Both of them indeed made thirty-ſix Cubits; but one Cubit muſt be allowed for the Baſis of each, which is not conſidered in the Book of *Chronicles.* This ſeems a better Solution of this ſmall Difficulty than that of *L'Empereur* in his Preface to *Codex Middoth*, where he ſaith, one of theſe Writers ſpeaks of the common Cubit, and the other of the ſacred, which was double to the common. Each Pillar therefore he thinks was eighteen ſacred Cubits, but thirty-five common; to which one common Cubit muſt be added for the Baſis: But this Diſtinction of common and ſacred Cubits is not allowed by every body.

And a line of twelve cubits did compaſs either of them about.] So they were four Cubits in Thickneſs. See Dr *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, p. 61, 62, 63. And *L'Empereur*'s Preface to *Benjamin Tudelenſis. Eupolemus* a Heathen Writer takes Notice of theſe Pillars, and ſays they were as high as the Temple. *Euſebius*, Lib. 9. *Præpar. Evang.* Cap. 34.

Ver. 16. *And he made two chapiters of molten braſs, to ſet upon the top of the pillars: the height of the one chapiter was five cubits, and the height of the other was five cubits:*] This Account of them *Ezra* alſo gives, 2 *Chron.* iii. 15. Yet in 2 *Kings* xxv. 17. they are ſaid to be but three Cubits. But it is to be obſerved that it immediately follows in that Place, there was *a wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiters:* Which in all made five Cubits; and are all here comprehended in the Word *chapiter.*

Ver. 17. *And nets of chequer-work, and wreaths of chain-work, for the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars;*] This curious Work encompaſſed the Chapiter, and contained, as it were, the Pomegranates afterwards mentioned; which might be ſeen through theſe Nets.

Seven for the one chapiter, and ſeven for the other chapiter.] Some think that each Chapiter was adorned with Leaves, and Flowers, and Fruit, in four Orders; which were bound about with three Chains. But it is very hard to explain this Work, which is ſo very breſly deſcribed. See Dr *Lightfoot* in the forenamed Place.

Ver. 18. *And he made the pillars,*] That is, he finiſhed them in this Manner. See the ſame Author, p. 63.

And two rows round about upon the one net-work, to cover the chapiters that were upon the top, with pomegranates: and ſo did he for the other chapiter.] There were two Rows of Pomegranates; which took up one of the five Cubits, whereof the Chapiter conſiſted.

Ver. 19.

Ver. 19. *And the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars, were of lily-work*] In Imitation of Lilies.

In the porch,] Such as were in the Porch of the Temple.

Four Cubits.] The other four Cubits were of this Lily-work, except the Middle.

Ver. 20. *And the chapiters upon the two pillars had pomegranates alſo above, over againſt the belly which was by the net-work :*] This is very obſcure, becauſe ſhortly delivered. But the Meaning ſeems to be, that the Lily-work being above and below, at the Top and the Bottom of the Chapiters, the middle Cubit (called the Belly) was all covered with Pomegranates.

And the pomegranates were two hundred, round about upon the other chapiter.] In the Book of *Jeremiah* lii. 23. it is ſaid that there were ninety-ſix on a Side; but all of them, upon the Net-work, were an hundred in all: Which *Abarbinel* thus explains. The Pomegranates on the Net-work were towards the four Quarters of the World, being twenty-four towards each Quarter; which in all made ninety-ſix. And in each Angle, there being one great Pomegranate, they made up the Number an hundred.

Ver. 21. *And he ſet up the pillars in the porch of the temple: and he ſet up the right pillar, and called the name of it Jachin, and he ſet up the left pillar, and called the name thereof Boaz.*] It is generally thought that theſe Pillars were made and erected only for Ornament; becauſe they ſupported no Building, But *Abarbinel*'s Conjecture is not improbable, that *Solomon* had reſpect to the Pillar of the Cloud, and the Pillar of Fire that went before them and conducted them in the Wilderneſs, and was the token of the Divine Providence over them. Theſe he ſet at the Porch or Entrance of the Temple (*Jachin* repreſenting the Pillar of the Cloud, and *Boaz* the Pillar of Fire) praying and hoping that the Divine Light, and the Cloud of his Glory would vouchſafe to enter in there; and by them God and his Providence would dwell among them in this Houſe.

Ver. 22. *And upon the top of the pillars was lily-work :*] This ſeems to have been ſaid before, *ver.* 19. but the next Words, *So was the work of pillars finiſhed*, ſhew that this was a new Addition, to crown all, after the Pillars were erected; as *Abarbinel* obſerves.

Ver. 23. *And he made a molten ſea,*] The *Hebrews* call any great Collection of Waters by the Name of a *Sea*. So the Lake of *Geneſaret*, and others, are called in the Goſpel: And here it ſignifies a great Veſſel, containing Abundance of Water. Which ſerved for the waſhing of the Sacrifices, and of the Prieſts and Levites; who waſhed their Hands and their Feet; not in it, but with Water drawn out of it by Pipes or Conduits.

Ten cubits from the one brim to the other: and it was round about,] Of a circular Figure.

And its height was five cubits :] Beſide the Height of the Oxen whereon it ſtood.

And a line of thirty cubits did compaſs it about.] For the Diameter being ten Cubits, this muſt be the Compaſs of it. This Sea was filled with Water by the *Gibeonites*; who were afterward called *Nethinims*.

Ver. 24. *And under the brim round about there were knops compaſſing it,*] They were in the Shape of an Egg; on the Top of every one of which was an Ox Head; from whoſe Mouth Water guſhed out: So *Abarbinel* gathers from 2 *Chron.* ii. 3. where they are called Oxen, from the Figure of their Head.

Ten in a cubit, compaſſing the ſea round about :] So there were three hundred of theſe Knops in all; the Sea being thirty Cubits round.

The knops were caſt in two rows, when it was caſt.] They were not carved afterward, but caſt at firſt when the Sea was molten. And there being two Rows of them, *Abarbinel* thence concludes there were ſix Hundred in all, one under another. From whence Water might flow out of the Sea, to waſh a great Number at a Time.

Ver. 25. *And it ſtood upon twelve oxen,*] Oxen were uſed not only for drawing the Plough, but for carrying Burdens upon their Backs; as they are ſtill employed among the *Indians*. Whence *Solomon* placed the Figure of theſe Creatures under his molten Sea, as the Supporters of it. There was ſo little Danger of their being worſhipped, that the Meanneſs of the Uſe to which they ſerved, had made ſome believe that *Solomon* made them in Contempt of the golden Calf, which the *Iſraelites* worſhipped in the Wilderneſs; and placed them under the Sea, that the People might ſee there was nothing worthy of Adoration in theſe Figures. *Joſephus* indeed thinks *Solomon* offended in making theſe Images: But this is confuted by the Glory of the LORD filling the Temple after it was finiſhed. Which ſhewed that he approved of all this Work; which it is likely was done by his Inſtruction: But ſome great Men think *Joſephus* is in the right.

Three looking toward the north, and three looking toward the weſt, and three looking toward the ſouth, and three looking toward the eaſt :] This ſeems to import that this Sea was ſquare (the Oxen looking towards the four Quaters of the World) whereas it is ſaid before, *ver.* 25. that it was *round all about*. And ſo it was (as the *Jewiſh* Interpreters, particularly *Abarbinel* and *Ralbag*, expound this) in the Brim of it, it was perfectly round, and ſo it continued in the two upper Cubits: But below the Brim (in the three lower Cubits) it was ſquare. And, as *Kimchi* thinks, in the two upper Cubits there were no Knops; but in the three lower, juſt above the Oxen that ſupported the Sea.

And the ſea was ſet above upon them, and all their hinder parts were inward.] Under the Sea, that they might not be ſeen.

Ver. 26. *And it was an hand breadth thick, and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, with flowers of lilies :*] In the Shape of Lilies: That is, not plain and ſtraight, but bending downwards, after the Manner of thoſe Flowers. See Dr *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, p. 230, *&c.*

It contained two thouſand baths.] A *Bath* being of the ſame Bigneſs with an *Ephah* (*Ezek.* xlv. 11.) is thought to contain eight Gallons: So that this Sea contained five hundred Barrels; that is, it had thus much Water conſtantly in it. But if it had been filled up to the

Brim, it would have held three thousand Baths, as we read 2 *Chron.* iv. 5. which Quantity they were not wont to put into it, lest with the Wind it should run over. Or, as the most learned of the *Jews* reconcile these two Places, these Words in the Book of the *Kings* are to be understood of moist Things; but those in the *Chronicles* of dry; which being heaped up, it would contain a third Part more than of Things liquid. With which some compare those Words of our Saviour, *Luke* vi. 38. *Good measure heaped up, shaken together, and running over.*

Ver. 27. *And he made ten bases of brass;*] Tables or Stands upon which the Lavers (mentioned below, *ver.* 38.) were to rest. See Dr *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, p. 228, &c.

Four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth, and three cubits the height thereof.] They were made so broad that the Lavers might stand more firmly, being each four Cubits; but not so high, that the Priests might more easily reach to wash the Sacrifices in them, 2 *Chron.* iv. 6.

Ver. 28. *And the work of the bases was in this manner: They had borders,*] To keep up the Lavers from falling.

Ver. 29. *And the borders were between the ledges:*] It is not easy to apprehend what he means by *Ledges*; because, as *P. Martyr* observes, we have no such Work in these Days.

And on the borders that were between the ledges were lions, and oxen, and cherubims:] Oxen are called *Cherubims* in *Ezek.* x. 14. Therefore the Meaning here is, that besides Lions and Oxen, there were other Cherubims (the Figures of Eagles perhaps) which adorned these Borders.

And upon the ledges there was a base above:] This is so darkly expressed, that I do not apprehend the Meaning; unless it be this, that the upper Ledge was over the Heads of these Animals; and the under Ledge was that upon which their Feet rested, as the next Words signify.

And beneath the lions and oxen were certain additions of thin work.] Under these Figures there was some other Work added (which was not cast together with them) and drawn very thin.

Ver. 30. *And every base had four brazen wheels,*] They run upon Wheels like a Coach, or Chariot; so might easily be removed from Place to place, as the Convenience of the Priests required.

And plates of brass:] Between the Wheels and the Bases. See Dr *Lightfoot* in the same Book, p. 226.

And the four corners thereof] For they were square, *ver.* 27.

Had under-setters:] In the *Hebrew*, *Shoulders*. Which were fitly so called, because as Burdens are born upon Mens Shoulders, so were the Lavers upon these; which supported them, when set upon the Bases, and kept them from falling when they run upon the Wheels.

Under the lavers were under-setters molten, at the side of every addition.] These were molten with the Bases, when they were cast.

Ver. 31. *And the mouth of it,*] The Bases seem to have been hollow at the Top; that the Feet of the Lavers might enter in, and be fastned there: And this he calls the *Mouth* of it.

Within the chapiter and above] Nothing of a Chapiter is mentioned 'till now: Therefore it is hard to know what is meant by it. Many take it for a smaller Basis, rising out of the greater; in which was the Mouth, or hollow Place before spoken of.

Was a cubit:] In Height. See *ver.* 35. where it is said, *on the top of the base was a round compass half a cubit high.*] Which seems to be meant of this Chapiter, which rose but Half a Cubit above the Base, the other Half being below it.

But the mouth thereof was round after the work of the base, a cubit and an half:] This was the Wideness of it.

And also upon the mouth of it were gravings with their borders, four-square, not round.] Through this hollow Place, called the Mouth, was round within; yet on the Outside it was square, and had Borders which were engraved.

Ver. 32. *And under the borders were four wheels: and the axle-trees of the wheels were joined to the base, and the height of a wheel was a cubit and half a cubit.*] So that the Bottom of the Base was not far from the Ground.

Ver. 33. *And the work of the wheels was like the work of a chariot wheel:*] Only the hinder Wheels and the fore Wheels were all of a Height.

Their axle-trees, and their naves, and their felloes, and their spokes were all molten.] Cast together with the Wheels.

Ver. 34. *And there were four under-setters to the four corners of one base: and the under-setters were of the very base it self.*] He mentioned the Under-setters before, *ver.* 30. Now he relates the Number of them; and that they were of the same piece with the Base itself; being cast together with it, and not made afterwards.

Ver. 35. *And on the top of the base, there was a round compass of half a cubit high:*] See *ver.* 31.

And on the top of the base, the ledges thereof, and the borders thereof were the same.] Cast all together at the same Time.

Ver. 36. *For on the plates of the ledges thereof, and on the borders thereof, he graved cherubims, lions, and palm-trees, according to the proportion of every one, and additions round about.*] In the *Hebrew*, according *to the nakedness* of every one: Which seems to signify that these Figures were as big as the void Space, in the Plates would admit.

Ver. 37. *After this manner he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, and one size.*] They were cast in the same Mold; and all of the same Bigness and Shape.

Ver. 37. *Then made he ten lavers of brass:*] Which were to stand upon the Bases forementioned.

One laver contained forty baths:] See *ver.* 26. From whence it will appear that each of these Lavers contained ten Barrels of Water.

And every laver was four cubits:] Some think that they were of this Height. But these Words rather relate to the Diameter of them, which was four Cubits: And then their Compass was twelve Cubits.

Upon every one of the ten bases one laver.] The Bases being exactly fitted to receive them: For they were each four Cubits in Length and Breadth, *ver.* 27.

Ver. 39. *And he put five on the right ſide*] That is, on the South-ſide, ſee vi. 8.

Of the houſe,] That is, of the Court where the Prieſts miniſtred.

And five on the left ſide of the houſe :] That is, on the North-ſide of that Court.

And he ſet the ſea on the right ſide of the houſe eaſt-ward, over-againſt the ſouth.] That is, in the South-eaſt: So that as ſoon as the Prieſts entred (which they did at the Eaſt Gate) they might have Water to waſh their Hands and their Feet.

Ver. 40. *And Hiram made the lavers, and the ſhovels, and the baſons: ſo Hiram made an end of all the work that he made king Solomon for the houſe of the* LORD.] Theſe ſeem to have been the laſt Things that he made: And ſo he finiſhed all the Work, which he recapitulates, with the Addition of ſome others not mentioned before. *Shovels*, for Inſtance, or *Beeſoms* wherewith they cleanſed the Alter from the Aſhes, that they might not hinder the Fire from burning: And *Baſons*, wherein the Prieſts received the Blood of the Sacrifices that were offered.

Ver. 41. *The two pillars, and two bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of the two pillars: and the two net-works, to cover the bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of the pillars:*

Ver. 42. *And four hundred pomegranates for the two net-works, even two rows of pomegranates for one net-work, to cover the two bowls of the chapiters that were upon the pillars* :] Being to ſum up all the Works he had finiſhed, he now adds the Number of Pomegranates that were upon the Pillars: Which had not been mentioned before.

Ver. 43. *And ten baſes, and ten lavers upon the baſes:*

Ver. 44. *And one ſea, and twelve oxen under the ſea:*

Ver. 45. *And the pots*,] Pots or Cauldrons were thoſe Veſſels, wherein they boiled thoſe Sacrifices which were divided between the Prieſt and the People that offered them. That is, *Peace-offerings*, that they might eat them before the LORD, and feaſt with him upon his own meat.

Shovels and baſons :] They are mentioned before, but here I ſuppoſe have a different Signification (though in the *Hebrew* the Words are the ſame) from what they had in *ver.* 40. And the firſt Word ſignifies *Fleſh-hooks*, wherewith they took the Meat out of the Pots: And the ſecond the *Platters* or Diſhes into which it was put, to be ſet before them.

And all theſe veſſels which Hiram made to king Solomon for the houſe of the LORD, *were of bright braſs.*] Or poliſhed Braſs: Or, the pureſt and fineſt that could be got. The *Syriack* and *Arabick* Tranſlators render it, *Corinthian Braſs*. But it is not credible, that it was known in the Days of *Solomon*.

Ver 46. *In the plain of Jordan did the king caſt them in the clay-ground, between Succoth and Zarthan.*] In the *Hebrew* the Words for *clay-ground* are, *in the Thickneſs of the Ground*. That is, the Earth was ſtiff, and glutinous, and upon that Account more fit to make Molds of all Kinds. And in a plain Country, ſuch Molds were more eaſily fixed than on the Sides of Hills, or ſteep Places.

Ver. 47. *And Solomon left all the veſſels unweighed, becauſe they were exceeding many: neither was the weight of the braſs found out.*] In the *Hebrew*, *it was not ſearched*, or enquired into; becauſe it would have been very troubleſome to take an exact Account of it.

Ver. 48. *And Solomon made all the veſſels that pertained unto the houſe of the* LORD:] He made them all new, except the Ark, the Mercy-Seat, and the Cherubims annexed to it.

The altar of gold,] That is, the Altar of Incenſe, which ſtood in the Holy Place before the Oracle.

And the table of gold, whereon the ſhew-bread was,] That is, all the Table-work: There being no leſs than ten, 2 *Chron.* iv. 7, 8 Upon one of which, in all Probability, which was more noble than the reſt, the Shew-bread was placed. Unleſs we ſuppoſe the Table which *Moſes* made was preſerved for that Uſe; and *Solomon* added the reſt for the greater Ornament of the Place. And (as *Joſephus* writes) the Gold and Silver Baſons were ſet upon them; together with a vaſt Number of Phials.

Ver. 49. *And the candleſticks of pure gold, five on the right ſide, and five on the left, before the oracle*,] He made ten Candleſticks inſtead of one which was in the Tabernacle of *Moſes*: Becauſe the Place was more capacious; and the Veſſels were not to be removed from Place to Place as they were before: And therefore there might well be more of them.

The flowers,] Which were wrought upon the Candleſticks.

The lamps, and the tongs of gold,] Wherewith to take Coals from the Altar of Burnt-offering.

Ver. 50. *And the bowls, and the ſnuffers and the baſons, and the ſpoons, and the cenſers of pure gold*;] The Uſe of theſe is viſible. The firſt being to keep Oil for the Lamps; the next to trim them: The *Baſons* (which were an hundred, as we learn from the Book of *Chronicles*) were to receive the Water of Sprinkling, and the Blood of the Sacrifices which was ſometimes brought into the moſt Holy Place. The *Spoons* ſerved to take up the Oil. The *Cenſers* were for offering Incenſe; though ſome tranſlate this Word, *Diſh-pans*, wherein the Incenſe was kept. There were other Cenſers of Silver, which received the Coals from the Altar upon all Days, but the Tenth of *Tiſri* (which was the great Day of Expiation) when the Golden Cenſer received them, and by it the moſt Holy Place was incenſed. On other Days it was not employed, but at the Altar of Incenſe; where the Coals were poured out of the Silver Cenſer (which received them from the Altar of Burnt-offerings) into the Golden, to burn the Incenſe: As the *Talmudiſts* ſay, both in *Codex Joma* and *Tamid*. Where they alſo ſay that the foregoing Word *Capoth*, which we tranſlate *Spoons*, ſignifies a Veſſel which contained the *Incenſe* that was to be offered upon the Coals in the Golden Cenſer. See *Braunius* in his *Selecta Sacra*, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 5. where he hath learnedly explained both theſe Words *Caph* and *Machtah*, which we tranſlate *Spoons* and *Cenſers*; where he hath demonſtrated, the latter ſignifies the Inſtrument that received the Coals from

from the Altar of Burnt-Offering, and the former, that which had the Incenſe in it, to be poured upon them.

And the hinges of gold, both for the doors of the inner houſe, the moſt holy place, and for the houſe, to wit, of the temple.] This ſhews the vaſt Riches of *Solomon*, and his great Piety: Which made him ſpare no Coſt to beautify the Houſe of God, and the meaneſt thing belonging to it. Whereby the People, who were much taken with outward Splendor, were preſerved from Idolatry: For they could go no where and ſee a Place comparable to this of *Solomon*; there being then nothing in the whole World like to it for Riches and Glory.

Ver. 51. *So was ended all the work that king Solomon made for the houſe of the* LORD: *and Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; even the ſilver, and the gold, and the veſſels did he put among the treaſures of the houſe of the* LORD.] I obſerved upon vi. 1. that *Abarbinel* thinks he would uſe none of the things that were dedicated by his Father; but do all at his own Coſt and Charges. Yet others think theſe Words mean no more, but that all the remaining Silver and Gold, which *David* left, and was not ſpent in this Work, *Solomon* would not employ to his own Uſes; but religiouſly preſerved in the Treaſury of the Temple. Where the Altar of Burnt-offering, which *Moſes* made, and ſome other things, which are now of no Uſe (far better and larger being made) were alſo laid up; as the Tabernacle it ſelf was. For the Temple being built, there was no further Occaſion for the Tabernacle; and yet it was fit to preſerve it, as a Place that had been Holy to the LORD.

CHAP. VIII.

Verſe 1. *AND Solomon aſſembled the elders of Iſrael,*] That is, the *Judges* in their ſeveral Cities.

And all the heads of the tribes,] Every Tribe had one or more principal Ruler in it.

And the chief of the fathers of the children of Iſrael,] The principal Perſons of every Family in thoſe Tribes.

Unto king Solomon, in Jeruſalem,] Where the Houſe of the LORD was now fixed.

That they might bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD, *out of the city of David, which is Zion.*] For thither *David* had brought it from the Houſe of *Obed-Edom*, and made a Tabernacle for it (2 *Sam.* vi. 12, 17.) until a fixed Houſe ſhould be prepared for it: Which was now built upon a neighbouring Mountain.

Ver. 2. *And all the men of Iſrael*] All the fore-named Perſons, with their Attendants: Which no doubt were numerous.

Aſſembled themſelves unto king Solomon, at the feaſt in the month Ethanim, which is the ſeventh month.] Here the *Targum* thus paraphraſes, *in the Month which anciently was called the firſt Month, but now is the ſeventh:* And called *Ethanim*, becauſe more ſacred Solemnities (which were the Support and Strength of their Religion and Government) were appointed in this Month than in any other. And among the reſt the Feaſt of Tabernacles; which is here meant, as *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel* and others think. And upon the Occaſion of this Aſſembly the *Jews* obſerve in *Seder Olam Rabba, Cap.* 15. that *the Schekinah doth not dwell, but in the Congregation.*

Ver. 3. *And all the elders of Iſrael came,*] All the fore-mentioned great Perſons were called *Elders*, and are here comprehended under that Name.

And the prieſts took up the ark.] The Ark had been carried by the Prieſts three Times before this: When they went over *Jordan*; when they incompaſſed the Walls of *Jericho*; and when *David* ſent it back, when he fled from *Abſalom*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 29, 30. It was the Office of the Levites to carry the Ark upon their Shoulders, except upon ſpecial Occaſions: And now they could not, becauſe it was not lawful for them to enter into the Holy Place, into which it was to be carried, and then into the moſt Holy. It is ſaid indeed, 2 *Chron.* v. 4. that *the Levites took it up:* But the Meaning is, that they took it up and carried it to the Temple, and then the Prieſts took it up (*ver.* 6.) and carried it into the Holy Place.

Ver. 4. *And they brought up the ark of the* LORD, *and the tabernacle of the congregation,*] Together with the Ark, they brought up the Tabernacle. But the Queſtion is what Tabernacle, whether that made by *Moſes* which was in *Gibeon*, 2 *Chron.* i. 3. or that made by *David* which was at *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 17. I think the latter is never called *the Tabernacle of the Congregation*, as the former frequently is. But it may be probably thought that both of them were now carried into the Temple, and laid up there; to avoid all Danger of Superſtition and Idolatry: And that no Worſhip might be performed any where, but only at this Houſe of God, which he now dedicated to him.

And all the holy veſſels that were in the tabernacle.] *Viz.* the Altar of Incenſe, and the Table, and the Candleſtick, and every thing belonging to them: Which remained in the Tabernacle, when the Ark was removed from it.

Theſe did the prieſts and the levites bring up.] The Prieſts brought up the Ark; and the *Levites* carried the Tabernacle, and the Veſſels of the Sanctuary.

Ver. 5. *And king Solomon, and all the congregation of Iſrael that were aſſembled unto him, were with him before the ark,*] When it was brought into the Houſe of God, and ſettled there; for it is not likely ſuch a Multitude of Sacrifices as follow, could be offered in the way from Mount *Sion* to the Temple, as ſome were when *David* brought it from the Houſe of *Obed-Edom* to *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 13.

And ſacrificed ſheep, and oxen, that could not be numbred for multitude,] That is, a vaſt Number; which might have been told, but not eaſily; as was ſaid before of the Weight of the Braſs employed about the veſſels of the Houſe of God, vii. 47. See there. Here is no mention of *Solomon*'s dancing before the Ark as *David* did; for all Holy Men were not alike moved by God; their Tempers and Conditions being very different. *Solomon* was now in a

a State of great Tranquillity, and conſtant Pleaſure: But *David* had been diſturbed by the Stroke upon *Uzzah*, a little before his great Tranſport of Joy, at the ſafe Conduct of the Ark to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 6. *And the prieſts brought in the ark of the covenant of the* LORD *unto his place, in the oracle of the houſe, to the moſt holy place,*] Before the Glory of the LORD filled the Houſe, the Prieſts were permitted to enter into the Oracle: But afterwards none but the High-Prieſt might approach ſo near unto the Divine Preſence, which dwelt there: And he but once a Year.

Even under the wings of the cherubims.] Which *Solomon* had made. For the Cherubims made by *Moſes* were fixed to the Mercy-Seat, and inſeparable from it: And ſtood together with the Ark under theſe Cherubims.

Ver. 7. *For the cherubims ſpread forth their two wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubims covered the ark, and the ſtaves thereof.*] For they were very large, ſtretching forth their Wings from one ſide of the Houſe unto the other, vi. 22, 24, *&c.*

Ver. 8. *And they drew out the ſtaves, that the end of the ſtaves were ſeen out in the holy place before the oracle,*] By the *Holy Place* is here meant the moſt Holy, where the Ark was under the Cherubims: Which covered both the Ark and the Staves. But the Staves were ſo drawn out that the Ends of them might be ſeen: Whereby the High-prieſt was directed in the Way he ſhould go juſt before the Mercy-Seat on the Day of Expiation; when he went between theſe two Staves to ſprinkle the Blood before God. See 2 *Chron.* v. 9. and *Buxtorf* in his *Arca Fœderis*, where he explains both this and the next Verſe, and gives a large Account of drawing out the Staves, p. 96, 97.

And they were not ſeen without:] In the Sanctuary.

And there they are unto this day.] And in this Poſture.

Ver. 9. *There was nothing in the ark ſave the two tables of Stone, which Moſes put there at Horeb, when the* LORD *made a covenant with the children of Iſrael, when they came out of the land of Egypt.*] The very ſame Words, in a manner, are repeated, 2 *Chron.* v. 10. But it is commonly obſerved that both theſe Places ſeem to contradict the Apoſtle's Words, *Heb.* ix. 4. For it is ſaid here in theſe Books, that nothing was in the Ark ſave only the two Tables of Stone: But that there, the Pot of Manna and *Aaron*'s Rod was alſo in the Aark. For ſo they generally interpret thoſe Words ἐν ᾗ *in which*, i. e. in the Ark στάμνῳ χρυσῇ, *the Golden Pot containing the Manna*, &c. Many learned Men have endeavoured to reconcile theſe Places ſeveral Ways, which *Andreas Sennertus* hath collected in a Treatiſe on purpoſe about it. Which might have been ſpared by this eaſy Obſervation, that the Prepoſition ἐν doth not always ſignify *in*, but *by*: And ſo the Place in the *Hebrews* is to be rendred, not *in which*, but *by which*. *Bochartus* hath given a great many Inſtances of ſuch Uſe of the Particle *Beth* in the Old Teſtament, *Hierozoicon. P.* 2. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 50. And indeed it is never ſaid there that the Pot of Manna was laid up in the Ark, but *before the* LORD *and before the Teſtimony*, *Exod.* xvi. 33, 34. and the ſame is ſaid of *Aaron*'s Rod, *Numb.* xvii. 4. Which ſignifies no more than putting them by the Ark. See *Huetius Demonſt. Evang. p.* 322.

Ver. 10. *And it came to paſs, when the prieſts were come out of the holy place,*] That is, the Oracle, where they had ſet down the Ark.

That the cloud filled the houſe of the LORD.] In this Cloud was the Glory of the LORD (*ver.* 11.) which now filled the Temple, as it had anciently done the Tabernacle, when it was firſt erected, *Exod.* xl. 34. Only there the Cloud covered the Tabernacle without, and the Glory of the LORD ſhined within: But here the Houſe it ſelf was filled with the Cloud, out of which the Glory of the LORD broke; and after it had filled the whole Houſe, ſettled in the moſt Holy Place.

Ver. 11. *So the prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter, becauſe of the cloud: for the glory of the* LORD *hath filled the houſe of the* LORD.] By this it appears that the Cloud filled the Sanctuary, as well as the moſt Holy Place: For in the Sanctuary the Prieſts miniſtred at the Altar of Incenſe. And it appears alſo by the next Verſe, that, at the firſt, nothing but a dark Cloud filled the Houſe, which was very aſtoniſhing: But afterwards the Glory of the LORD (as I ſaid) broke out, which was more amazing. Inſomuch that *Moſes* himſelf was not able to enter into the Tabernacle of the Congregation, when this Cloud and Glory firſt appeared, *Exod.* xl. 35.

Ver. 12. *Then ſpake Solomon,*] When he ſaw the Prieſts come out of the Houſe of God in great Conſternation, he uttered theſe Words which follow, with his Face turned towards the Altar, to compoſe and comfort them. This ſhews that the Cloud filled the Houſe before *Solomon* prayed: Whereas in 2 *Chron.* vii. 1, 2, 3. it appears, the Divine Glory did not fill it, 'till after he had prayed. Which *Abarbinel* reconciles with very good Reaſon. The Cloud, in which was the Glory of the LORD, or the Fire, came into the Temple before *Solomon* prayed: Which made him ſay here, *the* LORD *dwelleth in thick Darkneſs*. Which he beholding, prayed to God, who gave ſuch a ſenſible Token of his Preſence there. Now when he had made an End of his Prayer, then the Fire that was in the Cloud broke forth, and conſumed the Sacrifices on the Altar: And the Glory of the LORD filled the Houſe, as it is recorded in the Book of *Chronicles*.

The LORD *ſaid that he would dwell in thick darkneſs.*] As much as to ſay, be not afraid; but look upon this Cloud as a Token of God's Preſence and Protection: And that he owns this for his Houſe, where he intends to dwell, according to what he ſaid, *Levit.* xvi. 2. This Cloud is called *thick darkneſs*, becauſe it hindred the Sight of any other thing that was in the Holy Place; either the Altar, Candleſtick, or Table. Nothing was ſeen but the Glory of the LORD when it broke out: Which dazzled their Eyes, rather than enlightned them. And it is obſervable, that the better to repreſent this, the High-Prieſt when he went into

into the most Holy Place was to fill it with a Cloud of Smoak, by the Incense he offered, which made the Place dark (*Levit.* xvi. 12, 13.) that he might not lose his Life by the Splendor of the Divine Glory.

Ver. 13. *I have surely built thee an house to dwell in,*] He turns his Speech from them to God; and expresses his Hope that he would be pleased to continue in this House: Which he perceived by this Glorious Cloud he intended to make his Habitation.

A settled place for thee to abide in for ever.] Not like the Tabernacle, which was a moveable Habitation; but a Place wherein he hoped he would settle, and never remove from it. From hence the *Jews* call this *Beth-haolam*, the Enternal House, or the House of Ages. Which was not like *Gilgal*, *Shiloh*, *Nob*, and *Gibeon*, (as *Abarbinel* explains it) which did not last long, though God for some Time dwelt there: They not being in the Place which the LORD had chosen to place his Name there: Which was in Mount *Moriah*.

Ver. 14. *And the king turned his face about,*] From the Court of the Priests, to the Court of the Congregation, having the Altar on his Back.

And blessed all the congregation of Israel:] In that Form, perhaps, which God himself prescribed, *Num.* vi. 23, 24, &c.

(*And all the congregation of Israel stood.*)] Both out of Reverence to God, and Respect unto the King.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father, and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying,*] He acknowledges the Goodness of God in his gracious Promise; and his Faithfulness in fulfilling it. Which Promise was made by *Nathan*, unto whom the Word of the LORD came about this Matter, 2 *Sam.* vii. 4.

Ver. 16. *Since the day that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that my name might be therein;*] He had often told them that they should worship him in the Place which he would choose; but he never declared his Choice of a Place 'till *David*'s Time, 2 *Sam.* vii. 6.

But I chose David to be over my people Israel.] 2 *Sam.* vii. 8. to whom he shewed the Place which he would make his Dwelling, and where he would be worshipped.

Ver. 17. *And it was in the heart of David my father, to build an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.*] This is, as I said before, where God would dwell among them, and be graciously present with them. See 2 *Sam.* vii. 2.

Ver. 18. *And the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart:*] He accepted and commended his good Intentions, but would not let him put them in Execution. This Honour he reserved for his Son, as it follows in the next Words.

Ver. 19. *Nevertheless, thou shalt not build the house, but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house unto my name.*] See 2 *Sam.* vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 20. *And the LORD hath performed the word that he spake, and I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built an house for the name of the LORD God of Israel.*] He concludes as he began, with a thankful Acknowledgment of the Faithfulness of God in performing his Promise.

Ver. 21. *And have set there a place for the ark,*] The Token of God's Presence among them.

Wherein is the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers,] That is, the Tables of the Covenant: Which by a Figure are called *the Covenant*, because they contained it.

When he brought them out of the land of Egypt.] And told them that by the Tenure of this Covenant they were to hold the Land of *Canaan*.

Ver. 22. *And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD,*] Having spoken the foregoing Words with his Face toward the People, and blessed them: Now he turned about again with his Face toward the Altar, to make a solemn Prayer to God.

In the presence of all the congregation of Israel,] Being advanced upon a Scaffold which he had made; of three Cubits high (as we read in 2 *Chron.* vi. 13.) so that all might see and hear him.

And spread forth his hands toward heaven: Which was a solemn Posture of Prayer among other Nations. And it is evident both from that Place in the *Chronicles*, and from *ver.* 54. of this Chapter, that when he had *stood* a while with his Face toward the Altar, he fell down upon his Knees, and spread forth his Hands toward Heaven.

Ver. 23. *And he said, O LORD God of Israel, there is no God like thee in heaven above, or on earth beneath, who keepest covenant and mercy with thy servants, that walk before thee with all their hearts:*] He acknowledges the transcendent Excellencies of the Divine Majesty; and particularly again commemorates his Faithfulness to those who serve him sincerely.

Ver. 24. *Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him: thou speakest also with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thy hand, as it is this day.*] This relates to that Part of God's Promise to *David*, that his Son should build him an House. See *ver.* 15, 16, &c.

Ver. 25. *Therefore now, LORD God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that thou promisedst him, saying, There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel;*] He looked upon that as an Earnest he would fulfil the other Part of his Promise to *David*, which he made at the same Time, concerning his Kindness to his Posterity, 2 *Sam.* vii. 12, 13.

So that thy children take heed to their way, that they walk before me as thou hast walked before me:] He speaks like a wise Man, who was fully acquainted with the Mind of God: Whose Promise concerning the Inheritance of the Kingdom, he acknowledges depended upon this Condition, *if they took heed to their way*, &c.

that is, continued in the Faith and Worſhip of God, as *David* did. But if they proved Idolaters, then they made themſelves unworthy of this Privilege to the Seed of *David* (as *Abarbinel* ſpeaks) and loſt the Inheritance of the Kingdom, becauſe they were none of his Children. And therefore after *Solomon* and *Jeroboam* alſo turned away from God and followed Idols, (as he goes on) God might juſtly have taken the divided Kingdom away from their Children. And when all *Iſrael* forſook the LORD, and worſhipped the gods of the Nations round about them, he did forſake their Land, and would no longer dwell among them, nor continue the Kingdom to them.

Ver. 26. *And now, O LORD God of Iſrael let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou ſpakeſt unto thy ſervant David my father.*] This is not an unneceſſary Repetition; but (as *Abarbinel* notes) God, when he ſpake to *David* of building the Temple by his Son, promiſed two things. *Firſt*, The Stability of his Kingdom in his Family, 2 *Sam.* vii. 16. and *Secondly*, That he would ſhew the greateſt Kindneſs and Friendſhip to them; ſuch as a Father doth to his Son, *ver.* 13. *Solomon* here begs of God in this Prayer both theſe Benefits: The firſt in the foregoing Verſe, and the other in this.

Ver. 27. *But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much leſs this houſe that I have builded?*] He would not have the People poſſeſſed with ſuch groſs Imaginations as were among the Heathens; who fancied their Gods were confined to their Temples. No, ſaith *Solomon*, the Heaven it ſelf, no not the higheſt Heaven, can comprehend his infinite Majeſty.

Ver. 28. *Yet have thou reſpect unto the prayer of thy ſervant, and to his ſupplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and unto the prayer which thy ſervant prayeth before thee to day:*] But he would have them know that God, who could be confined no where, was in a ſpecial manner preſent here, to grant the Requeſts of thoſe who piouſly made their Supplications to him, as he now did, in this Place.

Abarbinel obſerves upon *ver.* 39. that *Solomon* uſes *three* Words in this Verſe, which in ſome Places ſignify the very ſame thing: But being all uſed here together, he thinks have diſtinct Meanings. For the Word *Rinnah* (which we tranſlate *Cry*) he thinks ſignifies ſetting forth with a loud Voice the Praiſes of God: Concerning which their wiſe Men in *Beracoth* ſay, *Let a Man firſt commemorate the Praiſes of God, and then let him pray.* Then the Word *Tepillah* (which we tranſlate *Prayer*) he thinks ſignifies Mens judging and condemning themſelves before God for their Offences: Confeſſing they are unworthy to have their Petitions granted. And the other Word *Techinah* (*Supplication* we tranſlate it) imports Mens Petitions to God for what they want, and deprecating his Diſpleaſure, *&c.*

Ver. 29. *That thine eyes may be open toward this houſe, night and day, even toward the place of which thou haſt ſaid, my name ſhall be there:*] He prays that God would have a gracious Reſpect unto all that came to make their Petitions there. For as in the former Verſe (as *Abarbinel* obſerves) he prays God would hear his own Petitions: So in this, that he would hear all other pious Worſhippers.

That thou mayeſt hearken to the prayer which thy ſervant ſhall make towards this place.] He beſeeches God to hear him, if he looked towards this Place, in his Prayer; though he was not preſent at the Temple to prefer his Petition. For thus pious Men were wont to direct their Prayer, when they were far diſtant from it; nay, when the Temple was demoliſhed, *Dan.* vi. 10. And when they were at the Temple, they could only look toward the moſt Holy Place: For the People came no nearer than into the outward Court of the Temple, and the Prieſts no further than to the next Court to it. Save only when they went to order the Lamps, and burn Incenſe Morning and Evening, and renew the Shrew-bread: Otherwiſe they alſo ſtood and officiated at a Diſtance in the Court appointed for them, called the Court of the Prieſts. So both People and Prieſts ſtood in their ſeveral Courts, and worſhipped with their Faces toward the Temple, where the Ark and Mercy-Seat were. From whence came the Expreſſion of worſhipping the LORD *toward his Holy Temple:* That is, toward the Place where the Mercy-Seat was. And alſo the Expreſſion, of *worſhipping towards his Footſtool:* For if the Glory of the LORD ſat upon the Cherubims, under which the Ark ſtood; then it was his Footſtool. See *Pſal.* xcix. 5. and cxxxviii. 2.

Ver. 30. *And hearken thou to the ſupplication of thy ſervant, and of thy people Iſrael, when they ſhall pray toward this place:*] Here, as the ſame *Abarbinel* obſerves, he deſires, whether there was one, or many that prayed, he would hear them.

And hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place,] He directs the People's Mind up to Heaven, the Place where he dwells in the higheſt Majeſty and Glory: Of which the bright Cloud in the Temple was a Token and Reſemblance.

And when thou heareſt, forgive.] For Sins unpardoned would hinder his Bleſſing from deſcending on them; and therefore in the firſt Place he implores Forgiveneſs of them.

Ver. 31. *If any man treſpaſs againſt his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cauſe him to ſwear,*] This ſeems to relate to ſuch as were accuſed of denying that which was ſaid to be depoſited with them by their Neighbour. Who were to purge themſelves by an Oath, there being no Witneſs to convince them.

And the oath come before thine altar in this houſe:] It was the Cuſtom of all Nations to touch the Altar when they made a ſolemn Oath: Calling God, that is, to witneſs the Truth of what they ſaid, and to puniſh them if they did not ſpeak the Truth.

Ver. 32. *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy ſervants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and juſtifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteouſneſs.*] He deſires God to hear the Complaint of him who was defrauded, or unjuſtly accuſed: And ſhew who had Right on his ſide;

by punishing the Offender, and acquitting the injured Person.

Ver. 33. *When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name,*] Acknowledge him to be God alone, and renounce all false gods.

And pray, and make supplication to thee in this house:] Or, toward this House: Expecting Help from God alone.

Ver. 34. *Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them back into the land which thou gavest unto their fathers.*] Deliver them out of the Captivity into which their Enemies had carried them; and restore them to their own Country. The *Jews* think the SCHECHINAH was always in Captivity with them, and brought them forth from thence.

Ver. 35. *When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee;*] As God is said to *bring the Wind* (*Psal.* cxxxv. 7.) so he doth the Rain *out of his Treasures:* Which when he shuts up, no Showers can fall, 'till he open them again.

If they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them:] That had been the frequent Fruit of their Affliction in former Ages: Though as soon as God had delivered them, they revolted from him; as we read in the whole Book of *Judges.*

Ver. 36. *Then hear thou in heaven and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk,*] These Words are better translated in 2 *Chron.* vi. 27. (where the *Hebrew* Words are the very same with these here) *When thou hast taught them the good way wherein they should walk.* He doth not desire their Pardon, 'till their Affliction had taught them better Obedience.

And give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.] He first desires their Amendment, and then that the Times and Seasons might be amended.

Ver. 37. *If there be in the land famine,*] Which arose sometimes from other Causes, besides want of Rain.

If there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar;] These two Creatures, *Locusts* and *Caterpillars*, made great Desolations where they swarmed, *Exod.* x. 4, 5. *Psalm* cv. 34, 35. *Mildew* also, the Heathens themselves were sensible was a punishment sent from Heaven. And therefore *Numa Pompilius* (as *Strigelius* observes) ordained a solemn Festival called *Rubigalia*, in the Beginning of *May*, to pray for their Preservation from this *Rubigo* as they called it, which corrupted their Corn. See *Pliny's Nat. Hist. Lib.* 18. *Cap.* 29.

If their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities,] In *their Gates:* Whereby they were so straitned, that none could go in, or out.

Whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be;] The Word *Plague* signifies some extraordinary Stroke by the Hand of God.

Ver. 38. *What prayer and supplication shall*] *be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel,*] Who in National Calamities were wont to beseech God's Mercies; with publick Fasting and prayer: Which if they neglected he intreats him not to reject the Supplications of any particular Person who besought his Favour for himself and Family.

Which shall know every man the plague of his own heart,] We are taught by *Ezra* in 2 *Chron.* vi. 29. to understand these Words of any private Trouble or Grief which any Man laboured under: For so the Words are there, *when every one shall know his own Sore, and his own Grief.* That is, shall make his secret Moan for any Affliction which lies heavy upon his Spirit.

And spread forth his hands towards this house:] That is, pray as *Solomon* now did to God. See *ver.* 22.

Ver. 39. *Then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways, whose heart thou knowest;*] He would have the People know that God could not be deceived with Words; but have them expect an answer from him, according to the Sincerity of their Hearts, in their Professions of Repentance.

(*For thou, even thou only knowest the hearts of all the children of men.*)] This Sense begets in Men the greatest Awe of the Divine Majesty.

Ver. 40. *That they may fear thee all the days that they live, in the land that thou gavest unto our fathers.*] That they might learn by his great Goodness, to worship him alone religiously all their Days: And by that means possess in Peace and Plenty, the good Land he had bestowed upon them.

Ver. 41. *Moreover, concerning a stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country, for thy name's sake;*] To become a proselyte to the true Religion, and worship God alone, tho' he was not circumcised, and thereby bound to keep the whole Law. Such Strangers came to pray at the Temple, though they might not offer any Sacrifices, except only a Burnt-Offering. And therefore we may observe, that in the New Testament the *Greeks* are said to come to a Feast, ἵνα προσκυνήσωσιν, that they might worship, not that they might keep the Passover, *John* xii. 20. and the like is said of the *Eunuch*, *Acts* viii. 22. See *Selden Lib.* 2. *De Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap.* 4, and 5.

Ver. 42. (*For they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and thy stretched out arm*)] All the stupendious Wonders he had done: Which declared him to be above all Gods; the most High, and Holy One.

When they shall come, and pray toward this place:] In the Court behind that of the *Israelites:* Which was made on purpose for the Religious uncircumcised *Gentiles.* Such, saith *Victorinus Strigelius* (whose Words I think fit here to transcribe) were *Naaman* the *Syrian*; *Nabuchadnezzar*, and his Son *Evilmerodach*; *Darius* the *Mede*; *Cyrus* the *Persian*; *Cornelius*, and the *Æthiopian Eunuch* mentioned in the *Acts* of the Apostles; and many such like Heathens: Who were Members of the true Church. By which means, and by the Dispersion of the *Jews* among other Nations, many

many Heathens were called to the Acknowledgment of the only true God. See *Joſephus* his laſt Book of *Antiquities*, Chapter the ſecond.

Ver. 43. *Hear thou in heaven thy dwelling-place, and do according to all that the ſtranger calleth to thee for:*] He had the ſame Senſe with St *Peter*, that *God is no reſpecter of perſons, but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted with him*, Acts x. 35.

That all the people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Iſrael,] By this it is evident that truly good Men in ancient Time deſired all the Gentile World might be incorporated with them: Unto which in our Saviour's Time the *Jews* were unaccountably averſe.

And that they may know that this houſe which I have builded, is called by thy name.] Hath thy glorious Preſence in it.

Ver. 44. *If thy people go out to battle againſt their enemy, whitherſoever thou ſhalt ſend them, and pray unto the LORD toward this city which thou haſt choſen, and toward the houſe that I have built for thy name:*] Some of the *Jews* wonder that *Solomon* ſhould mix his Prayer for Strangers with thoſe for the People of *Iſrael*, and not rather finiſh firſt what he had to deſire for the *Iſraelites*, and then pray for the *Gentiles*. If there be any thing in this, it was to ſhew that God made no Difference between them and pious People of other Nations. It is here remarkable, that they were not to make War without a Warrant and Commiſſion from God, upon the neighbouring Nations. Not to ſatisfy their Ambition and Vain-glory, but by his Command, or upon juſt and neceſſary Reaſons; which would warrant them to implore and expect God's Bleſſing upon their Arms.

Ver. 45. *Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and ſupplications, and maintain their cauſe.*] Shews the Juſtice of it, by making them victorious.

Ver. 46. *If they ſin againſt thee (for there is no man that ſinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy,*] The Weakneſs of human Nature, and its Proneneſs to ſin, doth not excuſe wilful Offences againſt God; eſpecially Apoſtacy from him, which was the Cauſe of all their Calamities.

So that they carry them away captives into the land of the enemy, far or near;] A good Cauſe ſometimes miſcarries for the Iniquity of thoſe that are engaged in it.

Ver. 47. *Yet if they ſhall bethink themſelves, in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent and make ſupplication to thee in the land of them that carried them captives, ſaying, we have ſinned, we have done perverſly, we have committed wickedneſs;*

Ver. 48. *And ſo return to thee with all their heart and all their ſoul, in the land of their enemies, which have led them away captive,*] In theſe, and in the foregoing Words, *ver.* 47. he gives a full Deſcription of true Repentance. Which begins in the ſerious Reflection which Men make upon their paſt Lives, and their preſent Miſeries into which their Sins have brought them. Which begets an unfeigned Sorrow and Reſolution of Amendment, with earneſt Supplication for Mercy and Grace: Confeſſing themſelves unworthy of it, and condemning themſelves for their Sins, and the high Aggravations of them (expreſſed here by *doing perverſly, and committing wickedneſs*) which at laſt concludes in their quitting that wicked Courſe of Life, and their ſincere Converſion to the Service of God.

And pray unto thee toward the land which thou gaveſt unto their fathers, the city which thou haſt choſen, and the houſe which I have built for thy name:] The very looking towards this Place, with earneſt imploring the Mercy of God, and Deſire of his Helps, was to own him that dwelt here, and acknowledge him alone for their God. Which was a Means (as that excellent Perſon Dr *Alix* admoniſhes me) to keep them from Idolatry: All the Nations of the World turning their Faces towards the Eaſt, when they worſhipped; but the *Jews* to the Weſt, where the Holy Place was. And for this Cauſe, when the Temple and the holy City were deſtroyed, and the Ark of the Teſtimony was gone; yet good Men looked and prayed toward the Place where it was wont to be; as appears by the Prophet *Daniel*. And therefore *Solomon* much more ſuppoſes they would do ſo, when they were all ſtanding. Which may ſeem, as Mr *Mede* obſerves, to have been done out of the uſe of all Mankind, without any ſpecial Precept to that Purpoſe; which is no where to be found: Nature having taught Mankind, as in their Addreſſes to great Perſons, to look unto their Face: So in their Addreſſes to the Divine Majeſty, to look that way, or toward that Place, where his Preſence is more demonſtrated than elſewhere. From whence he concludes, that to worſhip toward the Place, where there is any Sign or Specification of his Preſence, is no Idolatry. See his Diſcourſe upon *Pſal.* cxxxii. 7.

Ver. 49. *Then hear thou their prayer and ſupplication in heaven thy dwelling-place, and maintain their cauſe,*] In the *Hebrew*, *their right*: Which they had forfeited by their Diſobedience, but he prayed they might be reſtored unto upon their Repentance.

Ver. 50. *And forgive thy people that have ſinned againſt thee, and all their tranſgreſſion wherein they have tranſgreſſed againſt thee, and give them compaſſion before them that have carried them captive, that they may have compaſſion on them:*] Treat them mercifully while they continued their Slaves; and give them their Liberty to return to their own Land. *Solomon* enlarges much upon this in the following Verſes, as a thing of the greateſt Importance. Becauſe he knew that they, as well as all Men elſe, were prone to offend God (*ver.* 46.) and might provoke him to expel them from this Land. Towards which the *Jews* now at this Day turn their Faces, when they pray to God: But to no Purpoſe; for it only demonſtrates they have ſo provoked God by a Crime more heinous than ever was committed, that he will have no Regard to their Petition.

Ver. 51. *For they be thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughteſt out of Egypt, from the*

the midst of the furnace of iron:] Wherein they wrought with cruel Labour. See *Deut.* iv. 20.

Ver. 52. *That thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them in all that they call for unto thee.*] He brings two Arguments for the Divine Compassion toward them. First, that it might not lose the Glory of what he had formerly done for them; and then that it might appear he dwelt in this House, and had Respect unto the penitent Prayers that were here made to him.

Ver. 53. *For thou didst separate them from all the people of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O LORD our God.*] See *Exod.* xix. 5. Here he adds a third Argument; the peculiar Laws that he had given them; whereby they were distinguished from all People: In the Observance of which he beseeches him to preserve them. It was not a meer Angel that brought them out of *Egypt*, but the Divine Λόγος conducted them; to whom therefore this Prayer of *Solomon*'s was directed. For the SHEKINAH or Divine Glory that settled in the Temple, and there was worshipped, was this Divine Person, and not an Angel personating God.

Ver. 54. *And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he rose up from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees, with his hands spread up to heaven.*] See Verse 22.

Verse. 55. *And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying,*] Now he turned about again, with his Face the other way, from the Altar to the People.

Ver. 56. *Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.*] He celebrates again the Faithfulness of God, which continued now, as it had done in the Days of *Joshua*. See *Josh.* xxi. 45. xxiii. 14.

Ver. 57. *And the LORD God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us:*] Of which there was no Doubt, if they cleaved stedfastly unto him, as it follows in the next Words.

Ver. 58. *That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.*] This was the greatest Blessing he could ask for them; as the Means to preserve them in his Favour.

Ver. 59. *And let these my words wherewith I have made supplication before the LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night,*] Be ever acceptable to him.

That he maintain the cause of his servant,] That is, of *Solomon*, and his Successors.

And the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require:] That is, according to his, and their Necessities.

Ver. 60. *That all the people of the earth may know that the LORD is God, and that there is none else.*] That by his signal Favours to the *Israelites*, all the World might be invited to acknowledge him to be God alone.

Ver. 61. *Let your hearts therefore be perfect with the LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and keep his commandments, as at this day.*] When they were perfectly free from all false Worship, and served God alone; as he exhorted them to continue still to do, with Sincerity of Heart.

Ver. 62. *And the king, and all Israel with him, offered sacrifices before the LORD.*] Which was a solemn Act of Worship; whereby they acknowledged him to be their God. And these Sacrifices seem to have been laid upon the Altar, before *Solomon* begun his Prayer; ready to be offered: And when he had done, Fire came from Heaven (as we read 2 *Chron.* vii. 1.) and consumed the Sacrifices. Which was another Token of God's Presence in this House; as the Cloud had testified, and hereby was further confirmed: For the Fire from Heaven declared how acceptable the Sacrifices were that were offered in that Place.

Ver. 63. *And Solomon offered a sacrifice of Peace-offerings, which he offered unto the LORD,*] Besides the Burnt-offerings before-mentioned.

Two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep:] Which could not be all offered upon that Day, when he made his Prayer, but while the Feast lasted; which was in the whole fourteen Days, *ver.* 65. See upon iii. 4. The Heathen imitated these Sacrifices in their *Hecatombs*, which they offered of an hundred Beasts of a kind; as, suppose, an hundred Oxen, an hundred Goats, and an hundred Swine. They are described by *Julius Capitolinus*, in his Life of the Emperors *Pupienus Maximus*, and *Balbinus*; the last of which he saith, was so transported with Joy, being fuller of Fear, that he offered an *Hecatomb*; which was such a Sacrifice as this. An hundred Altars of Turf were raised in one Place, at them an hundred Swine, and an hundred Birds were killed. But if it were the Sacrifice of an Emperor, an hundred Lions, an hundred Eagles, and an hundred of other such kind of Animals were offered: But no such ravenous Creatures were ever offered to the true God.

And all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.] By this Prayer of *Solomon*, and by the Sacrifices, whereby all the People supplicated and gave Thanks to God, this House was set apart for God's Worship and Service. For then a Thing or Place is said to be *dedicated*, when it is first employed to that Use unto which it is hereafter designed. Concerning which see *Selden*, Lib. 3. *De Synedriis*, p. 204, &c.

Ver. 64. *The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court that was before the house of the LORD:*] That is, the Court of the Priests, which he did not consecrate (for that was done before) but employed it to holy Uses, and, as it were, honoured it by religious Acts (as Mr *Mede* speaks upon *Levit.* xix. 30.) And so the Name of God is said to be *hallowed* or sanctified by us, when we use it holily, and reverently. Thus they explain it in the *Gemara*, he *hallowed it*, that is, he set up another Altar there, as *L'Empereur* observes upon *Codex Middoth*, *Cap.* 3. *Sect.* 1.

For there he offered burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of peace-offerings.] In the middle

middle of the Court he erected ſeveral Altars, for the Reaſon following: And indeed the whole Court was little enough upon this Occaſion, as Dr *Lightfoot* acknowledges in his Book of the *Temple*, pag. 192, 193.

Becauſe the brazen altar that was before the LORD,] Near the Door of this Court.

Was too little to receive the burnt-offerings, and meat-offerings, and the fat of the peace-offerings.] Therefore by a ſpecial Licence from God, he ſet up other Altars; which were to ſerve only during this preſent Solemnity; when ſuch a vaſt Number of Sacrifices were to be offered. But afterward no other Altar was to be allowed, but that one brazen Altar where God by *Moſes* appointed all Sacrifices ſhould be offered; that they might be preſerved in the Worſhip of one only God. Therefore the *Jews* ſay theſe other Altars which *Solomon* erected were of Stone; which were ſoon pulled down again. But *Fortunatas Schaccus* hath ſaid a great deal to make it probable that he did not erect any Altars beſides the brazen; but ſacrificed upon the Ground, *Myrothec.* 2. *Cap.* 56.

Ver. 65. *And at that time Solomon made a feaſt, and all Iſrael with him,*] Such Solemnities were uſual among the Heathen, when they celebrated the Preſence of any of their Gods, as the illuſtrious *Ezek. Spanhemius* hath obſerved upon *Callimachus* his Hymn to *Apollo*, *ver.* 13. where he juſtly makes Account that they derived this Cuſtom from this famous Feſtival of King *Solomon:* Which *Joſephus* ſets out admirably. See *Lib.* 8. *Archæolog. Cap.* 2.

A great congregation, from the entring in of Hamath, unto the river of Egypt,] Hamath was the utmoſt Bounds of *Judea* to the North, called afterward *Epiphania*; and by the Inhabitants at this Day is called *Hama.* Sometimes the Bounds of this Kingdom this way, are ſaid to be the great River *Euphrates*; as by the River of *Egypt*, which was the South Bounds, is commonly underſtood *Nilus.* So *Nahal* is tranſlated by *Jonathan* and the *Hieruſalem* Interpreter upon *Numb.* xxxiv. 5. And indeed the Word *Nilus* comes from thence, for the *Hebrew* Word was anciently pronounced not *Nahal*, but *Neel:* From whence the Greek Νεῖλος, and the Latin *Nilus*, as *Bochartus* obſerves in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 5. *Cap.* 15. But here the River of *Egypt* is that little Stream which diſcharges it ſelf into the Sea, by the *Lacus Sirbonides*, between Mount *Caſius* and *Rhinocolura*, the laſt Town of *Paleſtine.* It is called by *Joſhua*, xiii. 1. *Sichor*, the ſame with *Nile*, becauſe it was but a Branch from the *Alveus Peluſiacus* of that great River. See *Gen.* xv. 18.

Before the LORD, *ſeven days, and ſeven days, even fourteen days.*] It appears by 2 *Chron.* vii. 9. that the Feaſt of the Dedication of the Altar laſted ſeven Days; and then the other ſeven Days were the Feaſt of Tabernacles, which followed after the other.

Ver. 66. *On the eighth day he ſent the people away:*] So *Ezra* likewiſe ſaith, 2 *Chron.* vii. 10. but adds that it was the twenty-third Day of the ſeventh Month: Whereas the laſt Day of the Feaſt of Tabernacles (which was the eighth from the Beginning) was the twenty-ſecond. Therefore *Solomon* took his Leave of them on the laſt Day of the Feaſt, which was the two and twentieth Day of the Month; and they went Home the next Day. By this alſo it appears, theſe fourteen Days of Feaſting were not kept all together, without Intermiſſion: For the great Day of Expiation was on the tenth of this Month; ſeven Days before which, I ſuppoſe, the Feaſt of Dedication was kept; and then they reſted 'till the fifteenth, when the Feaſt of Tabernacles began.

And they bleſſed the king,] Gave him Thanks for his Kindneſs, and prayed God to make his Reign proſperous.

And went to their tents joyful, and glad of heart, for all the goodneſs that God had done for David his ſervant, and for his people Iſrael.] In the Book of *Chronicles* it is added, *and unto Solomon:* But that is here included in the Goodneſs of God to *David*, on whom God beſtowed ſuch a Succeſſor. With whoſe magnificent Entertainment they were abundantly ſatisfied; and rejoiced exceedingly, that God had done ſuch great Things for *David* and his Family; and made all *Iſrael* happy in the great Peace and Plenty which they enjoyed, together with God's holy Religion ſo glorioufly eſtabliſhed among them.

CHAP. IX.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs when Solomon had finiſhed the building of the houſe of the* LORD, *and the king's houſe, and all Solomon's deſire that he was pleaſed to do,*] We are taught by *Ezra*, 2 *Chron.* vii. 11. to underſtand theſe Words in this Manner; *Thus Solomon finiſhed the houſe of the* LORD, &c. and concluded all with the foregoing Prayer, and the great Feſtival which he kept.

Ver. 2. *That the* LORD *appeared to Solomon the ſecond time, as he had appeared to him in Gibeon.*] When he appeared to him in a Dream: And ſo it is ſaid, 2 *Chron.* vii. 10. *the* LORD *appeared to Solomon by night.* Which he had done once before, and no more: For that which he ſpake to him, vi. 11, 12. was by a Prophet. See there.

Ver. 3. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy ſupplication that thou haſt made before me:*] This ſhews that the firſt Verſe is to be underſtood as I have there obſerved; for otherwiſe, we muſt ſuppoſe this Appearance of God to *Solomon* was eleven Years after he had finiſhed the Houſe of the LORD. Which is not likely; but it is more natural to think it was the very next Night after he had diſmiſſed the People.

I have hallowed this houſe which thou haſt built,] By the glorious Cloud which came into it and filled it; and by the Fire which, deſcending from Heaven to conſume the Sacrifices, teſtified his Acceptance of them.

To put my name there for ever,] Beſides thoſe viſible Tokens of his Preſence there, he now declares by Word of Mouth, that he owned this for his Houſe; and would always dwell in it, if they kept his Covenant, as the *Targum* here interprets it.

And

And mine eyes and my heart ſhall be there perpetually.] By his *Eyes* and his *Heart* he means his gracious Providence, and his tender Love and Affection ſhould always have Regard to what was done there; and it ſhould be moſt acceptable to him.

Ver. 4. *And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightneſs, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, to keep my ſtatutes and my judgments:*] In all things relating to Religion, and Civil Government, which *David* commonly did: Though ſome Time, and in one Thing, he fouly miſcarried.

Ver. 5. *Then will I eſtabliſh the throne of thy kingdom upon Iſrael for ever, as I promiſed to David thy father, ſaying, There ſhall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Iſrael.*] See 2 *Sam.* vii. 12, 13.

Ver. 6. *But if you ſhall at all turn from following me, you and your children,*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *if in turning you turn from me:* Which ſignifies more than their *at all turning from him.* Rather it ſhould be tranſlated, *if they altogether turned from following him:* That is, fell to Idolatry. For he did not intend to forſake them for every Offence; but only when they forſook him, as the next Words explain it.

And will not keep my commandments and my ſtatutes, which I have ſet before you, but go and ſerve other gods, and worſhip them;] There was a general Corruption of their Manners, when they fell to Idolatry.

Ver. 7. *Then will I cut off Iſrael out of the land which I have given them;*] This ſhews that he ſpeaks in the foregoing Words of a general Apoſtacy from him.

And this houſe which I have hallowed for my name, will I caſt out of my ſight,] No longer continue his gracious Preſence there; which he had promiſed, *ver.* 3.

And Iſrael ſhall be a proverb,] So that when Men would expreſs how unhappy any one was, they ſhould ſay, *as miſerable as the Jews.*

And a by-word among the people:] Who mocked at their Calamity.

Ver. 8. *And at this houſe which is high,*] Renowned for its Riches, and Splendor, and great Reſort unto it.

Every one that paſſeth by it ſhall be aſtoniſhed,] To ſee ſuch a marvellous Change: For *Pliny* teſtifies that *Jeruſalem* was the moſt famous City in the Eaſt, as *Grotius* obſerves.

And ſhall hiſs, and ſhall ſay, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this houſe?] Out of Scorn and Deriſion ſhall aſk what is the Matter, that this famous Place, which boaſted ſo much of the Favour of God, is laid in Ruin.

Ver. 9. *And they ſhall anſwer, Becauſe they forſook the LORD their God, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have taken hold upon other gods, and worſhipped them, and ſerved them: therefore hath the LORD brought upon them all this evil.*] The *Jews* were forced to give this Account of their Calamity.

Ver. 10. *And it came to paſs in the end of twenty years, when Solomon had built the two houſes; the houſe of the LORD, and the king's houſe,*] The former of which was ſeven Years in building, the latter thirteen, vi. 38. vii. 1.

Ver. 11. (*Now Hiram the king of Tyre had furniſhed Solomon with cedar-trees, and fir-trees, and with gold, according to all his deſire*)] See *Chap.* v. 8, 10. Where mention is made of theſe Trees, but nothing ſaid of Gold: But in the fourteenth Verſe of this Chapter we find that *Hiram* ſent him an hundred and twenty Talents of Gold. Which it is not likely he gave *Solomon*; who rather purchaſed ſo much of him for Wheat and Oil, and ſuch like Things which *Hiram*'s Country wanted; tho' it abounded with Gold. For the *Tyrians* were great Merchants, fetching Gold from *Ophir*, *ver.* 27, 28.

That then king Solomon gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee.] They were near, or adjoining to the Country of *Galilee* (as the Particle *Beth* frequently ſignifies) but were no Part of the Land of *Canaan*, when it was divided among the *Iſraelites:* For that could not be alienated, being God's Heritage. They were therefore Cities out of the Territories of *Iſrael*, as appears from *Joſhua* ix. 27. but had been conquered partly by *Pharaoh*, who gave them to *Solomon*, as Part of his Daughter's Portion; and partly by *Solomon* himſelf, who had Power to diſpoſe of them; eſpecially ſince at that Time they were not inhabited by the *Iſraelites*. See 2 *Chron.* viii. 2. and *Grotius de Jure Belli & Pacis.* Lib. 1. Cap. 3. Sect. 12. N. 3. *Hotoman* indeed, a famous Lawyer, thinks that *Solomon* did not give *Hiram* a Propriety, and perpetual Right in theſe Cities; but only the Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of them, 'till the Debt was ſatisfied, which *Solomon* had contracted, by the Aſſiſtance which *Hiram* afforded him, in building the Temple. But his Ground is not ſolid: For as our *Selden* alſo hath ſhewn (Lib. 6. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. 16.) the Kings of *Iſrael* might diſpoſe of thoſe Lands, which they had conquered, in a voluntary War, without the Conſent of the Senate. *Bochartus* alſo is of the ſame Mind, that theſe Cities were no Part of the Country of *Judea:* But *Abarbinel* confirms *Hotoman*'s Opinion, that the Revenues of theſe Cities were given to him 'till the Debt was diſcharged.

Ver. 12. *And Hiram came out from Tyre to ſee the cities which Solomon had given him, and they pleaſed him not.*] Were not ſuitable to his Deſire, and the Genius of his People; for the Soil being fat and very deep (as is generally thought) it required great Labour to till it, and was not pleaſant to dwell in.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid, What cities are theſe that thou haſt given me, my brother?*] Theſe are not Words of Contempt; for it is not likely that *Solomon*, who had been highly obliged to *Hiram* (and was in his own Temper very generous) would give him that which was of little Value. But his Meaning is, theſe Cities were not ſuch as would ſerve his Purpoſe; which made him return them to *Solomon* again (2 *Chron.* viii. 2.) who, no doubt, made him ſome other Recompence, which gave him better Satisfaction. *Abarbinel* thinks that *Solomon* having agreed to give *Hiram* ſo many Meaſures of Wheat and Oil, as are mentioned, *ver.* 11. with which he had ſupplied him every Year;

now that this Work was ended, gave him this Country, out of which he might raiſe this Proviſion for his Houſhold himſelf. Which *Hiram* did not like, becauſe his People were addicted to Merchandize, not to Agriculture: But did not upon this Account break off Friendſhip with *Solomon*, as appears by the following Hiſtory.

And he called them the land of Cabul unto this day.] It is commonly thought that *Hiram* called them, by way of Contempt, *Cabul*; which ſignifies *a dirty Country:* Or, as *Joſephus* will have it, *diſpleaſing*. (as we tranſlate in the Margin of our Bibles) For *Chabulon*, he ſaith, in the *Phœnician* Language ſignifies as much as ὃν ἀρέσκον, *that which doth not pleaſe*, *Lib.* 8. *Archæol. Cap.* 2. But the LXX ſeem to have underſtood the Word better; who tranſlate it ὅριον, the *Term* or *Bound:* As if *Cabul* were the ſame with *Gebul*; *Caph* and *Gimel* being frequently changed, as *Bochartus* obſerves; who approves of this Signification of the Word. For *Chabulon* was that Tract of Ground which bounded the lower *Galilee:* Extending from *Tiberias* unto this Place, as *Joſephus* himſelf ſaith, *Lib.* 3. *De Bello Judaico. Cap.* 2. See *Bochartus* in his *Canaan*, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 4.

Ver. 14. *And Hiram ſent to the king ſixſcore talents of gold.*] It may be better tranſlated, *and Hiram had ſent*, &c. See *ver.* 11. where the Reaſon is given, why *Solomon* offered him ſo rich a Country. Which though he did not like, yet theſe Words, *Abarbinel* thinks, ſignify that notwithſtanding *Hiram* continued his generous Friendſhip with *Solomon*, and after that ſent him all this Gold; or, it was ſent him as his Share in their Traffick to *Ophir*, mentioned in the Concluſion of this Chapter.

Ver. 15. *And this is the reaſon of the levy which king Solomon raiſed*] That the raiſing of a great Tribute upon the People, and employing ſo many Men in his Works, might not ſeem ſtrange, he here ſhews the Cauſe of it; which was his great and numerous Buildings; ſuitable to the high Dignity to which God had advanced him. But Mr *Selden* hath ſhewn, by many Inſtances, that the Word *Mas* is uſed not only for pecuniary Tribute; but for corporeal Labour. And thus he interprets theſe Words, *This is the cauſe of requiring the labour and work of ſo many men.* Which when he had declared, *viz.* his great Buildings; then he proceeds, *ver.* 20. to relate, who they were that he employed in this Service, *Lib.* 6. *De Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap.* 14.

For to build the houſe of the LORD, *and his own houſe*,] Of which an Account hath been already given.

And Millo,] Which was a large and very beautiful Place (as *Abarbinel* takes it) near to *Sion*; where the *Iſraelites* were wont to meet, and take their Pleaſure: And becauſe it was *full* of People, was therefore called *Millo*; which ſignifies *Fulneſs*, or Repletion. Now *David* had built round about *Zion*, *from Millo inward* (as we read 2 *Sam.* v. 9.) but had left the Structure of *Millo* itſelf imperfect; which *Solomon* now compleated, with a particular Reſpect to *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, whoſe Houſe was near to it, *ver.* 24. of this Chapter. In this Place ſome think there was a ſtrong Fortreſs built, which they gather from xi. 27, and 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 5. But others will have it to ſignify that deep Valley or Ditch (it may be called) which was between Mount *Sion* (the City of *David*) and Mount *Moriah*, on which the Temple ſtood. Therefore that there might be a convenient Paſſage from the King's Palace to the Houſe of God, *Solomon* joined theſe two Mountains, by a Bridge or a Cauſeway; which could not be done without filling up the Valley, or making great Arches; ſome think the one, and ſome the other.

And the wall of Jeruſalem,] Which was a great Structure. For there were three Walls, one within another, as *Abarbinel* and *Joſeph Ben Gorian* explain it: The inner Wall compaſſing the Houſe of God, and the Houſe of the King; the middle Wall compaſſing the Houſes of the Prophets, and great perſons (which explains 2 *Kings* xxii. 14.) and the third compaſſed the Houſes of all the People.

And Hazor,] Which had been a very eminent City, and the Head of ſome Kingdoms before the Conqueſt of *Canaan*, *Joſh.* xi. 10. and was given to the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *Joſh.* xix. 36.

And Megiddo,] A City in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, *Joſh.* xvii. 11.

And Gezer,] In the Tribe of *Ephraim*, *Joſh.* xxi. 21.

Ver. 16. *For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and ſlain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city*,] For the *Iſraelites* could not diſpoſſeſs the *Canaanites*, but they continued in *Joſhua's* Time, and after, to dwell in *Gezer*, *Joſh.* xvi. 10. *Judges* i. 29. And it ſeems *David* and *Solomon* did not expel them, but continued them under Tribute; 'till *Pharaoh* upon ſome Provocation (which is not recorded) utterly extirpated them, and burnt their City. This was done, I ſuppoſe, before the Marriage of *Solomon* with *Pharaoh*'s Daughter; and was the very firſt Expedition that the *Egyptians* made out of their own Country, as Sir *John Marſham* thinks in his *Can. Chron. Seculum* 14.

And given it for a preſent unto his daughter, Solomon's wife.] It is likely he had begun to repair the City: And now upon the Marriage of his Daughter, reſtored it to *Solomon*, who perfectly rebuilt it.

Ver. 17. *And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether*,] This is, having finiſhed the building of *Gezer*, he built the lower *Beth-horon*, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin* (*Joſh.* xviii. 13, 14.) and *Ezra* tells us alſo (in 2 *Chron.* viii. 5.) *Beth-horon* the upper which was in the Tribe of *Ephraim* (*Joſh.* xvi. 5.) but not here mentioned: Either becauſe it was not of ſo great Conſequence, or did not need ſo much Reparation as the other.

Ver. 18. *And Baalath*,] There was a City of this Name in the Tribe of *Dan*, *Joſh.* xix. 44. But it is likely this was a City near *Tadmor*, where *Baal* had been formerly worſhipped: For *Baal* was one of the Gods of that People, it appears in the following Obſervation.

And Tadmor in the wilderneſs,] This Word *Tadmor* ſignifies in *Hebrew* as much as *Palma* in *Latin*. From whence it was called by the *Romans* *Palmyra:*

Palmyra: Which was one of the moſt ſplendid Cities in the Eaſtern Countries: Which gave Name to the *Palmyrenæ Solitudines*, mentioned by *Pliny* and *Ptolomy*. There have been lately, after Twelve Hundred Years Obſcurity, ſeveral noble Inſcriptions found in this Place by ſome that travelled into this Wilderneſs: But *Bochartus* hath one of far greater Antiquity of two *Phœnician* Gods, *Aglibelus* and *Melachbelus*, *viz.* the Summer and the Winter Sun: In his *Geogr. Sacra*, p. 2, called *Canaan*, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 8. *p.* 811. where he calls this *Tadmor* a City of *Phœnicia*.

In the Land,] Of *Hamath Zoba* (a part of *Syria*) as *Ezra* ſeems to expound it, 2 *Chron.* viii. 3, 4. which Country *Solomon* had conquered.

Ver. 19. *And all the cities of ſtore that Solomon had,*] Where he laid up Corn againſt a Time of need; or Arms and Ammunition, in caſe of War. Some will have them Cities where he kept his Treaſure, which is not likely.

And cities for his chariots, and cities for his horſemen,] Which he had in great Number, iv. 26.

And that which Solomon deſired to build in Jeruſalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.] So that whitherſoever he went, he had an Houſe for his Entertainment, in every part of his Country. Behold, ſaith *Abarbinel*, the Reaſon of the Tribute (*ver.* 15.) is given from all theſe Buildings: And after he had finiſhed them, he laid no further Tribute upon his People: Who murmured at theſe Impoſitions, as we find, after he was dead: But in theſe publick Buildings, a great Number of Hands were employed, whereby Idleneſs was expelled, Manufactures were learnt, the Poor were relieved, all the meaner People exerciſed, Cities adorned, Diſeaſes driven away, and no Place left for Envy and Sedition: While the Subjects found the Treaſure that was raiſed, employed for the Benefit of ſo many of them; as *Bodinus* diſcourſes in his Book *De Republica*, *Lib.* 11. *Cap.* 2. where he obſerves how *Auguſtus* having ſettled the Empire in Peace, kept the People in their Duty by this Means; repairing many Temples decayed by Time, or burnt by Fire: Laying out vaſt Sums upon the Chappel of *Jupiter Capitolinus*, and other publick Edifices; inſomuch that he gloried, *he left* Rome *a Marble City, which he found a Brick*,

Ver. 20. *And all the people that were left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebuſites, which were not of the children of Iſrael,*] But by this Time were become, I ſuppoſe, Proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* Religion, as the *Gibeonites* were, or at leaſt renounced their Idolatry.

Ver. 21. *Their children which were left after them, whom the children of Iſrael alſo were not able to deſtroy, upon them did Solomon levy a tribute of bond-ſervice unto this day.*] He was able to have rooted them all out, as the Law required; but that Command did not take Place after they had ſubmitted, and made Peace with the *Iſraelites* (as thoſe Words ſuppoſe, *Joſh.* ix. 19.) And they ſeem now to have been in ſo poor a Condition, that *Solomon* did not lay any Tribute of Money upon them; but only of burdenſome Labour. Of theſe were the ſeventy-thouſand that bare Burdens, and eighty-thouſand that were Hewers in the Mountains; mentioned, *v.* 15. Thus Mr *Selden*, in the Place above-mentioned, explains theſe Words, *they were not able utterly to deſtroy:* Which was not for want of Power, but becauſe they had made a Covenant with them, and did not conſume them (as it is in 2 *Chron.* viii. 8.) But they would not receive them into Peace with them, 'till they became Proſelytes of the Gate: And when they had done ſo, they became Tributaries; and therefore ſuch Perſons, by vertue of their Covenant, *Solomon* now commanded to this Service. See *Lib.* 6. *De Jure Nat. & Gentium*, *Cap.* 14.

Ver. 22. *But of the children of Iſrael did Solomon make no bond-men:*] By this means he ſpared the Children of *Iſrael*, whom he did not employ in any ſervile Labours about his publick Works; but put them into nobler Offices, as it here follows. Yet this implies that his Royal Power might have laid ſuch Loads on them, if he had not deſigned to rule with great Gentleneſs over them.

But they were men of war,] Which was accounted an honourable Employment.

And were his ſervants,] Officers in his Court.

And his princes,] Governours of Provinces.

And his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horſemen,] Commanders of his Guards.

Ver. 23. *And theſe were the chief of the officers that were over Solomons work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work.*] In 2 *Chron.* viii. 10. they are ſaid to be but two hundred and fifty. For the *Hebrew* Doctors commonly ſay that there were of theſe Officers but two hundred and fifty *Iſraelites:* The other three hundred were Proſelytes. But the plaineſt Account of this is given by *Abarbinel*, that there were only two hundred and fifty ſet over thoſe that wrought in the Temple: The reſt were employed in looking after his publick Works in other Places. And it muſt be obſerved alſo, that there were far greater Numbers employed when the Temple Work was carried on with great Speed, as we read before, *ver.* 16.

Ver. 24. *But Pharaoh's daughter came up out of the city of David, unto her houſe which Solomon had built for her: then did he build Millo.*] There was not the like Neceſſity for building *Millo* that there was for building the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, and the Cities before-named: But he did it (as *Abarbinel* obſerves) in Honour, and for the Pleaſure of *Pharaoh*'s Daughter; who was to remove unto an Houſe near *to it*. And the Reaſon ſhe did not continue in the Houſe where *David* had dwelt, we are told in 2 *Chron.* viii. 11. which was, becauſe it was a kind of holy Place, where it was not fit for her to remain; the Ark of God having dwelt there.

Ver. 25. *And three times in the year did Solomon offer burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings upon the altar which he built unto the* LORD,] The Meaning is not, that he offered Sacrifices no oftner; but that he never failed to keep the three ſolemn Feſtivals, which God commanded to be obſerved by every body, when he offered Sacrifices ſuitable to thoſe great Mercies which were then commemorated; and to

the great Bleſſings God had beſtowed upon his Family.

And he burnt incenſe upon the altar that was before the LORD:] In the holy Place, before the Oracle. Where he could not burn it himſelf; but he gave it to the Prieſts at his own Charge, to be offered with a particular Reſpect to him. That it is likely he did every Day, Morning and Evening.

So he finiſhed the houſe.] This was ſaid before, but now repeated; becauſe after he had kept the three great Feſtivals there, it was not only conſecrated, but all Divine Offices had been performed in it; and there was nothing more to be added.

Ver. 26. *And king Solomon made a navy of ſhips in Ezion-geber,*] This Name *Ezion-geber* ſignifies *Spina Viri*; it lying in a rocky, ragged Shore, running out into the Sea like the *Backbone of a Man.* So *Arianus* (as *Bochartus* obſerves) in his *Periplus* deſcribes the inmoſt Part of the *Sinus Arabicus* (where *Ezion-geber* lay) as very dangerous, becauſe of the Rocks and Shelves. Which makes it leſs ſtrange, that the Ships of *Jehoſhaphat* were broken there in Pieces, in the very Port, before they put out to Sea, 2 *Kings* xxii. 48. Inſomuch that in after-times this Port was forſaken, and they frequented *Elath.* *Joſephus* will have *Ezion-geber* to be the ſame with *Berenice*, a City on the *African* Shore, over-againſt *Syene*; others have different Conjectures; when the Scripture plainly teaches us that it was a Port of *Idumæa*, not far from *Aela* upon the Red Sea; and not far diſtant from the Wilderneſs of *Sin.* For the *Iſraelites* removed their Camp from this Place to that Wilderneſs, as we read *Num.* xxxiii. 36.

Which is beſide Eloth,] Or, *Elath*, for it is called by both Names: And by the *Greeks* and *Romans*, *Aela*, and *Ailat*, and *Elat*, and *Elana*, &c. Which was a Port known in the Days of *Moſes*, *Deut.* ii. 8. belonging to the *Edomites*; and, as St *Hierom* ſaith, to the *Egyptians:* For it was *ambigui juris*, lying on the Confines of both Countries. Inſomuch that Sir *John Marſham* thinks *Solomon* and *Hiram* now built Ships there with the good Leave of *Pharaoh*; the *Egyptians* now not minding Merchandize, but were ſet upon conquering Countries: But *David* having conquered *Edom*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 14. I rather think became Maſter of this Port; where *Solomon* built a Navy of Ships in his own Right, and went thither himſelf to ſee it, 2 *Chron.* viii. 17. It continued in the Poſſeſſion of the *Iſraelites* about an hundred and fifty Years, till, in the Time of *Joram*, the *Edomites* recovered it, 2 *Kings* viii. 20. But it was again taken from them by *Azariah*, and left by him to his Son, 2 *Kings* xiv. 22. but loſt again by his Grandſon *Ahaz*, from whom the King of *Syria* took it 2 *Kings* xvi. 6. The *Syrians* held it a long Time, 'till after many Changes under the *Ptolomies* and the *Seleucidæ* it came into the Hands of the *Romans*; who quartered there the Tenth Legion, as St *Hierom* tells us. See *Bochartus* in the ſecond Part of his *Geographia Sacra*, called *Canaan*, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 44.

On the ſhore of the Red-ſea, in the land of Edom.] What the *Hebrews* call the Sea of *Suph*, other Nations call the Sea of *Edom*, from the Country which it waſhes, *viz. Idumea*; as appears from this Place. From whence the *Greeks* (not knowing the Reaſon of the Name) call it ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν, *the Red-ſea:* The Word *Edom* ſignifying *Rubrum* or *Rufum*, Red, or Yellow, as *Bochartus* and *Ludolphus* have obſerved.

Ver. 27. *And Hiram ſent in the navy his ſervants, ſhip-men, that had knowledge of the ſea, with the ſervants of Solomon.*] The Navy was *Solomon*'s, who had Servants of his own on board the Ships, to go and traffick at *Ophir:* But they had no Skill in Navigation, and therefore *Hiram* ſent as many *Tyrians* as were neceſſary to man the Ships; they having been always bred at Sea.

Ver. 28. *And they came to Ophir,*] It is certain there was a Place called *Ophir*, or as the LXX call it σόφιρ (which Word *Joſephus* alſo uſes inſtead of *Ophir*) and by others called Ὀφρῆν, which was in *Arabia Felix.* But this cannot be the Place here meant, as *Bochartus* hath demonſtrated by many Arguments, in his *Phaleg. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 27. This one is ſufficient, that it was a three Years Voyage to *Ophir* here mentioned; whereas the other was very near the Place where the Navy was prepared. And beſides, they fetched *Ivory* from *Ophir*, whereas there are no Elephants in *Arabia*; therefore we muſt ſearch for it ſomewhere elſe: And there is little doubt it was in *India:* But in what Part of it, is not ſo eaſy to be determined. The famous *Bochartus* thinks it was *Taprobana*; which is the ſame with that now called *Zeilan* or *Seilan.* For what the Ancients ſay of *Taprobana*, that the Moderns ſay of *Zeilan*; as he hath ſhewn in a very large *Diagram* of both Countries, in his *Canaan*, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 46. And indeed *Grotius* before him concluded, there was no better Way to gueſs where this Place was, than by conſidering what Commodities were brought from thence, and enquiring of Merchants (who have been in the remote Parts of the World) where not only Gold, and Silver, and precious Stones, but Ivory, and all the reſt that were fetched from *Ophir*, are to be found now. And in a Letter to his Brother, he deſires him to make this Enquiry for him. See *Epiſtol.* 483.

And fet from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents,] It is ſaid in 2 *Chron.* viii. 18. that they brought four hundred and fifty: But we may well ſuppoſe that thirty Talents might be ſpent in the Charges of the Voyage to and fro; ſo that only four hundred and twenty came to *Solomon*'s Coffers. Or rather, as *Abarbinel* thinks, *Solomon* gave the Servants of *Hiram*, who managed the Ships, thirty Talents for a Gratuity. Or as *Laniado* (who delights to contradict *Abarbinel*) the *Jeruſalem* Talent was bigger than that of *Ophir:* So that four hundred and fifty *Ophir* Talents made but four hundred and twenty *Jeruſalem* Talents. It is eaſy alſo to ſay, that there came of Gold refined only four hundred and twenty into *Solomon*'s Treaſury; though the whole Maſs was four hundred and fifty.

And brought it to king Solomon.] It is no improbable Conjecture of *Abarbinel*, that *Solomon* at firſt trafficked in the Ships of *Hiram*; which Voyage brought him for his Share the hundred and twenty Talents mentioned, *ver.* 14. of this Chapter: Which *Hiram* is ſaid to have

ſent to him, as the Profit (that is) of his Adventure. Which was ſo great that *Solomon* reſolved to build a Navy of his own: At which *Hiram* was ſo far from being offended, that like a true Friend he furniſhed him with Mariners to manage the Ships; and they brought him this great Quantity of Gold at their Return from their firſt Voyage.

The Imperial Laws forbid noble Men to exerciſe Merchandiſe as a Thing below them: And therefore it much leſs becomes a King, as *Bodinus* diſcourſes, *Lib. 6. de Republ. Cap. 2.* But we muſt not meaſure Antiquity by our own Times: And that Author well adds, that though he would not have Kings now to be Merchants, yet if he might have his Choice, *Mercatorem eum malo quam Tyrannum*, &c. I had rather a Prince ſhould be a Merchant than a Tyrant; and noble Men ſhould rather trade, than oppreſs and make a Prey of their Tenants.

CHAP. X.

Verſe 1. *AND when the queen of Sheba*] *Joſephus* thinks ſhe was Queen of *Meroe*, which was anciently called *Saba*. But a great many of his Countreymen more rightly underſtand this Matter; who ſay ſhe came from *Aljemin*; which was the South Part of *Arabia Felix*, near the Red-Sea; and ſo our Saviour calls her the *Queen of the South*, which is the Signification of *Jemin* in *Hebrew*; and in *Arabick* with the Addition of *Al* is called *Aljemin*.

Heard of the fame of Solomon, concerning the name of the LORD,] *Theodoret* thinks ſhe was a Religious Woman, as far as the Light of Nature guided her; and if we may believe the *Hebrew* Tradition, ſhe had ſome Tincture of revealed Religion from her pious Anceſtors: For they think ſhe was deſcended from *Abraham* by *Keturah*; one of whoſe Sons begat *Sheba*, 1 *Chron.* i. 32. Now ſhe came to hear of *Solomon*'s Fame by the Ships that went to *Ophir*: For they ſailed by her Coaſt, and in all likelihood ſpread his Fame there; as they did in all other Places where they touched; proclaiming his Mgnificence, and eſpecially his Wiſdom, and his glorious Temple which he had built, for the Worſhip of his God. Whoſe Praiſe they ſet forth, as far above all Gods.

She came to prove him with hard queſtions.] To try whether he was ſo wiſe as Report made him; by propounding difficult Queſtions to him, which none but a Man divinely illuminated could reſolve; as *Abarbinel* underſtands it.

Ver. 2. *And ſhe came to Jeruſalem*] The Fable of *Agatharcides* is confuted by this, which ſaith the Royal Dignity among the *Sabæans* was but a kind of Captivity. For after the Inauguration of the King, it was forbid, by an ancient Oracle, that he ſhould ſtir out of his Palace upon Pain of ſtoning: But there he enjoyed himſelf in all manner of Pleaſure.

With a very great train,] Royally attended.

And with camels that bare ſpices, and very much gold, and precious ſtones:] Theſe Preſents which ſhe brought to *Solomon*, are a great Argument ſhe came from *Arabia Felix*; which abounded with ſuch Things; but none of them are in *Meroe*: Nor can *Meroe* be ſaid to be *the Ends of the Earth*; from whence our Saviour ſaith this Queen came; there being many large Countries in *Africa* beyond *Meroe*; but none beyond the *Sabæans* in *Arabia*, whoſe Country lay upon the Sea. See *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg. Lib. 2. Cap. 26.* Where he ſhews they abounded in Gold, having ſuch Plenty of it from *Ophir*, that they exchanged it for Braſs and Iron, *&c.* giving double, or thrice the Weight of them. And yet the *Abyſſine* Chriſtians (who ſay her Name was *Marqueda*) are very confident ſhe came from their Country; where it is as conſtant a Tradition that ſhe had a Son by *Solomon*; from whom their Kings are derived. So *Ludolphus* obſerves in his Notes upon the Confeſſion of *Claudius* King of *Ethiopia*; where he ſaith, this *was the Faith of his Father the Iſraelitiſh King.*

And when ſhe was come to Solomon ſhe communed with him of all that was in her heart.] Had the Liberty to propound whatſoever ſhe deſired to be reſolved about; either in Natural, I ſuppoſe, or Divine Things.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon told her all her queſtions:*] That is, anſwered them to her Satisfaction.

There was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not.] There was nothing ſo ſecret, which he did not reveal to her.

Ver. 4. *And when the queen of Sheba had ſeen all Solomons wiſdom,*] Had fully diſcovered the wonderful Variety of Wiſdom wherewith he was endowed.

And the houſe which he had built,] Both for God and for himſelf: The Magnificence of which was admirable.

Ver. 5. *And the meat of his table,*] Where it is likely ſhe was entertained while ſhe ſtayed at *Jeruſalem.*

And the ſitting of his ſervants,] At their Table.

And the attendance of his miniſters,] Who waited on him at his Table, and in his Chamber, and other Places.

And their apparel,] Which was different, I ſuppoſe, according to their ſeveral Offices; but all very ſtately.

And his cup-bearers,] Who filled out his Wine, and brought and delivered it to him: With ſuch Ceremony as made his Grandeur appear in that ſmall Thing.

And his aſcent by which he went up to the houſe of the LORD:] From his own Palace: of which *L'Empereur* gives an Account, upon *Codex Middoth, p. 50.* But the ancient Interpreters underſtand by the Word *Olatho* not *his Aſcent*; but his *Burnt-offering*, which he offered in the Houſe of the LORD. And it is very likely, ſhe ſaw the Service of God's Miniſters in his Houſe, as well as *Solomon*'s in his own Houſe: And was made by *Solomon* to underſtand the Meaning of every thing that was done there. Which muſt needs put her into an Extacy of Admiration, as it here follows. And thus the LXX tranſlate theſe Words καὶ τὴν ὁλοκάυτωσιν αὐτῦ ἣν ἀνέφερεν ἐν οἴκῳ κυρίυ, whom *P. Martyr*, *Victorinus Strigelius* and others follow in theſe Words, *Et holocauſta ejus, quæ in domo Domini*

mini offerebat, and his Burnt-offerings which he offered in the Houſe of the LORD.

There was no more ſpirit in her.] She was perfectly aſtoniſhed. For as he diſcourſed of all Sorts of Natural Things; ſo he was no leſs ſkilful in Political Government; and tranſcended in the Knowledge of Divine Matters, as his Books ſhew us; having all Things likewiſe in ſuch Order both in his Houſe, and every where elſe, that it was amazing. A very great Man of our own obſerves, that ſuch things as theſe, the Apparel, the Sitting and Attendance of his Servants, were juſtly admired by her as an Indication of *Solomon*'s Wiſdom. For *they are the Outworks which preſerve Majeſty it ſelf from Approaches and Surprizals.* And whatſoever Prince *departs from theſe Forms and Trappings and Ornaments of his Dignity and Preheminence, will hardly be able, at ſome Time, to preſerve the Body it ſelf of Majeſty from Intruſion, Invaſion, and Violation.*

Ver. 6. *And ſhe ſaid unto the king,*] When ſhe had recovered her ſelf out of her Aſtoniſhment.

It was a true report that I heard in my own country, of thy acts, and of thy wiſdom.] They did not deceive her, who by their Reports of him, moved her to take this long Journey.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, I believed not the words, 'till I came, and mine eyes had ſeen it:*] She thought they might magnify Things too much, as Travellers are wont to do; eſpecially when they ſpeak of their own Country.

And behold, the half was not told me: thy wiſdom and proſperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.] This was very extraordinary: For commonly Men find Things fall far ſhort of their Expectations.

Ver. 8. *Happy are thy men,*] His Subjects.

And happy are theſe thy ſervants, which ſtand continually before thee, and hear thy wiſdom.] Eſpecially thoſe that were about his Perſon, and miniſtred unto him, who had Opportunity every Day to hear his wiſe Sayings and Diſcourſes.

Ver. 9. *Bleſſed be the LORD thy God,*] One would think by this that ſhe became a Proſelyte before ſhe returned to her own Country; whither ſhe carried better Things than ſhe preſented to *Solomon* (which the next Verſes mention) the Treaſures of Heavenly Wiſdom. *Philoſtorgius* indeed ſaith, that in his Time the *Sabæans* ſacrificed to the Sun and Moon, and certain Dæmons of their own Country; and yet ἐκ περίτομον τὸ ἔθνος, &c. the Nation was circumciſed after the *Jewiſh* Manner on the eighth Day. Which Rite they received, one would think, from this Queen, and retained it a long Time, though they continued their old Superſtition. It is poſſible indeed that the *Jews* who lived among them, might perſuade them to it. For the ſame *Philoſtorgius* ſaith, ἐκ ὀλίγου πλῆθος Ἰουδαίων ἀυτοῖς ἀναπέφυται, no ſmall Number of *Jews* was mingled with them.

Which delighted in thee, to ſet thee on the throne of Iſrael; becauſe the LORD loved Iſrael for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and juſtice.] A moſt excellent Admonition both to the People and to the King; that they ſhould think themſelves highly obliged to God, who had given them ſuch a King; and he ſhould think God made him King to govern his People juſtly. This Senſe the wiſe Heathen had, that Governours were ſet over Men by God, for their Good: As *Ariſtotle* told *Alexander* in a Letter to him, wherein he exhorts him to keep him in Mind, that his Kingdom was given him by God for the Sake of Mankind, εἰς εὐεργεσίαν, ἀ πρὸς ὕβριν, that he might do them good, and not abuſe them.

Ver. 10. *And ſhe gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold.*] Though we do not find that the Ancients ſpeak of any Mines of Gold in the *Sabæans* Country; yet they abounded with it, being near to that *Ophir* which I before mentioned, and is ſpoken of in the Book of *Job*, xxii. 24. xxviii. 16. (in an Age when they were not acquainted with the *Indian Ophir*, which was very remote from them.) And ſeveral other Places there were alſo near to them, who had Plenty of Gold, as *Bochartus* ſhews in his *Phaleg. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 27. *p.* 159, &c.

And ſpices very great ſtore, and precious ſtones.] This Country was famous for Myrrh, Frankincenſe, and Cinnamon, (*Joſephus* adds Balſom alſo) as *Bochart* obſerves out of many Authors, in the ſame Book, *Cap.* 26. *p.* 149, 153. For their very Fires were made of Caſſia, and Cinnamon. Precious Stones alſo he ſhews were ſo common in this Country, that they adorned their Cups, and their Beds, and their Stools, &c. with them. See him, *p.* 150.

There came no more ſuch abundance of ſpices, as theſe which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon.] For it ſeems the *Jews* maintained no Trade with this Country.

Ver. 11. *And the navy alſo of Hiram that brought gold from Ophir,*] This is meant of *Ophir* in *India*, mentioned ix. 28. From which *Hiram*'s Navy is ſaid to bring Gold, though the Ships were *Solomon*'s, becauſe *Hiram*'s Servants had the Management of them.

Brought it from Ophir great plenty of almug-trees, and precious ſtones.] It is very uncertain what theſe *Almug*, or *Algum*, Trees were. (as they are called by a Tranſpoſition of Letters in 2 *Chron.* ii. 8.) Our famous Dr *Caſtell* thinks it was the Wood called *Sanctulum*; which is proper for all the Uſes mentioned in the next Verſe, and is ſtill in *India*. And *R. D. Kimchi* upon that Place in the *Chronicles* ſaith it was a Red-Wood which is now called *Brezil*. By which cannot be meant the Wood that comes from *Brazil*, for that Country was not known in his Days; but probably he calls it *Brezil* from the *Hebrew* Word *Barzel*, which ſignifies Iron; it being of ſuch a dark Colour. And ſuch a Wood there is now in the Kingdow of *Java*, as *Gouſſet* obſerves out of *Thevet*, and other Authors, in his *Comment. Linguæ Hebr.*

Ver. 12. *And the king made of the almug-trees, pillars for the houſe of the LORD, and for his own houſe,*] Or rather *Rails* (as we tranſlate it in the Margin of our Bibles) which were made on either Side the Cauſey which went up from the King's Houſe to the Houſe of the LORD. Compare this with 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 16, 18. and 2 *Chron.* ix. 11. and ſee Dr *Lightfoot* of the *Temple*, *p.* 125. where he only quotes *Ralbag*; who ſaith he made *Battlements*, i. e. *Rails*

Rails on either Side, that Men by them might ſtay themſelves, as they went along the High-way of that Aſcent.

Harps alſo and pſalteries for ſingers: there came no ſuch almug-trees, nor were ſeen unto this day.] This Account of *Almug-trees* is mixed with the Story of the Queen of *Sheba*, becauſe ſhe is ſaid, *ver.* 5. to have admired the Aſcent (as we tranſlate it) which *Solomon* made to the Houſe of the LORD. Which appeared the more magnificent, becauſe the Rails thereof were made of this rare Wood. Which *Abarbinel* fancies was *Coral*, which grows in the very Sea, and they had never ſeen before; nor did any come after.

Ver. 13. *And king Solomon gave unto the queen of Sheba all her deſire, whatſoever ſhe asked, beſide that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty:*] By their mutual Preſents, which ſhe made to him (*ver.* 10.) and he at her Departure made to her, they teſtified their Friendſhip to each other; deſiring by theſe to be remembred. And *Solomon* deſired to know what would be moſt acceptable to her, among all the Rarities ſhe had ſeen, which he beſtowed upon her: Beſides, he generouſly added more Things of Value, which it is likely ſhe had not in her own Country.

So ſhe turned, and went to her own country, ſhe and her ſervants.] Accompanied, it is probable, with many of the *Iſraelites*, who went and planted themſelves there: From whom ſprung thoſe *Jews*, who, *Philoſtorgius* ſaith, were mixed with the *Sabæans* in no ſmall Numbers, as I obſerved, *ver.* 9. But the *Jews*, of whom he ſpeaks, were ſuch as ſettled there after the laſt Captivity; and it was not lawful for a *Jew*, while the Temple ſtood to ſettle in a Place, from whence he could not come three times a Year to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 14. *Now the weight of gold which came to Solomon in one year, was ſix hundred threeſcore and ſix talents of gold,*] The Hiſtory of the Queen of *Sheba* being ended, he returns to give an Account of *Solomon*'s Riches and Magnificence; which he had begun to ſet forth before. And firſt he relates what a vaſt Quantity of Gold was brought into his Country every Year; not only from *Ophir*, but from other Countries unto which perhaps the Queen of *Sheba* opened him a Paſſage.

Ver. 15. *Beſides that he had of the merchantmen,*] Who paid Cuſtom for the Goods they brought from ſeveral Countries; or, as *Abarbinel* thinks, the *Men of Hattarim* (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) ſignify a certain Nation, *viz.* the *Tartars* (as they are now called) who brought Commodities from the North Country to the People of *Iſrael*, as others did from the South.

And of the traffick of the ſpice-merchants,] There is no Reaſon thus to tranſlate theſe Words, as the ſame Author thinks: But they ſignify in general all Sorts of Traders, who brought in Merchandize, by Sea or Land.

And all the kings of Arabia,] Who ſent him Preſents.

And of the governors of the countries.] Which *David* or he had conquered, and placed Governours there; who gathered his Tribute, and ſent it to him every Year.

Ver. 16. *And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: ſix hundred ſhekels of gold went to one target.*

Ver. 17. *And he made three hundred ſhields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to every ſhield:* Theſe *Targets* and *Shields* ſeem to have been made for State and Pomp; to be carried before him, upon ſome ſpecial Occaſions. Though we do read in the *Roman* Authors of ſome great Captains to whom golden Shields were granted, as a Reward of their great Valour: And theſe perhaps might be intended for the ſame Purpoſe. But then we muſt not think that the Shields weighed but ſix hundred Shekels (which would have been ſo ſmall as to be of no Uſe) but that each coſt ſix hundred Shekels of Gold; as *Fort. Scacchus* obſerves, *Myrothec.* 3. *Cap.* 3.

And the king put them in the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon.] Where it is likely he kept his moſt precious Treaſure. See concerning this Houſe, vii. 2. which *Joſephus* ſaith the Queen of *Sheba* admired above all Things ſhe ſaw in *Judæa*: The vaſt Multitude of Cedar Pillars that were in it, making it look like the Foreſt of *Lebanon*: From whence ſome think it had its Name.

Ver. 18. *And the king made a great throne of ivory,*] We never read of ivory 'till about *Solomon*'s Time; who, perhaps, brought Elephants out of *India*, and took Care to have a great Deal of Ivory brought with them. Inſomuch that we read of *Ivory Palaces*, *Pſalm* xlv. 9. whoſe Walls were overlaid with Ivory; which was more precious than Gold in ancient Time, as *Pliny* tells in many Places.

And overlaid it with the beſt gold.] Not intirely, ſo as to cover the Ivory (for then it might as well have been made of Wood) but here and there; as *P. Martyr* reaſonably conjectures. Which made the Throne appear more beautiful by the Mixture of Gold and Ivory; with which at due Diſtances it was ſtudded. In this Throne he ſat when he adminiſtred Juſtice, and gave Audience to Ambaſſadors, and the like.

Ver. 19. *The throne had ſix ſteps,*] Was advanced to a juſt Height, that he might be ſeen and heard by all.

And the top of the throne was round behind:] Making an half Circle over his Head.

And there were ſtays on either ſide of the place of the ſeat,] Like one of our great Chairs, which have Reſts to lean one's Arm upon, on either Side.

And two lions ſtood behind the ſtays.] As their Supporters.

Ver. 20. *And twelve lions ſtood on the one ſide, and on the other upon the ſix ſteps:*] Upon every Step a Lion ſtood reared up, on each Side, as if he was falling upon his Prey: Which many Interpreters think had a myſtical Meaning in it, as every thing elſe had belonging to his Throne; with which I ſhall not trouble the Reader. *Grotius* thinks he offended in making theſe Figures; and having once begun to tranſgreſs the Law, he grew ſtill worſe and worſe.

There was not the like made in any kingdom.] That is, in thoſe Times there was none to be compared with it; but in After-Ages there were perhaps more glorious. For *Athenæus* ſaith,

the Throne of the *Parthian* Kings was of Gold, incompaſſed with four Golden Pillars beſet with precious Stones, *Lib.* 12. *Deipnoſ.* And the *Perſian* Kings he ſaith ſat in Judgment under a Golden Vine (and other Trees of Gold) the Bunches of whoſe Grapes were made of ſeveral Sorts of precious Stones.

Ver. 21. *And all king Solomon's drinking-veſſels were of gold, and all the veſſels of the houſe of the foreſt of Lebanon were of pure gold, none were of ſilver; it was nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon.*] Who brought in ſuch Plenty of Gold, that it made Silver of leſs Value while he lived.

Ver. 22. *For the King had at ſea a navy of Tarſhiſh, with the navy of Hiram:*] Theſe Words are added to give a further Account how *Solomon* came to have Gold in ſuch Abundance: For he trafficked for it, in another Fleet, beſides that which went to *Ophir*. That Fleet, it is plain, was *Solomon's*, and ſailed out of his own Port *Ezion-geber*, ix. 26. though it was manned by *Tyrians*, becauſe they underſtood the Sea. Whereas this Navy here ſpoken of belonged to *Hiram*, and went out of his Port at *Tyre*; and *Solomon* had only the Liberty to trade in it to *Tarſhiſh*. Which was a Place wherewith the *Tyrians* had very ancient Commerce; and therefore *Hiram* was the chief in this Voyage, as *Solomon* was in that to *Ophir*.

Once in three years came the navy of Tarſhiſh, bringing gold, and ſilver,] It was not ſo far off, that they could not return in leſs than three Years: But, as *Abarbinel* ſuppoſes, they went thither in the End of one Year, and ſtayed there the next to vend and to buy their Commodities; and then returned in the Beginning of the third Year. *Bochartus* hath made it very probable that this Place was *Tarteſſus* in *Spain*, where Gold and Silver in ancient Times, if we may believe *Strabo* and others, whom he quotes, was plentiful. But I do not find any Proof that *Ivory*, *Apes*, and *Peacocks*, were the Commodities of that Country. See his *Phaleg. Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 7.

And Ivory,] The *Hebrew* Word *Senhabim* is of doubtful Signification: But the Word *Sen*, or *Shen*, certainly ſignifying a *Tooth*, Interpreters have ſuppoſed that *habim* ſignifies an *Elephant*; and both together import Elephants Teeth, *i. e. Ivory*. But it is hard to give an Account of this Word *habim*: Therefore *Bochartus* rather thinks that the whole Word *Senhabim* ſignifies an Elephant: Which beſt agrees with what follows, *Apes* and *Peacocks*; all three ſignifying living Creatures: And indeed *Ivory* itſelf in this Chapter, is ſimply called by the Name of *Sen*: Where he ſpeaks of *Solomon*'s Throne, *ver.* 18. See his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 20.

And Apes,] The *Hebrew* Word *Kephim* is both by the Ancients and Moderns tranſlated *Apes*: Which Creature *Pliny* calls *Cephos*; and ſaith they were ſeen but once at *Rome* in his Days, and that they came out of *Ethiopia*. So that if *Tarſhiſh* was in *Spain*, they that ſailed thither trafficked in *Africk* alſo before they came home. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 3 *Cap.* 31.

And Peacocks.] The LXX do not adventure to tranſlate the *Hebrew* Word *Thuccijim*: But The *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, *Arabick*, and *Latin*, tranſlate it as we do, *Peacocks*: And ſo do the moſt Learned among the *Jews*, as *Bochartus* ſhews in a long Diſſertation; where he probably gueſſes this Creature had its Name by a ſmall Tranſpoſition of Letters from *Cuthajim*; as much as to ſay a Bird of *Cuth*, or a *Perſian* Bird. Which Tranſpoſitions are ſo uſual, that we have an Inſtance of it in this Chapter: The Trees here called *Almugim*, being called in the *Chronicles Algumim*. See *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *L.* 2. *Cap.* 23. where he ſhews how beautiful a Creature this is; which might well be brought from foreign Countries to *Judæa*, where there were none of them.

Ver. 23. *So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth, for riches and for wiſdom.*] The latter of which he begged of God; who graciouſly promiſed to add the former; which he did to Admiration.

Ver. 24. *And all the earth ſought to Solomon, to hear his wiſdom, which God had put in his heart.*] That is, the great Men of the neighbouring Countries came, as the Queen of *Sheba* did, to be acquainted with his Wiſdom; which they heard was a Divine Gift.

Ver. 25. *And they brought every man his preſent, veſſels of ſilver, and veſſels of gold, and garments, and armour, and ſpices, horſes and mules,*] This ſhews that he ſpeaks in the former Verſe, of the great Men of the Earth; who made theſe Preſents to him, when they came into his Country.

A rate year by year.] This ſeems to ſignify that they ſo highly prized his Wiſdom, that they courted his Friendſhip; and voluntarily ſent him a certain Preſent every Year, as a Token of the Continuance of it.

Ver. 26. *And Solomon gathered together chariots and horſemen:*] In a Time of profound Peace, he thought it a piece of Wiſdom to be ready for War, as a Means to preſerve the Peace. Though the ſureſt Way to enjoy the Happineſs wherein he lived, had been to obſerve ſtrictly the Commands of God.

And he had a thouſand and four hundred chariots and twelve thouſand horſemen,] Four hundred of theſe Chariots, *Joſephus* ſaith, were preſented from the Kings and Princes before-mentioned: And he had a thouſand of his own before. But what need was there for ſo many Stables for his Horſes as ſeem to be mentioned iv. 26. *viz.* forty thouſand? The Word is not *Stables*, but *Stalls*; every Horſe having a Stall, not a Stable to himſelf: And ſome Chariots had two, ſome four Horſes belonging to them. And yet even thus there were too many: Therefore we muſt ſuppoſe they did not always ſtand in one Place; but ſometimes in one Country, ſometimes in another. Where it was neceſſary there ſhould be Stalls for them, when he removed from City to City.

Whom he beſtowed in the cities for chariots, and with the king at Jeruſalem.] The former Part of theſe Words relates to the Chariots, which were kept in the Country, in the Cities *Solomon* built for them, ix. 19. and the latter to the Horſemen, which were always with the King in *Jeruſalem*; as *Abarbinel* underſtands theſe Words. Thus *Solomon* took Care they ſhould

not

not be burdenſome to his People, by keeping them all in one Place: But they were diſtributed through the Country, only a great Body of Horſe in the Royal City.

Ver. 27. *And the king made ſilver to be in Jeruſalem as ſtones,*] As common as Pebles.

And cedars made he to be as the ſycomore-trees, which are in the vale in abundance.] Ordinary Things, like Willows, that among us grow numerouſly in low Grounds.

Ver. 28. *And king Solomon had horſes brought out of Egypt,*] Here he again openly tranſgreſſed the Law of God (as *Grotius* obſerves) preſuming he had no need of thoſe Cautions, which were given againſt this by *Moſes* in the Book of *Deüteronomy*, xvii. 16.

And linen yarn:] Moſt think *Byſſus*, fine Linnen, is hereby meant; which was a great Commodity in *Egypt*.

The kings merchants received the linen yarn at a price.] It is acknowledged by all Interpreters that theſe, and the following Words in the next Verſe, are very obſcure.

Ver. 29. *And a chariot came up, and went out of Egypt for ſix hundred ſhekels of ſilver, and an horſe for an hundred and fifty: and ſo for all the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Syria, did they bring them out by their means.*] Theſe Words *Bochartus* ſeems to me to have cleared with the greateſt Perſpicuity, by taking the *Hebrew* Word *Mikveh*, not for *Linnen Yarn*, or fine Linnen; but for the *Toll* or *Cuſtom* that was taken for the Horſes that were brought out of *Egypt*. And thus he tranſlates the whole; *Horſes were brought up to Solomon out of Egypt; and as for the Toll or Cuſtom, the Merchants of King Solomon hired it at a Price* (that is, redeemed it of the King of *Egypt* for ſo much conſtantly) *and a Chariot coming out of Egypt went out for ſix hundred Shekels of Silver, and an Horſe for an hundred and fifty; and ſo to all the Kings of the Hittites, and for th King of Syria, did they bring by their Hands.* The Senſe of which Words is plainly this, that noble Horſes being found in thoſe Times in few Countries but *Egypt*, *Pharaoh* would not ſuffer them to be carried from thence without a great Tribute, which he exacted for them; which was ſix hundred Shekels for a Chariot, and a hundred and fifty for a Horſe. This muſt not be underſtood to be the Price at which they were bought, but the Cuſtom paid for them; otherwiſe every Horſe would have been of the ſame Value, which is abſurd. *Solomon* therefore bringing many thouſand Horſes out of *Egypt*, prevailed with his Father-in-Law to free him from this grievous Tribute, and to accept of a certain Sum of Money to be paid him every Year inſtead of it. Thus being freed from the Cuſtom, which was demanded of all others; all the Kings of the *Hittites* and *Syrians* bought their Chariots and Horſes of *Solomon*'s Merchants, who could afford to ſell them cheaper than they could have them in *Egypt*. See *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 9.

By the *Kings of the Hittites* are meant the Rulers of ſome of that Nation, who were driven out by the *Iſraelites*; and lived in the North-Eaſt of the Land of *Canaan*, or in ſome Part of *Arabia*. See *Judges* i. 26.

CHAP. XI.

Verſe 1. *AND king Solomon loved many ſtrange women (together with the daughter of Pharaoh.)*] It was not a Fault in him that he married *Pharaoh*'s Daughter; ſhe being a Proſelyte, as is generally ſuppoſed, to the *Jewiſh* Religion. But in marrying ſo many other Women beſides, he committed two Sins againſt the Law; one in multiplying Wives, and another in marrying thoſe of ſtrange Nations, who ſtill retained their idolatrous Religion; which was expreſly againſt their Law, as the next Verſe declares it. The *Jewiſh* Doctors indeed are ſo very deſirous to excuſe *Solomon*, that they ſay theſe ſtrange Women were proſelyted: But Mr *Selden* well obſerves, that then it had been no Sin to have married with ſome of them; and yet *Nehemiah* ſays it was a Sin, xiii. 26. *Lib.* 5. *De Jure Nat. & Gen. Cap.* 15. *p.* 625, 626. And *Buxtorf. de Sponſal. & Divort. p.* 40, 41.

Women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites:] Some think *Solomon* would not have taken Wives out of theſe Nations, had it not been out of ſome political Principle: Which ſome think was that he might by their Means gain Intelligence of the State of thoſe Countries: Others, that he might extinguiſh the old Enmity which was between the *Iſraelites* and thoſe Nations; to which he might probably hope to put an End, by contracting theſe Marriages with them. But good Intentions will not juſtify the doing unlawful Things.

Ver. 2. *Of the nations concerning which the LORD ſaid unto the children of Iſrael, ye ſhall not go in to them, neither ſhall they come in unto you; for ſurely they will turn away your heart after their gods.*] This relates particularly to the *Hittites* and the *Zidonians* before-mentioned; and conſequently the reſt of the ſeven Nations of *Canaan*, with whom they were forbidden to make any Marriage, (*Exod.* xxxiv. 16. *Deut.* vii. 3.) for the weighty Reaſon here mentioned. For though they might marry Wives of other Nations, if they embraced the *Jewiſh* Religion; yet of the ſeven Nations of *Canaan* they might not, thought they were converted to their Religion. Leſt the Venom might lurk and lie hid; and at laſt break out, and infect them. Great was the Foreſight of *Moſes* (wherewith God endowed him) in giving this Precept (as *Grotius* notes) for the not obſerving it undid the *Iſraelites*, and was the Foundation of their utter Ruin.

Solomon clave unto theſe in love.] He not only married them, but had a great Affection to them; whereby his Heart was eaſily alienated from God.

Ver. 3. *And he had ſeven hundred wives, princeſſes; and three hundred concubines:*] Of theſe Princeſſes, few or none had the Name of Queens, as *Abarbinel* obſerves; but they only who were of the higheſt Eſteem with him, or who were of Royal Extraction. He thinks *Solomon* enjoyed every one of theſe once, and then ſhut them up, that no body might touch them afterwards. See *Buxtorf. De Sponſal. & Divort.* p. 48,

p. 48, 49. and *Hackſpan*'s Miſcellanies, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 6. But it ſeems to me more probable, that he kept ſo many Wives meerly for State and Pomp; after the manner of the Eaſtern Princes; but never uſed many of them. Juſt as they do now in *China*, where the Emperor hath a great Multitude of Wives, choſen out of the prime Beauties of the Country: Many of which he never ſaw in his Life; as Father *la Compte* tells us in his Hiſtory of *China*, *P.* 1. *pag.* 62. The ſame is ſaid of the great *Mogul*, that he hath as many Women as will make up a full Thouſand (which is *Solomon*'s Number) as the Author of the Voyage to the *Indies* tells us, in the End of *P. le Vall*'s Hiſtory, Sect. 20. p. 496. It muſt be conſidered alſo that *Solomon* had not brought them to this Number in the Beginning of his Reign, but toward the latter End; when his Riches increaſing, he made vaſt Expences, and ſtudied to out-do all other Kings, in Magnificence of all kinds.

And his wives turned away his heart.] He was ſo delighted in their Company, that they turned away his Thoughts from ſerious Buſineſs; yea, from God himſelf.

Ver. 4. *For it came to paſs when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods:*] For indulging himſelf too much in Pleaſure, he weakened both his Body and his Mind: And growing old betime, began to dote upon other Gods; which he ſuffered his Wives to worſhip privately, and at laſt openly to exerciſe the religious Rites of their own Country.

And his heart was not perfect with the LORD *his God, as was the heart of David his father.*] He did not forſake the LORD, but joined other Gods with him. Which a Man of his Senſe could never have done (who had ſo ſolemnly acknowledged in his Prayer, that there was no God like to the LORD, yea, that there was no God elſe, viii. 23, 60.) if his Mind had not been enervated, and his Underſtanding darkned by ſenſual Pleaſures.

Ver. 5. *And Solomon went after Aſhtoreth the goddeſs of the Zidonians,*] He worſhipped *Aſtarte*, of which ſee in the Book of *Judges*, ii. 13. and 1 *Sam.* vii. 3, 4.

And after Milcon the abomination of the Ammonites.] This God was the ſame with *Moloch*; whom he calls an Abomination, becauſe highly deteſted by God: Who had given them a particular Caution againſt worſhipping the Hoſt of Heaven, *Deut.* iv. 10. Now *Moloch* ſignifies the Prince of that Hoſt, as I may call it, the Sun; the King of Heaven, as the Moon was called the Queen: In this all agree that *Moloch* comes from *Melech*, which in the *Hebrew* Language ſignifies *a King*, and is of the ſame Import with *Baal* and *Adonis* (which ſignify *Lord*) which were worſhipped by many Nations, as *Moloch* was: Who was not the peculiar God of the *Ammonites*; but the God whom they principally worſhipped.

Ver. 6. *And Solomon did evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *and went not fully after the* LORD *as David his father did.*] And yet *Abarbinel* thinks he did not commit Idolatry by offering Sacrifices to theſe falſe Gods; but was only perſuaded by his Wives ſo far as to learn the Manner after which they worſhipped their Gods, by being preſent at the Rites of their Religion. Which was a dangerous Piece of Learning; which he might have known without being preſent at their Sacrifices.

Ver. 7. *Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemoſh the abomination of Moab,*] Concerning *Chemoſh* I have ſaid enough elſewhere. See *Numb.* xxi. 29.

In the hill that is before Jeruſalem; He ſet up an Altar upon the Mount of Olives; where all the City of *Jeruſalem* might ſee what they did. This contradicts *Abarbinel*, and ſhews he was more than a Spectator of their Worſhip: Which he incouraged by building an Altar for it. And indeed that Author is much to blame in abuſing his excellent Parts, to find Excuſes for ſuch a foul Crime.

And for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon.] In the ſame Place, I ſuppoſe, *Moloch* was worſhipped: For he would not adventure to permit ſtrange Worſhip to be exerciſed in *Jeruſalem* it ſelf; though his Poſterity did. And ſo from little Beginnings followed great Miſchiefs.

Ver. 8. *And likewiſe did he for all his ſtrange wives, which burnt incenſe, and ſacrificed unto their gods.*] For what was granted to one, the reſt would be apt to claim; or elſe complain of Unkindneſs to them. It is an aſtoniſhing thing that a Man of his Wiſdom ſhould not rather have converted them all to his Religion, than be ſeduced by them ſo much as to favour theirs. But he took no Pains with them, having given up himſelf wholly to his Pleaſures; and growing conceited perhaps of his great Wiſdom, thought he could reconcile his Religion with theirs; and find a good Meaning in all their Superſtitions. *Abarbinel* obſerves in ſeveral Places, that it is never ſaid *Pharaoh*'s Daughter turned away his Heart from the LORD, or that he ſet up an Altar for her: Which is an Argumer ſhe was proſelyted to the true Religion, and continued in it. As the reſt might have been, if he had made it his Buſineſs, and had not grown indifferent, and thought all Religions alike. Which hath been the Diſeaſe of ſome great Wits.

Ver. 9. *And the* LORD *was angry with Solomon, becauſe his heart was turned from the* LORD *God of Iſrael, which had appeared to him twice.*] Firſt at *Gibeon*, in the Beginning of his Reign, iii. 5. and then at *Jeruſalem* after the building of the Temple, ix. 2. There was another Time when a Meſſage came to him, by the Word of the LORD, vi. 12. But we do not read that God appeared to him more than twice; which was enough to eſtabliſh him in his Faith, Fear, and Love.

Ver. 10. *And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he ſhould not go after other gods:*] For in both thoſe Viſions the Happineſs God promiſed him, was declared to depend upon his Obſervation of God's Statutes, as *David* his Father did. See iii. 14. ix. 4, 5. And when he had begun to build the Temple, he admoniſhed him, that he had better deſiſt, than go on in that Work, unleſs he intended to keep all his Commandments, vii. 12, 13.

But he kept not that which the LORD *commanded.*] Which was the greater Crime, becauſe

becauſe he had ſo oft admoniſhed him of his Duty, and done ſuch great things for him.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore the LORD ſaid unto Solomon,*] Either by ſome Prophet, or by a Viſion: Wherein he appeared to him as terribly, as before he had done kindly, and pronounced this Doom upon him. The former I think is moſt probable, that God would not vouchſafe to appear to him any more; but ſent this Meſſage by *Ahijah*, or ſome other Prophet.

Foraſmuch as thou haſt done this, and thou haſt not kept my covenant, and my ſtatutes which I commanded thee, I will ſurely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it unto thy ſervant.] Tear it in pieces, and give the greater Part of it to one of his own Subjects, *viz. Jeroboam.* This was enough to aſtoniſh any Man, to hear that all his Splendor ſhould be ſo ſoon eclipſed, if he were not perfectly ſtupified: And it is likely it did make him reflect upon his Folly; and, as many think, moved him to write the Book of *Eccleſiaſtes.*

Ver. 12. *Notwithſtanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy father's ſake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy ſon.*] Though this was ſome Mitigation of the Puniſhment, that in his Days the Kingdom ſhould continue entire; yet he humbled him by letting him know this Favour was not granted for his ſake, but for his Father's, who had ſerved him faithfully.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy ſon, for my ſervant David's ſake,*] In Memory alſo of *David*'s faithful Service, he adds another Mitigation of the Punſhment: That the whole Kingdom ſhould not be torn from his Son, but he would leave him one Tribe, over which he ſhould reign: Which was that of *Judah*, unto which *Benjamin* was an Appendix, being much mixed with it.

And for Jeruſalem's ſake which I have choſen,] To be the Place of his Habitation, in the Temple built there by *Solomon:* Which he would ſuffer to remain to his Poſterity.

Ver. 14. *And the LORD ſtirred up an adverſary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's ſeed in Edom.*] Though God did not execute the formentioned Threatning 'till after his Death, yet he began to afflict *Solomon* by raiſing up three Adverſaries againſt him; who diſturbed his Repoſe, in his old Age, when he moſt deſired to be quiet. The firſt of them is here mentioned; who had a mortal Hatred to *Solomon*, ever ſince the Death of *David*, who had endeavoured to deſtroy him with every Male in the Country. But God reſtrained his Wrath from attempting any thing againſt *Solomon*, as long as he obſerved God's Commands.

Ver. 15. *For it came to paſs, when David was in Edom,*] To conquer the Country: Which he did intirely, and put Garriſons into it, 2 *Sam.* viii. 14. 1 *Chron.* xviii. 12, 13.

And Joab the captain of the hoſt was gone up to bury the ſlain,] It is not to be ſuppoſed that the *Edomites* ſlew none of the *Iſraelites*, in the Defence of their Country: And thoſe are they, it is probable, unto whom *Joab*, after he had done his Buſineſs, went up to give an honourable Interment.

After he had ſmitten every male in Edom:] That is, all he could find: For ſome fled, as *Hadad* did.

Ver. 16. (*For ſix months did Joab remain there, with all Iſrael,*] That is, with all his Army.

Until he had cut off every male in Edom.)] Intending to extirpate the Nation.

Ver. 17. *Then Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his fathers ſervants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being yet a little child.*] He being very young, ſome of his Father's Servants took him and hid him, and themſelves with him, in ſome ſecret Place: And when *Joab* was buſy in giving a ſolemn Burial to the *Iſraelites*, they took that Opportunity to carry *Hadad* into *Egypt.*

Ver. 18. *And they aroſe out of Midian,*] But firſt they went into *Midian*, that they might ſend from thence to know if *Pharaoh* would give them Entertainment and Protection.

And came to Paran,] Which was in the way to *Egypt.* For the Wilderneſs of *Paran* lay between *Edom* and *Egypt.*

And they took men with them,] To attend *Hadad*; that he might appear like a young Prince.

And they came to Egypt unto Pharaoh king of Egypt.] He invited him not only to come into his Country, but to his own Palace.

Which gave him an houſe, and appointed him a table, and gave him land.] According to the manner of generous Princes, who pity noble Perſons that are in Diſtreſs, *Pharaoh* not only aſſigned him an Houſe, and kept a Table for him, that he might want nothing; but moreover gave him Land, that out of its Revenues he might provide himſelf an Equipage ſuitable to his Quality.

Ver. 19. *And Hadad found great favour in the eyes of Pharaoh, ſo that he gave him to wife the ſiſter of his own wife; the ſiſter of Tahpenes the queen.*] This argues an high Eſteem of him, for the princely Qualities which it is likely appeared in him: Though ſometimes the Affections of Kings are unaccountable, and they prefer thoſe who do not deſerve it.

Ver. 20. *And the ſiſter of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his ſon, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaohs houſe:*] The Queen had as great a Fondneſs for the Child, as the King had for his Father; and would have him nurſed and weaned in *Pharaoh*'s Palace.

And Genubath was in Pharaohs houſhold, among the ſons of Pharaoh.] He was educated among the King's Children, as if he had been of them: Which gave *Hadad*, no doubt, great Reputation.

Ver. 21. *And when Hadad heard in Egypt that David ſlept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the hoſt was dead,*] Whom he dreaded more than *David*; having done that terrible Execution upon his Country, of deſtroying their Males for ſix Months together.

Hadad ſaid to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to my own country.] Which he hoped to recover, now that the great Enemies of it were dead, and *Solomon* young.

Ver. 22.

Ver. 22. *Then Pharaoh ſaid unto him, But what haſt thou lacked with me, that thou ſeekeſt to go to thine own country? And he anſwered, Nothing: Howbeit, let me go in any wiſe.*] Nothing would ſatisfy him, but to go and attempt the regaining the Dominion of *Edom*. Which ſome fancy he did by the Interceſſion of *Pharaoh*: Who perſuaded *Solomon* to let him reign in *Edom*, paying him a Tribute; which now in the End of *Solomon*'s Reign he denied to pay, and rebelled againſt him. But this proceeds upon a Suppoſition, that when *David* died, *Solomon* was married, which is not true. Nor is it certain that he was the ſame *Pharaoh* whoſe Daughter *Solomon* married, that had been ſo kind as to educate *Hadad*. It ſeems to me more likely that though *Hadad* ventured to his own Country, he durſt not attempt any thing, 'till *Solomon* began to decline in the Favour of God, and of his People too. For if *Hadad* had moved any Change of Government, *Solomon* had Forces enough to ſuppreſs him; and in his vigorous Age, no doubt would have done it; he being ſo great a Prince, and having ſo many Chariots and Horſemen always ready, that I am apt to think *Hadad* did not ſo much as enter into his own Country, but lived ſomewhere near it; watching an Opportunity to get Poſſeſſion of it; which he found in the Concluſion of *Solomon*'s Reign.

Ver. 23. *And God ſtirred him up another adverſary, Rezon the ſon of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah.*] When he ſaw his Army beaten by King *David*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 3.

Ver. 24. *And he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David ſlew them of Zobah:*] Some of thoſe that fled, when *David* defeated *Hadadezer*, liſted themſelves under *Rezon*; who became their Commander. And it is probable, he lived after the manner of the *Arabians*, by Plunder and Robbery, all the Days of *David*, and the beſt part of *Solomon*'s Reign.

And they went to Damaſcus and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damaſcus.] Not in the Days of *David*: Who had put a Garriſon into *Damaſcus*, and brought the People under Tribute, 2 *Sam.* viii. 5, 6. And ſo they continued ſubject unto *Solomon*; 'till he, doting upon ſtrange Women, minded not the Defence of his Conqueſts. Which *Rezon* took the Advantage of, and invaded and got Poſſeſſion of *Damaſcus*: And reigned there, as *Hadad* did in *Edom*.

Ver. 25. *And he was an adverſary to Iſrael all the days of Solomon,*] This is not to be underſtood of the whole Reign of *Solomon*, which for the moſt part was peaceable (as was obſerved before, iv. 20, 25.) but of all the Days which remained of his Life, from the Time that his Wives publickly exerciſed their Idolatry, unto the Day of his Death.

Beſide the miſchief that Hadad did:] This ſignifies, as *Abarbinel* thinks, that *Rezon* durſt not have rebelled againſt *Solomon*, if *Hadad* had not led him the way: But ſeeing what Succeſs he had in *Edom*, he and his Men ſeized on *Damaſcus*.

And he abhorred Iſrael, and reigned over Syria.] In Combination with *Hadad* he defied *Iſrael*: And made himſelf King not only of *Damaſcus*, but over all the Country thereabout.

Ver. 26. *And Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's ſervant,*] In a publick Employment.

(*Whoſe mother's name was Zeruah, a widow-woman*) *even he lift up his hand againſt the king.*] Not againſt King *Solomon*, that we read of, but againſt his Son; to whom he gave great Diſturbance, as ſoon as *Solomon* was dead.

Ver. 27. *And this was the cauſe that he lift up his hand againſt the king. Solomon built Millo, and repaired the breaches of the city of David his father.*] This was the Occaſion of *Jeroboam*'s Advancement, as it follows in the next Verſe. For *Solomon* being engaged in many Buildings, choſe fitting Perſons to oveſee his Works; among which *Jeroboam* was one. Who took this Opportunity to work in the People a Diſaffection to *Solomon*, and his Government, as *Abarbinel* and others of the *Jews* imagine. For he repreſented, ſay they, the Building of *Millo*, as a Work of Vanity, only to gratify *Pharaoh*'s Daughter: And the Breaches of the City of *David* they take to have been only open Places, at which People might enter and come eaſily many Ways to the King's Palace; whereas being ſtopped up by *Solomon*, Acceſs was not ſo eaſy, but they were forced to go about. This was repreſented as a Grievance; eſpecially ſince ſuch heavy Burdens were laid upon the People, to maintain theſe Expences. But the Text ſuggeſts nothing of this.

Ver. 28. *And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour:*] Of great Courage, and Strength of Body.

And Solomon ſeeing the young man that he was induſtrious,] Very diligent in the Buſineſs wherein he had employed him, of looking over his Works.

He made him ruler over all the charge of the houſe of Joſeph.] Gave him greater Preferment; which was to look after the Revenue of a whole Province; the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and, as ſome think, *Manaſſeh* alſo. This was an high Obligation upon him; but it made him, the *Hebrew* Doctors think, only more preſumptuous to inſtil Diſcontent into the People; who were unneceſſarily burdened to ſupport *Solomon*'s Vanity, in ſuch vaſt Buildings as he undertook. If *Jeroboam* was guilty of joining with the People in their Murmurings, and increaſing them, this cannot properly be called *lifting up the Hand*, that is, rebelling againſt *Solomon*: But was a Preparation for it, and diſpoſed the People to the Revolt, which afterward followed.

Ver. 29. *And it came to paſs at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jeruſalem,*] Where he had been, it is likely, to give up his Accounts; and was returning to his Charge.

That the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way:] Met with him, as he was going along. Some of the *Jewiſh* Doctors will have this Prophet to be one of thoſe who came out of *Egypt* with *Moſes*; and therefore muſt be five hundred Years old. See *Selden*, *Lib.* 2. *De Synedr.* p. 668. Which, if it could be believed, made him the fitter Perſon to reprove *Jeroboam* afterward for the Sin of the golden Calves, and alſo for the Rebellion, which he had ſeen puniſhed in *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*.

And he had clad himself with a new garment;] That he might make the better Appearance at Court, when he waited on the King.

And they two were alone in the field.] The Prophet, I suppose, took *Jeroboam* aside to speak with him privately: For it cannot be thought that *Jeroboam* had no Servants to attend him; but they were bid to stay where they were, 'till the Prophet and he went to confer about some private business.

Ver. 30. *And Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve Pieces.*] An Emblem of what followed, or rather a Prediction of it: For there were two Ways in those ancient Days of foretelling things; one in express Words, the other in Signs and Resemblances; according to the manner of the Eastern People in the eldest Times. Many Instances we have of it, after this of *Ahijah*. As *Zedekiah* made himself a Pair of Iron Horns, and said to *Ahab*, *with these shalt thou push the Syrians*, &c. xxii. 11. *Elisha* also foretold the Victories of *Joash*, by shooting Arrows and stamping on the Ground so many times, 2 *Kings* xiii. 18, &c. *Jeremiah* foretold the pulling down of *Jerusalem*'s Pride, by the rotting of his Girdle, where it was buried by *Euphrates*; and a great many more in the Old Testament, which continued in the New; *Agabus* foretelling the Bonds of St *Paul*, by binding his own Hands and Feet with St *Paul*'s Girdle.

Ver. 31. *And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the* LORD, *the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee:*] Whence it is called frequently, *the Kingdom of the ten Tribes.*

Ver. 32. (*But he shall have one tribe.*] Besides his own. Or, *Benjamin* and *Judah* may be looked upon but as one Tribe; both of them having a Share in the City of *Jerusalem*, and lying near one to the other.

For my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel)] See above, *ver.* 13.

Ver. 33. *Because they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon,*] It seems by this that some of the People, at least of *Solomon*'s Court, followed his bad Example.

And have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and to keep my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father.] This was a great Aggravation of his Sin, that he had so good a Father; who had given him an excellent Education under *Nathan* the Prophet (as I observed, 2 *Sam.* xii. 25.) and a most pious Example; having never gone after other Gods, but celebrated the Praises of the LORD with the highest Strains of Love and Devotion.

Ver 34. *Howbeit, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand*;] No, not the Kingdom of the ten Tribes; which *Solomon* held as long as he lived. These and the following Words explain the Threatning, *ver.* 32. of *rending the Kingdom out of the hand of Solomon*, not to be meant of taking any part of it from him, during his Life.

But will make him a prince all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake; whom I chose, because he kept my commandments, and my statutes:] This was an Admonition to *Jeroboam* not to molest *Solomon* in his life-time, by raising Rebellion against him; and also to walk in God's Ways as *David* did, and not fall into Idolatry; for which Sin God resolved to punish *Solomon* so severely, as to rend the greatest Part of his Kingdom from his Posterity.

Ver. 35. *But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes.*] He bids him not doubt of what he promised; but he must stay for it 'till *Solomon* was dead.

Ver. 36. *And unto his son will I give one tribe,*] He saith *one* Tribe, though there were two; because (as *Abarbinel* observes) they had their Portion and Possession together in *Jerusalem*; and, though two Tribes, were both called by the Tribe of *Judah*; because of the Eminence and Glory of that Tribe; which was so great, that before the Division of the Kingdom, *Judah* is often mentioned as distinct from the rest of *Israel*. See 1 *Sam.* xi. 8. 2 *Sam.* v. 5.

That David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen, to put my name there.] By a *light* is meant a Succession of Kings, who are called the Light of the People (as *David* is, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 17.) because they chear them by their comfortable Influence, when they govern well. And these are said to be *before God* in *Jerusalem*; because there he dwelt where they reigned.

Ver. 37. *And I will take thee,*] From that Condition wherein he was, and place him on a Throne, as here follows.

And thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth,] Have a very flourishing Kingdom.

And shalt be king over Israel.] But not reign in *Jerusalem.*

Ver. 38. *And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did, that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David,*] The same Promise that he made to *David*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 16. only he doth not say he would establish *his Kingdom for ever.*

And will give Israel unto thee.] Make them his obedient Subjects.

Ver. 39. *And I will for this*] For their Sin, mentioned *ver.* 33.

Afflict the house of David,] By this rending the greatest Part of the Kingdom from them.

But not for ever.] For in the Days of the *Messiah*, saith *Rasi*, the Kingdom shall be restored to the House of *David.* And he might have added, that few returned out of their Captivity but the House of *Judah*, who were delivered in a wonderful Manner from *Babylon.*

Ver. 40. *Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam:*] A Sign of his Dotage; that he could entertain a Thought of endeavouring to defeat the Purpose of God! But how he came to know what was secretly transacted between *Ahijah* and *Jeroboam* alone, is a great Question. Perhaps the Prophet made no Scruple to report what he had delivered in the Name of the LORD. Or, *Jeroboam* himself, being puffed up with this Assurance, could not contain, but told it to some of his Confidents, who spread it abroad. Or, his

Servants, though they heard not a Word ſpoken, yet ſeeing the rending of his Garment into twelve Parts, and the giving ten to him, might ſpeak of it: The Meaning of which *Solomon* eaſily underſtood; being told (by the ſame Prophet, perhaps) that the Kingdom ſhould be rent from him, and given to his Servant, *ver.* 11.

And Jeroboam aroſe and fled into Egypt,] This was a common Refuge for diſcontented People. And it may ſeem ſtrange that the King of *Egypt*, being nearly allied to *Solomon*, either his Father-in-Law, or Brother-in-Law (for many think the Father of *Solomon*'s Wife was dead) ſhould give ſuch Perſons Entertainment. But it is to be conſidered that *Kingdoms are never married*; and Princes commonly regard only their own Intereſt.

Unto Shiſhak king of Egypt,] All the Kings of *Egypt* had the Title of *Pharaoh*, even from the Time of *Abraham*: But we never find any of them, 'till now, called by his proper Name, to diſtinguiſh from other *Pharaohs*; unleſs *Remeſis* (*Gen.* xlvii. 11.) be the Name of a King, not of a Country. Now all agree that this is the great King who is called by the *Greeks Seſoſtris*: Who having ſubdued *Ethiopia*, extended his Conqueſts into *Aſia*, as far as the *Aſſyrians* and *Medes*, as *Joſephus* tells us, who calls himſelf *Sethoſis*, Lib. i. *contra Apion.*

And was in Egypt until the death of Solomon.] Being protected by *Shiſhak*: Who, it is likely, was now projecting the great Conqueſts he made afterwards.

Ver. 41. *And the reſt of the acts of Solomon, and all that he did, and his wiſdom, are they not written in the book of the Acts of Solomon?* All the Kings of *Iſrael*, as *Abarbinel* thinks, maintained ſome wiſe Men, who wrote all that paſſed in their Reign. Perhaps this was begun by *Solomon* (for we read not of any Book of the Acts of *David*) and out of theſe *Annals*, the ſacred Writer of this Book took what he thought moſt uſeful, and omitted the reſt, which he did not judge ſo neceſſary and inſtructive.

Ver. 42. *And the time that Solomon reigned in Jeruſalem, over all Iſrael,*] There ſeems to have been no need to ſay he reigned in *Jeruſalem*, ſince he reigned over all *Iſrael*; if it had not been to ſhew the great Tranquillity of his Reign. Which was ſuch, that he did not go out to War as other Kings, but lived quietly in his royal City.

Was forty years.] He loſt the great Privilege of long Life, which God promiſed if he performed ſuch ſincere Obedience as *David* did; unto whoſe Age he did not attain.

Ver. 43. *And Solomon ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] Thus concludes the Hiſtory of this great Man; without any, the leaſt, mention of his Repentance; though he ſaw terrible Puniſhments coming upon his Family. Which ſhould have moved him (one would think) to pull down the high Places he had built for idolatrous Worſhip, and abandon all his ſtrange Wives; and done ſome remarkable Honour to the LORD God of *Iſrael*. Which if he did, the Divine Writer did not think fit to record it, but to leave all in Uncertainty, and leave a Blot upon his Memory; that all Poſterity might have a frightful Example of humane Weakneſs, and learn thereby to watch and pray, leſt they enter into Temptation.

CHAP. XII.

Verſe 1. *AND Rehoboam went to Shechem:*] A Multitude of Children was accounted a great Bleſſing among the *Iſraelites*: But if *Solomon* had any more beſides this Son, and two Daughters, mentioned iv. 11, 15. this holy Writer would not do him the Honour to mention them, but paſſes them by in Silence: Nor doth he vouchſafe to acquaint us (as is uſual) in the Beginning of his Story, from whom *Rehoboam* was deſcended by the Mother's Side; but in the Concluſion mentions it twice (xiv. 21, 31.) that ſhe was an *Ammoniteſs*, one of an infamous Nation. Howſoever, though he was not intirely an *Iſraelite*, he pretended to the Kingdom; being the eldeſt, if not the only Son of *Solomon*, to whom it belonged by the Law then eſtabliſhed; which ever after continued in *Judah*. That which follows ſhews this was the Opinion of all the People.

For all Iſrael were come to Shechem to make him king.] To acknowledge him for their Sovereign, as rightful Succeſſor to *Solomon*. They met for this Purpoſe at *Shechem*, becauſe it was the moſt convenient Place, being in the middle of the Kingdom. Or, as others think, becauſe it was in the Tribe of *Ephraim*; where they could ſpeak their Minds more freely than they durſt at *Jeruſalem*, which was in the Tribe of *Judah*. And this hath ſome Colour in it, from what follows; that they ſent for *Jeroboam* to meet them there, who would not venture to come to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs when Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it,*] The Words *of it* are not in the Original, but only that he *heard*: Either of this Meeting, or of the Death of *Solomon*; or both: For he could not hear of this Meeting, without hearing of his Death.

(*For he was fled from the preſence of king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt*)] As hath been related in the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 3. *That they ſent and called him:*] At the ſame Time that he heard of this Meeting, and the Occaſion of it, a Meſſage came to him from the Aſſembly, to deſire his Aſſiſtance.

And Jeroboam, and all the congregation of Iſrael came, and ſpake unto Rehoboam, ſaying,] By *all the Congregation* is meant all their Elders, and Heads of their Tribes; who choſe *Jeroboam* to be their Speaker.

Ver. 4. *Thy father made our yoke grievous: Now therefore make thou the grievous ſervice of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter; and we will ſerve thee.*] They begin with a Complaint againſt the former Government; but promiſe to ſubmit to *Rehoboam* as their King. and be his faithful Subjects, if he would promiſe to eaſe them of thoſe Burdens which his Father had impoſed on them. Which were not ſo heavy as they repreſented them, conſidering the Peace and Plenty they enjoyed (iv. 25.) and the vaſt Riches he brought into the

Kingdom; ſo that Silver was nothing accounted of in his Days, x. 21. But People are more ſenſible of the ſmalleſt Preſſures, than of all their Enjoyments: And moſt ſenſible of the leaſt Burden, when they are at perfect Eaſe. Such were the Tributes he exacted for his Buildings, the Expences of his Family, and Maintenance of Chariots and Horſemen, which were all for the Honour of the Nation, and employed great Numbers of them. *Abarbinel* thinks it is poſſible, when War was raiſed by *Hadad* and by *Rezon* againſt him, in his latter Days, the Tribute might be increaſed, and occaſion their Grumbling. But howſoever that be, it is obſervable that they make no Complaints at all of *Solomon*'s Idolatry, and the ſtrange Worſhip he introduced; about which they were not concerned, but rather complied with him. See xi. 33.

Ver. 5. *And he ſaid unto them, Depart yet for three days, then come again to me: and the people departed.*] He deſired Time to conſider, in ſo weighty a Buſineſs; pretending, I ſuppoſe, he would examine the Truth of their Allegations: otherwiſe it had been dangerous to ſend them away without any Anſwer, when it was evident they were diſguſted.

Ver. 6. *And king Rehoboam*] By this it is plain, he had a Title to the Kingdom; though they had not yet made a Recognition, as we ſpeak, of his Authority.

Conſulted with the old men that ſtood before Solomon his father, while he yet lived,] *Solomon* was ſo wiſe, as in his beſt Days not to depend ſolely on his own Wiſdom; but had other wiſe Men with whom he adviſed, as his Counſellors in all Matters of Moment.

And ſaid, How do ye adviſe, that I may anſwer this people?] Being Men of great Experience, who had learned, no doubt, much Wiſdom under ſo wiſe a King as *Solomon*, he had Reaſon both to conſult ſuch Sages, and to depend upon their Advice, as likely to be moſt prudent and ſafe.

Ver. 7. *And they ſpake unto him, ſaying, If thou wilt be a ſervant unto this people to day, and wilt ſerve them and anſwer them, and ſpeak good words to them, then they will be thy ſervants for ever.*] This was moſt ſolid Advice, to get Poſſeſſion of the Kingdom, and then he might govern as his Father had done. And he might eaſily be poſſeſſed of it, by condeſcending to them for once, and giving them ſuch an Anſwer as they deſired; which would oblige them to him for ever. For to be *their ſervant one day*, ſignified no more than to court them with good Words, and kind Promiſes, to be an eaſy Governour of them: Which would win their Hearts, and make them ſubmit chearfully to him; and give him the ſame Power which his Father had.

Ver. 8. *But he forſook the counſel of the old men, which they gave him,*] He was proud and vain, I ſuppoſe, and ſcorned to court his People; expecting Obedience unto him, as an abſolute Monarch.

And conſulted with young men, that were grown up with him, and ſtood before him.] He had made ſome of his Familiars, who had been bred up with him, and attended him, to be now of his Privy-Council: Men unexperienced, and who underſtood not the Humour of the People; which is a frequent Fault of new Kings, who, to ſhew their Power, preſently change their Counſellors, and put in new Officers; to gratify all their Dependants; not conſidering who are wiſeſt, but who have been their Companions.

Ver. 9. *And he ſaid unto them, What counſel give ye, that we may anſwer this people, who have ſpoken to me, ſaying; make the yoke which thy father did put upon us, lighter?*] It is likely he told them what the old Counſellors had ſaid; who they thought, were too timorous, and therefore give more bold and fierce Advice.

Ver. 10. *And the young men that were grown up with him, ſpake unto him, ſaying,*] They were not ſo young, but they might have had more Wit (if they had not been Men of Pleaſure) for *Rehoboam* being one and forty Years old when he began to reign (xiv. 21.) and theſe Men growing up with him, were about the ſame Age.

Thus ſhalt thou ſpeak unto the people, that ſpake unto thee, ſaying, thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter to us: thus ſhalt thou ſay unto them, My little finger ſhall be thicker than my father's loins.] They adviſe him to threaten to lay Burdens upon them, as much heavier than his Father's, as the Loins are thicker than the little Finger: Words of Infamy, Madneſs, Stupidity, and full of Lies, as *Abarbinel* here gloſſes: For he magnifies himſelf, as if his Power excelled his Father's, unto whom he was nothing comparable. And if it had been true, it did not become him to boaſt on this Faſhion; but he ought rather to have highly magnified the Glory and Majeſty of his Father.

Ver. 11. *And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke:*] What a ſenſeleſs Stupidity was this (as the ſame Author proceeds) to grant the Accuſation to be true, which they brought againſt his Father; and not rather to have excuſed, and defended ſo excellent a Prince, from whom they could not but acknowledge they had received exceeding great Benefits?

My father hath chaſtiſed you with whips, but I will chaſtiſe you with ſcorpions.] This is ſtill worſe, to accuſe his Father of ſuch Severity (which the People did not) that he treated the *Iſraelites* like Beaſts: For a *whip is for a horſe*, as *Solomon* obſerves, *Prov.* xxvi. 3. And who could endure to hear him ſay, that he would treat them far more ſeverely, and tear their very Fleſh in Pieces? For that is meant by *Scorpions*, Whips with Rowels in them (as we ſpeak) which *Abarbinel* calls *iron Thorns*. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. Lib. iv. Cap. xxxii. *Ralbag* ſimply calls them Thorns tied to a Whip, which grievouſly pricked and tore the Fleſh. See *Carpzovius* upon *Schickard*'s *Jus Regium*, Cap. ii. Theorem vii. p. 143. What People could bear this with Patience; or endure to come under the Yoke of ſuch a furious Prince?

Ver. 12. *So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, ſaying, come again the third day.*] In which Time wiſer Thoughts, one would have expected, ſhould have taken Place: But *Solomon* had obſerved, that *there is no counſel, nor underſtand-*

ing, nor wiſdom againſt the LORD (*Prov.* xxi. 30.) whoſe doing this was, as it follows, ver. 15.

Ver. 13. *And the king anſwered the people roughly, and forſook the counſel of the old men which they gave him* ;] He anſwered them like a Tyrant, not like a King.

Ver. 14. *And ſpake to them after the counſel of the young men.*] Which was moſt ſuitable to a Prince of a high and violent Spirit.

Saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke ; my father alſo chaſtiſed you with whips, but I will chaſtiſe you with ſcorpions.] He thought, it is likely, to have frighted them into Obedience, by this bluſtering Language; which juſtly made him odious.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the king hearkned not unto the people of Iſrael* ;] Who deſired to be eaſed of their Burdens.

For the cauſe was from the LORD, *that he might perform his ſaying, which the* LORD *ſpake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat.*] God infatuated his Counſels, to bring about his own Deſign. Otherwiſe, he could not have been ſo blinded, as not to ſee how baſely he reflected upon his Father; and how unlikely it was that the People would ſubmit to ſuch a Power as he intended to exerciſe over them. But as *Livy* excellently ſpeaks, *fatis urgentibus rempublicam, omnia ſalutaria monita ſpernuntur.* And here one cannot but obſerve the vaſt Difference there is between the Sacred and Profane Hiſtorians. The Intention of the former is to poſſeſs Mens Minds with a Senſe of Divine Providence, which ſecretly rules in all publick, as well as private Affairs. *Machiavel* himſelf, though far from being religious, was ſenſible of an over-ruling Power interpoſing in all Things, which few Hiſtorians acknowledge ſo as they ought: But rather write, as if they would not have their Reader think of any thing but the Wiſdom, Strength and Policy of thoſe that manage Affairs; without any Conſideration of the Care God takes of them. Of this *Hermannus Conringius* thinks *Polybius* himſelf to have been guilty; whatſoever Excuſes *Caſaubon* makes for him. *De Civili Prudentia*, Cap. xiv.

Ver. 16. *So when all Iſrael ſaw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people anſwered the king, ſaying, What portion have we in David ?*] They renounce all Intereſt in him, and in his Family.

Neither have we inheritance in the ſon of Jeſſe:] So they call *David* in a contemptuous and ſcornful manner. Wherein they have left us an exact Picture of an ungrateful World, as *Victorinus Strigelius* here ſpeaks. For no Eloquence is able to expreſs the great Merits of *David* to the Children of *Iſrael.*

To your tents, O Iſrael : now ſee to thine own houſe David. So Iſrael departed to their tents.] They left *Rehoboam*, and bad him look to his own Affairs; for they would have nothing to do with him. Thus other Kingdoms have been overturned by the Folly of heady young Men: As an old Poet obſerves in *Tully's* Book *de Senectute*, Cap. vi. where he quotes theſe Verſes out of *Nævius* in a Play of his, in which one aſks,

Cedò, qui veſtram Rempublicam tantam amiſiſtis tam citò.

Tell me, I beſeech thee, how you came to loſe ſuch a famous Common-wealth ſo quickly?

Unto which he brings in another returning this Anſwer,

Proventabant Oratores novi, Stulti Adoleſcentuli.

There roſe up new Orators, a Company of fooliſh Youths.

Upon which *Cato* makes this Remark; *viz.*

Temeritas, eſt florentis ætatis, Prudentia ſeneſcentis.

Raſhneſs is the Property of Youth, Prudence belongs to Old Age.

Ver. 17. *But as for the children of Iſrael which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them.*] As ſeveral of the *Simeonites* alſo did; who were very nearly ſituated to *Judah.*

Ver. 18. *Then king Rehoboam ſent Adoniram, who was over the tribute* ;] This was a new piece of Imprudence, to ſend one to treat with them, when they were ſo highly exaſperated; and to ſend him (with Promiſes, perhaps, of eaſing them, when it was too late) who had the principal Care of thoſe Tributes, of which they complained. For People hate thoſe that are the Inſtruments of their Oppreſſion, or any way employed in it.

And all Iſrael ſtoned him with ſtones, that he died :] There was a general Uproar againſt him; in which they committed this Barbarity, againſt the Law of all Nations; which probibits any Violence to be done to a King's Ambaſſador. But in their Rage, the King feared (it appears by the next Words) they would have no Reſpect to himſelf.

Therefore king Rehoboam made ſpeed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jeruſalem.] This ſeems to be a further Imprudence; for he ſhould have maintained his Ground and kept Footing (as we ſpeak) in the Country of *Iſrael*; from whence it might not have been eaſy for them to expel him: *But Fear is as bad an Adviſer as Fury.* This is the firſt Time that we read of a King riding in a Chariot; for we never read that either *Saul*, or *David*, or *Solomon* rode in them: But after the Diviſion of the Kingdom, there is frequent mention of the Uſe of them both by the Kings of *Judah* and *Iſrael.*

Ver. 19. *So Iſrael rebelled againſt the houſe of David unto this day.*] Would no longer be governed by any of *David*'s Race; who had been their Deliverer from their powerful Enemies. The Rememdrance of which might have made them more patient; and not ſo forward to revolt from a Family to which they had been ſo much obliged. But old Kindneſſes are laid aſleep, and People are ſtrangely forgetful of Benefits, as *Pindar* ſpeaks, in *Iſthmia*, Ode 7.

Αλλὰ παλαιὰ γὰς εἴδει
Χάεις, ἀμνάμονες δὲ βεοτοί.

This Defection from the Family of *David* is juſtly called a *Rebellion*, as *Salianus* notes in his *Annals*; for though God willed this Defection, as a Puniſhment of Sin; yet they did Wickedly who

who were the Authors of it. And though the Family of *Solomon* deſerved ſuch a Puniſhment, yet the People had no juſt Reaſon to forſake their legal Prince. For they had no Order from God for it: And *Rehoboam*'s Anſwer to them did not deſerve ſuch a Reſentment; much leſs ſo ſudden and inconſiderate. Nor did the Prophetical Prediction warrant it: Which might have been fulfilled ſome other Way, than by ſuch a violent throwing off his Government.

Ver. 20. *And it came to paſs when all Iſrael heard that Jeroboam was come again,*] The great Men had ſeen him, and needed not to be informed of his Return, *ver.* 3. but now the News was ſpread over all the Country.

That they ſent, and called him to the congregation,] From his Tent, unto which he was gone, as other People were, *ver.* 16.

And made him king over all Iſrael:] Without any Condition, that we can find; though it is likely, he promiſed to eaſe them of all their Burdens.

There was none that followed the houſe of David, but the tribe of Judah only.] Which comprehended *Benjamin* alſo, being one with it, as was obſerved before, xi. 31, 32. And it was by the ſingular Providence of God, that they were not alſo tempted to deſert ſuch a haughty Prince as *Rehoboam* was.

Ver. 21. *And when Rehoboam was come to Jeruſalem, he aſſembled all the houſe of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourſcore thouſand choſen men, which were warriors; to fight againſt the houſe of Iſrael, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon.*] This was a very potent Tribe, eſpecially aſſiſted by *Benjamin*, and wanted not Affection to the Houſe of *David*, which they had expreſſed upon all Occaſions: And were ready now, with a very numerous Army, to fall upon the *Iſraelites*, before their new King was ſettled in his Throne; and bring them back to their rightful King.

Ver. 22. *But the word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God, ſaying,*] A Perſon, known to be a Prophet, was ſent to them from God with a Meſſage, before they marched to the Country of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 23. *Speak unto Rehoboam the ſon of Solomon king of Judah,*] God himſelf owns him for no more than king of *Judah*.

And to all the houſe of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the people, ſaying,] Unto thoſe mentioned *ver.* 17.

Ver. 24. *Thus ſaith the* LORD, *Ye ſhall not go up to fight againſt your brethren the children of Iſrael; turn every man to his houſe: for this thing is from me.*] Who was reſolved to maintain what he had done. It was the Intention and Deſign of God to make *Jeroboam* King: But he did not ſtay for his Appointment, but uſurped the Kingdom by the Help of certain vain Fellows, who raiſed a Sedition againſt *Rehoboam*. See 2 *Chron.* xiii. 5, 6, 7. And beſides, God did not promiſe to ſet his Poſterity upon his Throne (as he did to *David* and *Solomon*) unleſs he kept his Commandments, which he did not; and therefore though he ſaith *the thing was from him*, yet the ſetting his Son upon the Throne after him, and the ſucceeding Kings, were not *from him*; but in *Hoſea* he ſaith, viii. 4. *They have ſet up kings, but not by me: They have ſet up princes, and I know it not*, i. e. did not approve it.

They hearkened therefore to the word of the LORD, *and returned to depart, according to the word of the* LORD.] Now *Rehoboam* was cool, and began to be wiſe, in not reſiſting the Council of God, who had taken the Kingdom from him; but ſubmitting to his Decree, and bearing it patiently. The People, at leaſt, were of this Mind, and perſuaded him not to engage in a War, wherein God would appear againſt him. According to the Council of *Menander* mentioned by *Strigelius*, Μὴ θεομάχει, μηδὲ πρόσαγε τῷ πράγματι χειμῶνας ἑτέρους, τοὺς δὲ ἀναγκαίους φέρει. *Fight not againſt God; neither do any thing to bring upon thy ſelf new ſtorms and tempeſts: but bear thoſe that are neceſſary, and cannot be avoided.*

Ver. 25. *Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein,*] For there it is likely they choſe him King; and therefore he enlarged and beautified it (which is meant by *built*) to be his Royal Seat.

And he went out from thence, and built Penuel.] But this did not ſatisfy him, he removed from thence to another City, which he alſo built; and ſo became a Builder as well as *Solomon*, with whoſe Buildings he is thought to have found fault.

Ver. 26. *And Jeroboam ſaid in his heart, Now ſhall the kingdom return to the houſe of David:*] Though God had told him he would build him a ſure Houſe (xi. 37, 38.) if he kept his Commandments, yet he did not truſt to his Promiſe; but after he had been ſome Time poſſeſſed of the Kingdom, began to fear a Revolt of the People, if he permitted them to worſhip God according to the Law; and ſo contrived to make an Alteration in Religion.

Ver. 27. *If the people go up to do ſacrifice in the houſe of the* LORD *at Jeruſalem, then ſhall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah, and they ſhall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam king of Judah.*] All the People of *Iſrael* being bound at the three great Feaſts to go up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip; as alſo, upon other ſolemn Occaſions, devout Perſons going thither to offer Gifts and Sacrifices; he was afraid, they would be ſo taken with the Splendor and Magnificence of the Temple, and of the Royal City, and recal to Memory the famous Acts of *David* and *Solomon*, who were buried there; and the King would find ſuch Means to oblige them, and the Prieſts and Levites ſo ſolicite them to unite themſelves again to *Judah* (who appeared to have the better Cauſe, having the Temple in Poſſeſſion, where God dwelt) that they would be drawn not only to forſake him, but to kill him. For beſides all this, their Belief of one only God was the principal Cauſe of Union among them: And next to that was their worſhipping God at one only Place. Therefore inſtead of conſulting God, and committing himſelf to him, who could and would have preſerved him in the Kingdom he had given him, notwithſtanding all theſe Dangers; he took Counſel, as it here follows, of ſuch as were governed only by *Reaſons of State*, and deviſed how to eſtabliſh himſelf by wicked Inventions.

The *Talmudiſts*, after their manner, add ano-

ther Reaſon why he took the following Reſolution. For, ſaith *R. Nachman* (in the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. xi. N. 46.) the Cuſtom being that none ſhould ſit in the Court of the Temple, but only the King of the Houſe of *David*, he thought with himſelf, that if the People ſaw *Rehoboam* ſit, and him ſtand, they would conclude the former to be King, and *Jeroboam* but his Servant. Another Reaſon is alledged by *Kimchi:* When the Year of Releaſe came, *Jeroboam* ſaid within himſelf, it is written, *Deut.* xxxi. 10, 11. *At the end of every ſeventh year, thou ſhalt read this law in the ears of all Iſrael*, &c. Now if I attempt to read it, the People will ſay, the King who is in *the place which God hath choſen* (i. e. *Jeruſalem*) muſt read firſt, and ſo I muſt read it after him, which will be a Diſgrace to me: And if I read it not at all it will be worſe, for I ſhall be thought profane. But theſe, and ſuch like, are frivolous Reaſons, for his Reſolution to draw the People from the Worſhip of God according to the Law, at his own Houſe at *Jeruſalem*.

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And he placed in Bethel the prieſts of the high places which he had made.] There he alſo built an Houſe, or Temple; and ſet up many Altars in it, where theſe Prieſts officiated as they did in other *high Places*.

Ver. 33. *So he offered upon the altar he had made in Bethel, the fifteenth day of the eighth month,*] There he began this new Feſtival, and conſecrated it himſelf.

In the month which he had deviſed of his own heart:] Out of his own Will and Pleaſure (as the *Targum* tranſlates it) againſt the expreſs Ordinance of God.

And ordained a feaſt unto the children of Iſrael,] To be obſerved, I ſuppoſe, every Year in *Bethel*, as the Feaſt of Tabernacles was at *Jeruſalem*. And it is likely it laſted as many Days; unleſs he affected to make Alterations in every thing, and ordained more, or fewer Days, as he thought good.

And he offered upon the altar, and burnt incenſe.] He preſumed to perform the higheſt Part of the Prieſts Office, which was to burn Incenſe. Which he had not done in *Dan*, as *Abarbinel* thinks, but only in *Bethel*; which was in ſome regard to the Metropolis of his Kingdom, and Head of the Tribe of *Ephraim*; to which Place the Prophet, mentioned in the next Chapter, came, and not to *Dan*. He obſerves alſo that the Scripture ſaith thrice he offered upon the Altar, ſpeaking of different Times and Places. *Firſt* it is ſaid, *ver.* 30, that he offered upon the Altar; that is at *Dan*, where all *Iſrael* went to worſhip. *Secondly*, he offered again in *Bethel*, in the Beginning of this Verſe: And then it is ſaid here in the Concluſion, that he aſcended the Altar in *Bethel*, not to offer Sacrifice, but to burn Incenſe, which he had not done in *Dan*. And when he burnt Incenſe on the Feaſt-Day he had inſtituted, the Man of God came from *Judah*, and propheſied againſt the Altar, as it follows in the next Chapter.

CHAP. XIII.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, that there came a man of God out of Judah,*] That is, a Prophet: For none are called Men of God, but Prophets. And ſo this Man is called below, *ver.* 18. whence *Kimchi* concludes *David* was a Prophet, becauſe he is called a Man of God. And this Prophet is thought by the *Jews* to be *Iddo*; whoſe Viſion againſt *Jeroboam* is mentioned 2 *Chron.* ix. 29. But this is an evident Miſtake: For *Iddo* was alive in the Days of *Abijah* the Son of *Rehoboam* (2 *Chron.* xiii. 22.) Whereas this Prophet here ſpoken of was killed immediately after this Prophecy Therefore they were not the ſame; unleſs we ſuppoſe that what is here related fell out in the latter End of *Jeroboam*'s Reign.

Tertullian in his Book *De Jejunio*, Cap. xvi. call him *Sameas:* Where *Rigaltius* obſerves that *Joſephus* calls him *Jadon*, and *Epiphanius Joam.*

By the word of the LORD *unto Bethel:*] By a particular Command of God.

And Jeroboam ſtood by the altar to burn incenſe.] Upon that Feaſt-Day, which he had inſtituted. See the laſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 2. *And he cried againſt the altar in the word of the* LORD,] Declared it, and the Worſhip there performed, to be idolatrous; which he ſpake by Authority from God.

And ſaid, O altar, altar,] Some think he mentioned the Altar twice, to ſignify that he propheſied againſt that in *Dan*, as well as againſt this in *Bethel*.

Thus ſaith the LORD, *behold, a child ſhall be born unto the houſe of David, Joſiah by name,*] The Prophets ſaw things future, as if they were preſent. And thought this was not to come to paſs, 'till above three hundred and ſixty Years after this Time, yet this Man of God foretels it, as if it were to be done e'er long. And the Prediction is the more wonderful, becauſe he tells out of what Family he ſhould ſpring, and what ſhould be his Name.

And upon thee ſhall he offer the prieſts of the high places that burn incenſe upon thee, and mens bones

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In the month which he had deviſed of his own heart:] Out of his own Will and Pleaſure (as the *Targum* tranſlates it) againſt the expreſs Ordinance of God.

And ordained a feaſt unto the children of Iſrael,] To be obſerved, I ſuppoſe, every Year in *Bethel*, as the Feaſt of Tabernacles was at *Jeruſalem*. And it is likely it laſted as many Days; unleſs he affected to make Alterations in every thing, and ordained more, or fewer Days, as he thought good.

And he offered upon the altar, and burnt incenſe.] He preſumed to perform the higheſt Part of the Prieſts Office, which was to burn Incenſe. Which he had not done in *Dan*, as *Abarbinel* thinks, but only in *Bethel*; which was in ſome regard to the Metropolis of his Kingdom, and Head of the Tribe of *Ephraim*; to which Place the Prophet, mentioned in the next Chapter, came, and not to *Dan*. He obſerves alſo that the Scripture ſaith thrice he offered upon the Altar, ſpeaking of different Times and Places. *Firſt* it is ſaid, *ver.* 30, that he offered upon the Altar; that is at *Dan*, where all *Iſrael* went to worſhip. *Secondly*, he offered again in *Bethel*, in the Beginning of this Verſe: And then it is ſaid here in the Concluſion, that he aſcended the Altar in *Bethel*, not to offer Sacrifice, but to burn Incenſe, which he had not done in *Dan*. And when he burnt Incenſe on the Feaſt-Day he had inſtituted, the Man of God came from *Judah*, and propheſied againſt the Altar, as it follows in the next Chapter.

CHAP. XIII.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, that there came a man of God out of Judah,*] That is, a Prophet: For none are called Men of God, but Prophets. And ſo this Man is called below, *ver.* 18. whence *Kimchi* concludes *David* was a Prophet, becauſe he is called a Man of God. And this Prophet is thought by the *Jews* to be *Iddo*; whoſe Viſion againſt *Jeroboam* is mentioned 2 *Chron.* ix. 29. But this is an evident Miſtake: For *Iddo* was alive in the Days of *Abijah* the Son of *Rehoboam* (2 *Chron.* xiii. 22.) Whereas this Prophet here ſpoken of was killed immediately after this Prophecy Therefore they were not the ſame; unleſs we ſuppoſe that what is here related fell out in the latter End of *Jeroboam*'s Reign.

Tertullian in his Book *De Jejunio*, Cap. xvi. call him *Sameas:* Where *Rigaltius* obſerves that *Joſephus* calls him *Jadon*, and *Epiphanius Joam.*

By the word of the LORD *unto Bethel:*] By a particular Command of God.

And Jeroboam ſtood by the altar to burn incenſe.] Upon that Feaſt-Day, which he had inſtituted. See the laſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 2. *And he cried againſt the altar in the word of the* LORD,] Declared it, and the Worſhip there performed, to be idolatrous; which he ſpake by Authority from God.

And ſaid, O altar, altar,] Some think he mentioned the Altar twice, to ſignify that he propheſied againſt that in *Dan*, as well as againſt this in *Bethel*.

Thus ſaith the LORD, *behold, a child ſhall be born unto the houſe of David, Joſiah by name,*] The Prophets ſaw things future, as if they were preſent. And thought this was not to come to paſs, 'till above three hundred and ſixty Years after this Time, yet this Man of God foretels it, as if it were to be done e'er long. And the Prediction is the more wonderful, becauſe he tells out of what Family he ſhould ſpring, and what ſhould be his Name.

And upon thee ſhall he offer the prieſts of the high places that burn incenſe upon thee, and mens bones

bones ſhall he burn upon thee.] The Meaning is not that he ſhould burn the Prieſts alive; but the Execution of this Prophecy explains it: That he ſhould ſlay the Prieſts of the high Places; and then burn their Bones, as he did the Bones of thoſe that had been buried; and thereby defile this Altar, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 15, 16, 20.

Ver. 3. *And he gave a ſign the ſame day,*] To confirm this Prophecy:

Saying, This is the ſign which the LORD *hath ſpoken;*] A Proof that he ſpake from God; and not from himſelf.

Behold, the altar ſhall be rent, and the aſhes that are upon it ſhall be poured out.] This could not be done, but by the Power of God; who hereby demonſtrated he had ſent this Prophet to ſpeak theſe Words; which were preſently fulfilled.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs, when Jeroboam heard the ſaying of the man of God, which had cried againſt the altar in Bethel,*] In the Preſence of the King himſelf, when he was about the ſolemn Service of his gods.

That he put forth his hand from the altar,] Where he ſtood, *ver.* 1.

Saying, Lay hold on him.] As he himſelf would have done, had he been near him.

And his hand which he put forth againſt him dried up, ſo that he could not pull it in again to him.] The Muſcles and Sinews ſhrunk, ſo that it was ſtiff and frigid; and he perfectly loſt the Uſe of it. Which Prodigy was a new Token, that the Prophet's Words would be fulfilled.

Ver. 5. *And the altar alſo was rent, and the aſhes poured out from the altar, according to the ſign which the man of God had given by the word of the* LORD.] Which ſo amazed all the People, that we do not find any body went about to lay hold on him; but *Jeroboam* himſelf was, for the preſent, aſtoniſhed at the miraculous Power of God.

Ver. 6. *And the king anſwered and ſaid unto the man of God, Intreat now the face of the* LORD *thy God and pray for me,*] A marvellous Change! He that juſt now threatned, humbly ſupplicates him that ſmote him.

That my hand may be reſtored me again.] He was convinced that Healing muſt come from the ſame Hand that gave the Wound; and that it was in vain to ſeek to his gods.

And the man of God beſought the LORD, *and the king's hand was reſtored him again, and became as it was before.*] He did not intend his Deſtruction, but his Reformation; and therefore granted his Requeſt. Whereby a new Miracle was wrought for his Converſion.

Ver. 7. *And the king ſaid unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refreſh thy ſelf, and I will give thee a reward.*] A ſtrange Inſenſibility of God's great Mercy to him; which did not lead him to Repentance, when it moved him to ſo much Gratitude as to deſire to reward him that was the Inſtrument of his Cure. His Hand was reſtored, but not a good Mind.

Ver. 8. *And the man of God ſaid to the king, If thou wilt give me half thine houſe, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread, nor drink water in this place:*] For he had a Charge from God (as it follows) not to communicate with them, who were Apoſtates from their Religion.

Ver. 9. *For ſo it was charged me by the* LORD, *ſaying,*] The ſame Divine Authority, which ſent him thither to do what they had heard and ſeen, gave him this following Charge.

Eat not bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the ſame way that thou cameſt.] The Reaſon is plain, why he ſhould not eat or drink with them; becauſe that was to have familiar Society with Idolaters. But why he ſhould not return the ſame Way that he came, is not ſo evident. Some think it was to repreſent, that even the Way to *Bethel* was abominable; and therefore not to be frequented: Or, to ſhew how much we ought to abhor that which leads to Evil. But it ſeems to be a Proverbial Speech; ſignifying that he ſhould be conſtant and ſtedfaſt in executing the Charge committed to him. For he that doth any thing without Succeſs is ſaid to return by the Way that he went, *Iſaiah* xxxvii. 29, 34. And therefore not return by the Way that he went, is to do his Buſineſs effectually.

Ver. 10. *And ſo he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel,*] To ſhew (as many think) how God deteſts the Way to Idolatry; and would have it to be forgotten.

Ver. 11. *And there was an old prophet*] One who had many Years been a Prophet before this Apoſtacy; whoſe Name the *Jews* ſay was *Micah:* Who was a Worſhipper of the true God, though he dwelt among this idolatrous People. A great many take him to have been a falſe Prophet: But *Theodoret* proves that he was a true, though guilty of telling a Lye to the Man of God. See *Hermannus Witſius* his *Miſcellanea*, Tom. I. p. 142, &c.

In Bethel,] He was originally of *Samaria*, as we learn from 2 *Kings* xxiii. 18. But removed hither, it is likely, ſince this Revolution, that he might ſee what *Jeroboam* deſigned.

And his ſons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel:] In the *Hebrew* it is, *his ſon came and told him*, &c. that is, one of his Sons came firſt, and told all the foregoing Paſſages; and afterward came all the reſt of them, and confirmed what he had related.

The words that he had ſpoken to the king, them they alſo told their father.] By this it appears, they were preſent when *Jeroboam* ſtood at the Altar; and therefore joined in that idolatrous Worſhip; though their Father did not, and yet was ſo timorous that he durſt not reprove it.

Ver. 12. *And their father ſaid unto them, Which way went he? for his ſons had ſeen what way the man of God went that came from Judah.*] They had the Curioſity to obſerve what Way ſuch a remarkable Perſon went to his own Country; imagining perhaps their Father would have a Mind to diſcourſe with him.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid unto his ſons, Saddle me the aſs. So they ſaddled him the aſs, and he rode thereon,*] In the way they directed him.

Ver. 14. *And went after the man of God, and found him ſitting under an oak;*] Weary, I ſuppoſe, with a long Journey; and faint for want of Victuals.

And he ſaid, Art thou the man of God that came from Judah? and he ſaid, I am.

Ver. 15. *Then he ſaid unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.*] He had a mind to have a further Trial of the Truth of what the Man of God had ſaid; and ſo, in a crafty deceitful Manner, inticed him back; contrary to his Commiſſion.

Ver. 16. *And he ſaid, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread, nor drink water with thee in this place.*] It ſeems he was forbid ſo much as to go into any of their Houſes; leſt he ſhould be tempted to eat with them.

Ver. 17. *For it was ſaid to me by the word of the LORD, thou ſhalt eat no bread, nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou cameſt.*] For which Reaſon he refuſed to accept of the King's Invitation.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid unto him, I am a prophet as thou art,*] He pretended, as *Abarbinel* thinks, that God had revealed the very ſame to him concerning the Altar in *Bethel*, that he had threatned.

And an angel ſpake unto me, by the word of the LORD, ſaying, Bring him back] And he further pretended that he found him here by the Direction of an Angel. For he did not tell him, that he learnt from his Sons what had paſſed; but pretended he had it by Prophecy; and that an Angel, in the Name of God, commanded him to bring him back to his Houſe, and refreſh him there.

To thine houſe, that he may eat bread, and drink water.] He perſwaded him, I ſuppoſe, that the Meaning of God's Charge, *thou ſhalt not eat bread, nor drink water in this place*, was to be underſtood of Sinners and Idolaters, with whom he might not communicate: But he being a Prophet, was not to be comprehended in that Command. And therefore the Angel ſaid, bring him back *to thine houſe*: Not to the Habitation of any Idolater, but to his Dwelling-houſe, which was undefiled. This *Abarbinel*.

But he lied unto him.] All this was a Fiction, which God ſuffered for the Trial of the good Man; whether he would belive him, or a Man he did not know.

Ver. 19. *So he went back with him, and did eat bread and drink water in his houſe.*] He thought it poſſible that God might, in Pity to him, revoke his Prohibition; becauſe he was hungry and weary. But he ought to have believed the Revelation he had himſelf, of which he was certain; and not truſted to what another pretended was revealed to him; which he could not be ſure was true. And it is ſaid emphatically, *ver.* 22. *The LORD did ſay to thee, eat no bread*, &c. If God had, in Compaſſion to him, thought fit to re-call that Word, he would have done it to himſelf; and as plainly allowed him to refreſh himſelf, as before he had forbidden it. So *Abarbinel* well obſerves, *Nothing that a Prophet receives from God is to be altered, unleſs that Prophet hath another Word from God revoking the former.* As *Abraham* had; to whom God ſaith, *Gen.* xxii. 2. *Take thy ſon*, &c. *and offer him for a burnt-offering*, &c. But when he was going to do it, he heard that Command repealed, *ver.* 12. *Lay not thy hand upon the lad*, &c. He would not receive a contrary Command from the Mouth of any Prophet, but from the Mouth of God alone; from whom he received the firſt Command.

Ver. 20. *And it came to paſs, that as they ſat at the table, the word of the LORD came to the prophet that brought him back:*] God would not vouchſafe to ſpeak to him, who had diſobeyed his Voice; but rather to the other, though in his Name he had feigned an Untruth.

Ver. 21. *And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, ſaying,*] He ſeems to be in a great Agony; from the Conſideration of what he had done, and of what the Prophet from *Judah* was to ſuffer.

Thus ſaith the LORD, Foraſmuch as thou haſt diſobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and haſt not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee,] To diſobey God's Mouth, was to diſobey the Word ſpoken by his Mouth.

Ver. 22. *But cameſt back, and haſt eaten bread and drunk water in this place, of which the LORD did ſay to thee, eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcaſe ſhall not come into the ſepulchre of thy fathers.*] This was all his Puniſhment; that he ſhould ſhortly die, and not be buried among the *Jews*.

Ver. 23. *And it came to paſs after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he ſadled for him the aſs, for the prophet whom he had brought back.*] It is remarkable that no Puniſhment is here threatned to the old Prophet, for telling him a Lie. Becauſe, as *Abarbinel* thinks he meant no Harm to the other Prophet; but fancied that his ſaying, he might not eat or drink with them, was only to excuſe himſelf from going with *Jeroboam* to his Houſe. And beſides, it might have turned to the great Advantage of the Prophet who came from *Judah*, if he had ſtedfaſtly perſiſted in his Reſolution, and not given Credit to what the old Prophet ſaid againſt it.

Ver. 24. *And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and ſlew him:*] Not far from *Bethel* there was a Wood; out of which the two She-Bears came, that tare two and forty Children in pieces, 2 *Kings* ii. 24. Out of which Wood, it is probable, this Lion came, and ſlew this Prophet.

And his carcaſe was caſt in the way, and the aſs ſtood by it, the lion alſo ſtood by the carcaſe,] This was to admoniſh all the Prophets to obſerve God's Commands ſtrictly; and to ſhew *Jeroboam* what he might expect; ſince God ſpared not a leſſer Offender. But as God ſhewed his Severity, in taking away this Prophet's Life which was his Puniſhmet; ſo he remarkably ſhewed his Approbation of the Prophet; in that the Lion ſtood quietly by his Carcaſe, and did not devour it; nor do any hurt to the Aſs on which he rode. As if he was meerly ſent by a Divine Appointment, to execute what God had threatned; but could not move one Step beyond that Commiſſion. For when the Prophet had ſuffered what God intended, he takes even his dead Body into his Protection; and would not let it be violated, as his obſerved below, *ver.* 28.

Ver. 25. *And behold, men paſſed by, and ſaw the carcaſe caſt in the way, and the lion ſtanding by the carcaſe: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt.*] As a wonderful Thing;

Thing; that the Lion ſhould neither fall upon his Prey, nor hurt them who paſſed by; but ſuffered them to go on quietly.

Ver. 26. *And when the prophet that brought him back from the way heard thereof, he ſaid, It is the man of God, that was diſobedient to the word of the* LORD:] Diſobedience in great Caſes hath been thus puniſhed by Men in Authority. For the *Athenians* put their Ambaſſadors to Death, whom they had ſent into *Arcadia*, though they had performed their Buſineſs very well, to their Content, ἐπεὶ ἑτέρων ὁδὸν ἦλθον, καὶ ὐ τὴν προστεταγμένον, becauſe they came another Way, and not that which they were preſcribed. Which is the very Caſe before us, *Ælian*, Lib. vi. Var. Hiſtor. Cap. 5.

Therefore the LORD *hath delivered him unto the lion, who hath torn him and ſlain him according to the word of the* LORD, *which he ſpake unto him.*] The Lion did not rend his Body in Pieces, but only gave him one Wound, which killed him. In the *Hebrew* the Word is, *he broke him*, that is his Bones, and ſo ſlew him ſpeedily.

Ver. 27. *And he ſpake to his ſons, ſaying, Saddle me the aſs. And they ſaddled him.*] Hearing the Lion ſtood as quiet as a Lamb, and neither meddled with the Carcaſe, nor hurt any that paſſed by, he did not fear to take up the Body of the Prophet that came from *Judah*; believing the Lion had Order to do no other Miſchief, but kill him.

Ver. 28. *And he went and found his carcaſe caſt in the way, and the aſs and the lion ſtanding by the carcaſe: the lion had not eat the carcaſe, nor torn the aſs.*] Here is a Cluſter of Miracles, that the Lion, contrary to his Nature, did not eat the Carcaſe, nor kill the Aſs, nor meddle with the Travellers that paſſed by, nor with the old Prophet and his Aſs: And that the Aſs ſtood ſo quietly, and was not frighted at the Sight of a Lion, and betake it ſelf to Flight. And more than this, the Lion ſtood by the Carcaſe a long Time, 'till this ſtrange News was carried into the City; as a faithful Keeper of the Prophet's Body, that no other wild Beaſts ſhould meddle with it. Which made the Miracle more illuſtrious; and plainly ſhewed all this did not happen by Chance.

Ver. 29. *And the prophet took up the carcaſe of the man of God, and laid it upon the aſs, and brought it back: and the old prophet came into the city, to mourn, and to bury him.*] To make a ſolemn Funeral for him.

Ver. 30. *And he laid his carcaſe in his own grave,*] Which was the greateſt Honour he could do him.

And they mourned over him, ſaying, Alas my brother.] He and his Sons made the uſual Lamentation over him; of which this was the Form, we find, in After-Times, *Jer.* xxii. 18.

Ver. 31. *And it came to paſs after he had buried him, that he ſpake unto his ſons, ſaying, When I am dead, then bury me in the ſepulchre wherein the man of God is buried, lay my bones beſide his bones.*] This he ordered, not meerly out of Affection to the Prophet, but to ſecure himſelf from the Judgment that he had threatned, *ver.* 2.

Ver. 32. *For the ſaying which he cried by the word of the* LORD *againſt the Altar in Bethel, and againſt all the houſes of the high places that are in the cities of Samaria, ſhall ſurely come to paſs.*] This *Abarbinel* looks upon as an Argument that this Man was a Prophet of the LORD; that he foretold the ſame Thing that the Man of God who came from *Judah*, did. And, as he thinks, ſomething more; *viz.* the Deſtruction of all the High Places by *Joſiah*, which is not before mentioned.

Ver. 33. *After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way,*] By all theſe wonderful Works (for the ſingular Number is put for the plural) *Jeroboam* was not at all changed; but continued in his Idolatry.

But made again of the loweſt of the people, prieſts of the high places:] He did not reform in any one Thing; but ſtill went on in making any body Prieſts. See xii. 31.

Whoſoever would, he conſecrated him, and he became one of the prieſts of the high places.] Without any Reſpect to his Tribe, or Family; or indeed, to his Condition.

Ver. 34. *And this thing became ſin to the houſe of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and deſtroy it from the face of the earth.*] Brought dreadful Puniſhments upon his Family (for ſo *Sin* ſometimes ſignifies the *Puniſhment* of Sin) and theſe not vulgar Puniſhments, but utter Extirpation.

CHAP. XIV.

Verſe 1. *At that time*] Some Time after thoſe Woes were denounced againſt him; but the Phraſe doth not denote any preciſe Time.

Ahijah the ſon of Jeroboam was ſick.] Being ſtricken by the Hand of God, with ſome Diſeaſe.

Ver. 2. *And Jeroboam ſaid to his wife, Ariſe, I pray thee, and diſguiſe thy ſelf,*] Put on ſuch Apparel as the common People wear.

That thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam:] He would have her go on this Errand, becauſe he was ſure ſhe would report Things truly to him: But yet would not have her known to be his Wife, becauſe he would have the Prophet ſpeak more freely and indifferently: Or, perhaps, he was afraid he ſhould threaten too heavily, if he knew who ſhe was.

And get thee to Shiloh; behold there is the prophet Ahijah, which told me I ſhould be king over this people.] This looks like great Stupidity, that he ſhould think to deceive a Prophet, who could tell him future Events: And therefore much more diſcover Things preſent.

Ver. 3. *And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruſe of hony, and go to him: he ſhall tell thee what ſhall become of the child.*] They that went to enquire of a Prophet, uſed to make him ſome Preſent, as a Token of their Reſpect to him. See 1 *Sam.* ix. 7. And by ſuch Oblations the Prophets ſupported themſelves. This Preſent which ſhe made him was of ſuch Things as might make him think her to be a Countrywoman, rather than a Courtier.

Ver. 4. *And Jeroboams wife did ſo, and aroſe, and went to Shiloh, and came to the houſe of Ahijah: but Ahijah could not ſee, for his eyes were ſet by reaſon of his age.*] In the *Hebrew* his Eyes *ſtood for his hoarineſs.* He ſeems to have a Film, or a Cataract grown over his Eyes.

Ver. 5. *And the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son, for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be when she cometh to thee, that she shall feign her self to be another woman.*] He was as fully instructed how to treat her, as if he had seen, and known her.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass, when Ahijah heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, that he said, Come in thou wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thy self to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings.*] He discovered her before she appeared, that she might give the greater Credit to his Words.

Ver. 7. *Go tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel,*] Raised him from a private Person, to be the King of the ten Tribes.

Ver. 8. *And rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes,*] Though *David* committed some great Sins, yet he was upright in his Religion, and never started aside in the least unto other gods. In which Piety God expected *Jeroboam* should have continued, as he admonished him, when he first sent *Ahijah* to him, xi. 38.

Ver. 9. *But hast done evil above all that were before thee:*] King *Saul* was not so bad; nor *Solomon:* Who though he was drawn aside himself, yet did not study to make his People Idolaters.

For thou hast gone and made thee other gods, and molten images,] Or, *even molten images*; that is, the Golden Calves. Which he did not think to be gods, but only Representations of God: And yet God looked upon this Worship which was paid to him before these Images, as the Worship of other gods: Which are called *Devils*, in 2 *Chron.* xi. 15.

To provoke me to anger,] That was the Effect of this idolatrous Worship.

And hast cast me behind thy back:] Neglected me and my Service. For those things we cast behind our Backs, which are nothing worth; and for which we have no Regard or Concern what becomes of them.

Ver. 10. *Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam,*] Severely punish it.

And will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall,] That is, not leave a Man of his Family alive, as *Ralbag* interprets it. See 1 *Sam.* xxv. 22.

And him that is shut up, and left in Israel,] That is, married or unmarried, as *de Dieu* expounds these Words upon *Deut.* xxxii. 36. all sorts of Men, of whatsoever State or Condition they be. Others refer this to Treasures shut up in secret Places, and to Flocks left in the Field; or, to Men taken Captive, or that have escaped. As much as to say, there shall be an Universal Destruction. And thus *Bochartus* glosses, (comprehending all these) *I will cut off every male, whether he be a captive, or a free man; whether he live in the city, or in the country; be married or single.* See his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 66.

And I will take away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam,] All his Posterity.

As a man taketh away dung, 'till it be all gone.] Which Servants remove so carefully, that they suffer not the least Speck to remain.

Ver. 11. *Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field, shall the fowls of the air eat:*] That is, none of them shall be buried.

For the LORD hath spoken it.] This is God's irrevocable Decree.

Ver. 12. *Arise thou therefore, get thee unto thy own house, and when thy feet enter the city, the child shall die.*] This was a sign that all the rest of his Threatnings should be fulfilled.

Ver. 13. *And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave,*] All the rest were to be buried in the Bowels of Dogs, and of Fowls of the Air, *ver.* 11.

Because in him is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam.] He was the only Person of that Family that disliked the Worship of the Calves, and perhaps intended to remove them when he had Power; and suffer the People to go up to *Jerusalem* to worship, trusting God would preserve him in his Kingdom. Some of the *Jews* say, that he broke down a Hedge which his Father had made, to keep People from going to *Jerusalem*, at the three great Feasts.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam*] This King was *Baasha*, xv. 27, 28.

This day:] As soon as he was made King, *ver.* 29.

But what? even now.] What did I say? (that day) even just now. It is as sure as if it were now done. The *Chaldee* takes it otherwise; he shall destroy the House of *Jeroboam*; both that which liveth now at this Day, and that which shall be born in Time to come. But *Kimchi* puts no Stop at this Word *Vemah (and what)* but continues it with what follows, in this manner, *what is this which shall now happen, to that which shall come hereafter?* That is, the present Calamities shall be nothing to the future. Which agrees well enough with what follows, concerning the continual Troubles that should be in *Israel*; and at last their Captivity.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD shall smite Israel,*] For their consenting to that idolatrous Worship which *Jeroboam* set up.

As a reed is shaken in the water,] That is, they shall be in perpetual Commotions by Civil Wars: Having no Quiet, but frequently changing their Kings. Thus *Bochartus* excellently expounds it, in an Epistle to our Bishop *Morley*, p. 106, *&c.* The Reason of this Expression was, that several

of their Kings were afterwards killed, and new Families ſtarted up; and between ſo many Kings of ſo many Families and Tribes, their Minds fluctuated and wavered; and they knew not where to fix themſelves, and reſt in Quiet: Therefore their Condition is thus deſcribed in 2 *Chron.* xv. 5. *There was no peace to him that went in, or to him that came out*, &c.

And he ſhall root up Iſrael out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers,] Which he began to do firſt by *Tiglath-Pileſer* King of *Aſſyria*, 2 *Kings* xv. 29. And then finiſhed it by *Shalmaneſer*, 2 Kings xvii. 5, 6, *&c.*

And ſhall ſcatter them beyond the river,] That is, *Euphrates:* They being carried (as the forenamed Places tell us) into the Country of the *Medes.*

Becauſe they have made their groves,] In which they placed the Images of their gods. For they were not contented with the Calves, but fell to groſſer Idolatry; which was commonly practiſed in Groves. See *Judges* iii. 7.

Provoking the LORD to anger.] For nothing was ſo deteſtable to him as this Sin.

Ver. 16. *And he ſhall give Iſrael up,*] In to the Hands of the Heathen.

Becauſe of the ſins of Jeroboam, who did ſin, and who made Iſrael to ſin.] Perverted the whole Nation: Who by his Authority and Example were led into Idolatry.

Ver. 17. *And Jeroboams wife aroſe and departed, and came to Tirzah:*] A City in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh:* Which had been famous in ancient Times, (*Joſh.* xii. 24.) and became the Royal Seat, and continued ſo for ſome Time, (xv. 33.) being found more convenient, I ſuppoſe, than *Schechem* where *Jeroboam* firſt ſettled.

And when ſhe came to the threſhold of the door, the child died.] It ſeems the King's Houſe was near the Gate of the City: For it is ſaid, *ver.* 12. that as ſoon as ſhe entred into the City, the Child ſhould die. And ſo it did, when ſhe came to the Threſhold of the Door of the Palace.

Ver. 18. *And they buried him; and all Iſrael mourned for him, according to the word of the LORD, which he ſpake by the hand of his ſervant Ahijah the prophet.*] Whereby he confirmed all the reſt of his Threatnings againſt the Houſe of *Jeroboam* and the People of *Iſrael.*

Ver. 19. *And the reſt of the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned,*] How he behaved himſelf in War, and in Peace.

Behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael.] Not in that Book in the Bible, called *Chronicles*; but in ſuch a Book as that wherein the Acts of *Solomon* were recorded, Day by Day, xi. 41. See there.

Ver. 20. *And the days that Jeroboam reigned were two and twenty years: amd he ſlept with his fathers, and Nadab his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] His ſleeping with his Fathers ſeems to be a Phraſe ſignifying only that he died, as all before him did: Not that he was buried with them (as it is ſaid of *Rehoboham*, ver. 31. for they were private Men, and he a King; who, no doubt, was magnificently interred by his Son.

Ver. 21. *And Rehobohaam the ſon of Solomon reigned in Judah: Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to reign,*] And therefore whas born a Year before *Solomon* came to the Crown: For he reigned but forty Years, xi. 42.

And he reigned ſeventeen years in Jeruſalem, the city which the LORD had choſen out of all the tribes of Iſrael, to put his name there:] A great Honour to him; of which he was not worthy; and therefore God ſhortned his Days, and did not let him reign ſo long as *Jeroboam.*

And his mothers name was Naamah an Ammoniteſs.] It is much that *David* ſhould ſuffer *Solomon* to marry one of this Country; unleſs ſhe was proſelyted, as the Daughter of *Pharaoh* is ſuppoſed to have been. He himſelf indeed had married the Daughter of *Talmai* King of *Geſhur*; but the Son he had by her proved ſo wicked, that it might have been a Caution to him not to marry his Son, eſpecially him he intended for the Heir of his Crown, to a Stranger. Who if ſhe was proſelyted, yet many think ſhe did not ſo change her Religion, but that ſhe inſtilled ill Principles into her Son, and corrupted him. Nay, was one of thoſe Women that inticed *Solomon* to Idolatry; for Women of *Ammon* are reckoned among his ſtrange Wives.

Ver. 22. *And Judah did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and they provoked him to jealouſy, with their ſins which they had committed,*] By joining other gods together with him. Which is an amazing thing, that at the Beginning of his Reign *Rehoboam* ſhould do well for three Years (2 *Chron.* xi. 17.) and then forſook the Law of God (2 *Chron.* xii. 1.) and fell off from his Worſhip, into ſuch groſs Idolatry, as exceeded that of *Jeroboam's.*

Above all that their fathers had done.] Above all that had been practiſed in the Time of the *Judges.*

Ver. 23. *For they alſo built them high places, and images, and groves on every high hill, and under every green tree.*] They multiplied Altars on every high Hill; and ſet up Images; and built Temples for them: Which I take to be meant by *Groves.* For they could not be under every green Tree; nor could they be ſaid to be *built*, but to be planted; therefore it is reaſonable to interpret them Temples, or Places of Divine Worſhip. As among the Heathen *Strabo* teſtifies (*Geograph. Lib.* 9.) that the Poets called their Temples by the Name of Groves (ἄλση καλοῦσιν τὰ ἱερὰ πάντα) though they had no Trees about them; becauſe the Cuſtom was to have Trees planted about their Sacred Places. In which the *Iſraelites* ſet up Altars; directly contrary to the Law: Which intended to preſerve Unity in Religion, by allowing one Altar only.

Ver. 24 *And there were alſo Sodomites in the land,*] This kind of Wickedneſs often attended Idolatry, xv. 12. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 7. *Rom.* i. 21, 28. For among the Heathen the moſt filthy things were practiſed in theſe ſhady dark

Places

Places (their *Groves*) by the Worshippers of *Venus*, *Bacchus*, and *Priapus*. And such there were, it appears by the Place now quoted, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 7. among the *Israelites*: Who out of Devotion to some false god or other, prostituted their Bodies, contrary to Nature, to be abused in Honour of those gods, directly against the Law, *Deut.* xxiii. 17. For when *Josiah* purged the Temple, he is said to cast out the *Sodomites*: Where by *Kedeschim* our *Selden* understands the Priests of *Astarte*. *Syntag.* 2. *De Diis Syris.* Cap. 2.

Ver. 25. *And it came to pass that in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem:*] Ροβοάμῳ δ' αὐτῷ παρέδωκε ἀμαχητὶ τὴν πόλιν. *And Rehoboam* (as *Josephus* writes) *delivered up the City to him, without striking a stroke.* For he had a vast Army (as we read, 2 *Chron.* xii. 2.) wherewith he conquered *Asia*, as *Herodotus* tells us, who calls him *Sesostris*. For *Josephus* acknowledgeth he relates the same Expedition that the Scripture doth; but under a different Name. It may seem something strange that *Shishak* being so nearly allied to *Rehoboam*, should come up against him, and take his Royal City: But as Kingdoms are never married, so *Jeroboam*, it is likely, who had lived long in *Egypt*, stirred him up to invade him; and thereby established himself in his new Kingdom: For we read not a Word of any Cities in *Israel* that he took; but only the fenced Cities of *Judah* (2 *Chron.* xii. 4.) *Jeroboam* and his Country remaining undisturbed. Besides, it must be remembred he was not the Son of *Pharaoh*'s Daughter, but of an *Ammonitess*: And therefore there was no Kindred between *Rehoboam* and *Shishak*.

Ver. 26. *And he took away the treasures of the house of the* LORD, *and the treasures of the kings house, he even took away all*;] These Riches which *David* and *Solomon* had treasured up, tempted *Shishak*, it is probable, to this Expedition against *Jerusalem*: For he did not intend to keep this City, but only to spoil it.

And he took away the shields of gold which Solomon had made.] Which were in the House of the Forest of *Lebanon* (See x. 16, 17.) which it seems he also plundered. This was a speedy Vengeance for their Sins; that so soon after *Solomon*'s Death, the Splendor wherein he left *Jerusalem* should be extinguished. For *Rehoboam* served God three Years; was corrupted in the fourth; and in the fifth was punished.

Ver. 27. *And king Rehoboam made in their stead brazen shields, and committed them into the hands of the chief guard,*] In the *Hebrew* the Word for *Guard* is *Runner*: So called because they went before the King, and behind him.

Which kept the door of the kings house.] These Shields were not of much Value; and so were committed to Men in a mean Office: Whereas the Golden ones were kept, as I said, in the House of the Forest of *Lebanon*.

Ver. 28. *And it was so when the king went into the house of the* LORD, *that the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard-chamber.*] He did not quite forsake God, but still continued to worship in the Temple: And perhaps he now left the high Places (after he had been thus chastised by the King of *Egypt*) and frequented the House of God better. Shields were carried before him thither, for Pomp sake, that he might not be contemned by his People; and that there might be no Occasion for Sedition, if they were disposed to it, when they saw him so well guarded.

Ver. 29. *Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] He refers those that desired a larger Account of him, to the publick *Annals*, as he had done when he concludes the History of *Jeroboam*, v. 19. See there.

Ver 30. *And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all their days.*] This doth not seem to agree with what we read xii. 22. where God commanded *Rehoboam* and his People not to go to fight with *Israel*; and they obeyed his Voice. But this is easily satisfied, by observing that the *Jews* were commanded not to make War upon the *Israelites*; but they are not commanded not to defend themselves, if the *Israelites* made War upon them. And this was their Case; the *Israelites* vexed them with continual Incursions and Depredations; though the House of *David* did not assault them, but only repel their Violence: Or, perhaps upon the Borders, they were continually endeavouring to get Ground one of another; though they never came to a set Battle.

Ver. 31. *And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and his mothers name was Naamah, an Ammonitess.*] The Repetition of this about his Mother hath something remarkable in it (See *ver.* 21.) though it is hard to know what it is. *Abarbinel* thinks, it is as much as to say, he did not repent at last; but as he lived, so he died, in the Idolatry of his Mother.

And Abijam his son reigned in his stead.]

CHAP. XV.

Verse 1. *NOW in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son of Nebat, reigned Abijam over Judah.*] Which seems to disagree with what is said below, *ver.* 9. concerning *Asa*, that he began to reign the twentieth Year of *Jeroboam*, and *Abijam* reigned three Years. But it is usual both in Scripture, and in other Authors, to reckon Part of a Year for a whole Year. So *Abijam* began to reign in some Part of *Jeroboam*'s eighteenth Year, and continued his Reign the whole nineteenth; and died in the twentieth: and so was reckoned to have reigned three Years, as it here follows.

Ver. 2. *Three years reigned he in Jerusalem:*] This was a very short Time, as *Abarbinel* observes; but it was because he walked in the Way of his Father; which provoked God to cut him off.

And his mothers name was Maacah, the daughter of Abishalom,] The same Author fancies she was the Daughter of *Absalom* (as he is called 2 *Chron.* xi. 21.) who rebelled against his Father *David*; and so was a bad Daughter of

a bad Father. She is called by another Name, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 2. viz. *Michaiah the daughter of Uriel.* But he thinks that is the Name of the Family, and this her proper Name. Others think this a meer Fancy, and with great Reason; for *Abiſhalom* is a different Name from *Abſalom*, as *David*'s Son is always called. And they think he had two Names, as his Daughter alſo had. But *Pellicanus* ſeems to me to have given the plaineſt Account of this, that *Maachah* was his Grandmother, and *Micaiah* his Mother.

Ver. 3. *And he walked in all the ſins of his father, which he had done before him:*] See xiv. 22, 23, 24.

And his heart was not perfect with the LORD *his God, as the heart of David his father.*] They ought all to have remembred *David*, and trod in his Steps; who was the Founder of the Royal Family; and never turned aſide to the Worſhip of other gods, as this Man did; though together with them he worſhipped the LORD God of *Iſrael*, who is therefore called the LORD *his God.*

Ver. 4. *Nevertheleſs, for Davids ſake, the* LORD *his God gave him a lamp in Jeruſalem, to ſet up his ſon after him,*] He continued the Kingdom in the Poſterity of *David:* Which is the Meaning of giving him a *lamp.* See xi. 36.

And to eſtabliſh Jeruſalem:] Whereby *Jeruſalem* was eſtabliſhed as the Place of God's Worſhip.

Ver. 5. *Becauſe David did that which was right in the eyes of the* LORD, *and turned not aſide from any thing that he commanded him, all the days of his life; ſave only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.*] He was not without other Sins; but none ſo enormous as this; and therefore not remembred, as this about *Uriah* is very often, to his Diſhonour.

Ver. 6. *And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life.*] This was ſaid before, xiv. 30. and therefore may ſeem to come in here impertinently; becauſe he is not ſpeaking of *Rhehoboam*, but of his Son *Abijam:* Who was a valiant young Man in the days of his Father, and always fought his Battles with *Jeroboam.* Which being related before in the Hiſtory of *Rehoboam*, is here repeated, as *Abarbinel* thinks, to ſhew that *Abijam* was the Cauſe of theſe Wars. And theſe Words, *all his days*, he thinks, relate to *Abijam*, who continued the War between his Father and *Jeroboam* with great Succeſs: As we read 2 *Chron.* xiii. 17. *Bochartus* thinks a plainer Account may be given of this, by ſuppoſing that *Rehoboam* ſignifies this Son of his; Children and Fathers being one and the ſame in a moral Account. Thus *Abraham* is ſaid to have purchaſed the Sepulchre of the Sons of *Emor*; which was indeed purchaſed by *Jacob:* And the *Iſraelites* ſay to *Rehoboam*, (xii. 16.) What Portion have we in *David?* That is, in *Rehoboam* the Grand-child of *David.* In like manner he thinks it may be ſaid, *there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam*, that is, between *Abijam*, the Son of *Rehoboam*, and *Jeroboam:* Whom *Abijam* grievouſly afflicted. *Hierozoicon*, P. I. Lib. II. Cap. 43. But this doth not ſeem to be the true Account; becauſe the War between *Abijam* and *Jeroboam* is diſtinctly mentioned in the next Verſe. Therefore the Meaning of theſe Words is, that though God was pleaſed, for *David*'s Sake, who walked uprightly before him, to continue a *Lamp*, that is, a Succeſſor to him in *Jeruſalem*; yet theſe Succeſſors were vexed with continual Wars, (as appeared both in the Reign of *Rehoboam* and of *Abijam*) and did not enjoy their Kingdom peaceably.

Ver. 7. *Now the reſt of the acts of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See xi. 41. *Ezra* ſaith they were recorded in the Book of the Prophet *Iddo*, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 22. from whence he took what he thought fit.

And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.] He continued the War, which had been between his Father and *Jeroboam*; and managed it very gloriouſly, as *Ezra* ſhews in the Book of the *Chronicles.*

Ver. 8. *And Abijam ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city of David: and Aſa his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*

Ver. 9. *In the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Iſrael, reigned Aſa over Judah.*] In ſome part of that Year. See *ver.* 2.

Ver. 10. *And one and forty years reigned he in Jeruſalem: and his mothers name was Maacah the daughter of Abiſhalom.*] This was the Name of his Grand-mother; who is called his Mother, as *Roguel* is called the Father of *Jethro*'s Daughter, (*Exod.* ii. 18.) when he was their Grandfather. Which Example *Kimchi* here alledges to explain this. And thus *Abarbinel:* The Senſe is not, that *Maachah* brought forth *Aſa* (for ſhe was his Father's Mother) but ſhe brought him up and gave him his Education. Which made his Piety the more remarkable, that he was not tainted with her Principles of Religion as his Father was. But why his Mother ſhould not be mentioned, but his Grand-mother, which was not at all needful (becauſe it was evident, by what was ſaid before, that *Maachah* was the Mother of *Abijam* his Father) is unaccountable. And therefore others think that this was the Name of his Mother: Which was the ſame, as her Father's alſo was, with that of *Abijam*'s.

Ver. 11. *And Aſa did that which was right in the ſight of the* LORD, *as did David his father.*] He made him his Pattern: Worſhipping the LORD alone; and taking away all Idols, as it here follows.

Ver. 12. *And he took away the Sodomites out of the land, and removed all the idols that his father had made.*] Of which ſee xiv. 23, 24. But ſtill ſome ſecretly remained; and therefore when it is ſaid he *removed all* Idols, the Meaning is all that he could diſcover; for ſome lurked privately, xxii. 46.

Ver. 13. *And alſo Maacah his mother, even her he removed from being queen,*] He took away her Guards, all the Enſigns of Royal Dignity; and reduced her to the Condition of a private Perſon. But the Word *being* is not in the *Hebrew*; which others tranſlate, *he removed*

her from the Queen. That is, from his Wife; that she might not be infected with her Idolatry. He put her therefore out of the Court, where she gave a bad Example.

Because she had made an idol in a grove.] The Word we translate *idol*, is *Miphlezeth*, which imports something of Terror and Horror; either because it was of a frightful Aspect, or brought dreadful Judgments upon its Worshippers. St *Hierom* understands by it *Priapus*, or *Baal-Peor*, to whom the Women were much devoted. *Theodoret* takes it for *Astarte* or *Venus*: And indeed in the Northern Countries *Priapus* and *Venus* were painted together, as *Johan. Gensius* observes in his Book *De Victimis Humanis*, P. I. Cap. 9. Whatsoever it was, it was placed in a Grove; in which shady Places all the Works of Darkness, even Sodomy it self, were practised.

Asa destroyed her idol, and burnt it by the brook Kidron.] He cut it down, and having burnt it, stamped it to a Powder; and then threw it into the Brook *Kidron*; as *Moses* did with the Golden Calf, *Exod.* xxxii. 20. See 2 *Chron.* xv. 16.

Ver. 14. *But the high places were not removed: nevertheless, Asa his heart was perfect with the* LORD *all his days.*] He did take away all the high Places, wherein they sacrificed to strange Gods (2 *Chron.* xiv. 3.) but not those wherein God alone was worshipped: For his Authority was not great enough to do this; the People having so universally and so long taken this Licence, that none durst attempt to abolish this inveterate Custom 'till the Days of *Hezekiah*: Who seeing the Calamities that were coming upon his Country, endeavoured to prevent them, by a thorough Reformation. But though *Asa* did not venture to do this, yet his Heart was sincerely affected to the right Worship of God; and he suffered Sacrifices to be offered to none else.

Ver. 15. *And he brought in the things which his father had dedicated, and the things which himself had dedicated, into the house of the* LORD, *silver and gold, and vessels.*] According to the Piety of ancient Times, his Father had vowed some part of the Spoils he took in the War with *Jeroboam* unto the LORD; but had not Time to make good his Vow; or upon some Account or other neglected it. *Asa* his Son therefore made his Vow good; and also himself brought in what he had devoted unto holy Uses, (for so the Words are in the *Hebrew*, *he brought in the holy things of his father*, &c.) having gotten great Spoil in his War with the *Ethiopians*, 2 *Chron.* xiv. 13, 14.

Ver. 16. *And there was war between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days,*] There having been no Mention hitherto made of *Baasha*, this may seem not to stand in its proper Place. But *Abarbinel* thinks it is here inserted, that as this Divine Writer had shewn what his Virtues were, so he might now mention his Faults. The chief of which was occasioned by this War: Which moved him to send to *Benhadad* for Help; when he should have relied upon God; as it is related largely, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 7, &c.

Ver. 17. *And Baasha king of Israel went up against Judah,*] After *Asa* his great Victory over the *Ethiopians*, a great many of the *Israelites* fell off to him from *Baasha*: Who thereupon resolved to make War upon *Judah*, and thereby prevent a further Defection of his Subjects.

And built Ramah,] A City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*: Which either belonged to the Kingdom of *Israel*; or he had taken from *Judah* and fortified it; for that is meant by *building* it, as appears by what follows.

That he might not suffer any to go out, or come in to Asa king of Judah.] That he might hinder all Communication between his People and the People of *Judah*. For this Place lay in the Confines of both Kingdoms; and in such a Strait, that a Fortification being made there, none could pass to and fro without a Licence from *Baasha*.

Ver. 18. *Then Asa took all the silver and gold that was left in the treasures of the house of the* LORD, *and in the treasures of the kings house, and delivered them into the hands of his servants: And king Asa sent them to Benhadad, the son of Tabrimon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria, that dwelt at Damascus, saying,*] This was held lawful, in case of extream Danger, to employ sacred things for the Defence of one's Country. But here was no such Necessity in this Case; for God had appeared so wonderfully for *Asa*, against a more powerful Enemy than *Baasha*, that he ought to have confided in him for Help; as the Prophet *Hanani* told him, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 7, &c.

Ver. 19. *There is a league between me and thee, and between my father and thy father:*] In the latter End of *Solomon*'s Reign the *Syrians* were Enemies to him, xi. 24, 25. But when he was dead, and the Kingdom was divided, both *Judah* and *Israel* made Peace with the *Syrians*: Having enough to do, to settle themselves in their own Dominions.

Behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; come and break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart from me.] This was a wicked piece of Policy, to tempt him with Money to break his Word, which perhaps he had sworn to observe.

Ver. 20. *So Benhadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captain of his hosts, which he had,*] Always in a Readiness, for some Expedition, or for the Defence of his Country.

Against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah, and all Cinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali.] By this it appears, that he fell upon the Northern Part of the Kingdom of *Israel*, which was nearest to *Damascus*; whilst *Baasha* was busy at *Ramah*, which was in the more Southern Part of his Dominions.

Ver. 21. *And it came to pass, that when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of Ramah,*] By this Means *Asa* compassed his Ends; it not being safe for *Baasha* to continue the Work he was about, for fear *Benhadad* should make larger Conquests than he had already done.

And dwelt in Tirzath.] Which was become the Royal City, (See xiv. 17.) where *Baasha* settled

ſettled himſelf; though he intended, I ſuppoſe, when he had finiſhed *Ramah*, to have dwelt there ſome Part of the Year; that by his Preſence the Paſſages might have been the better ſecured.

Ver. 22 *Then king Aſa made a proclamation throughout all Judah (none was exempted)*] He ſummoned all the People of the Country; who were not diſabled by Age, or Sickneſs, or ſome other way,

And they took away the ſtones, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baaſha had builded, and king Aſa built with them Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah.] They were inhabited before, but he inlarged, and perhaps fortified them. Which he judged better than to perfect the Fortification of *Ramah*; which would have been a perpetual Bone of Contention (as we ſpeak) between *Judah* and *Iſrael*.

Ver. 23. *And the reſt of the acts of Aſa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See xi. 41.

Nevertheleſs in the time of his old age he was diſeaſed in his feet.] He had the Gout, as the *Gemara* of the *Sanhedrin* explains it, Cap. vi. N. 7. which made him leſs active than he had been before this Diſeaſe ſeized him.

Ver. 24. *And Aſa ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers, in the city of David his father: and Jehoſhaphat his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*

Ver 25. *And Nadab the ſon of Jeroboam began to reign over Iſrael in the ſecond year of Aſa king of Judah, and reigned over Iſrael two years.*] Part of two Years, as appears from *ver.* 28 and 33.

Ver. 26. *And he did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his ſin, wherewith he made Iſrael to ſin.*] By the Worſhip of the Golden Calves.

Ver. 27. *And Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah, of the houſe of Iſſachar,*] That is, of a Family in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*.

Conſpired againſt him, and Baaſha ſmote him at Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philiſtines (for Nadab and all Iſrael laid ſiege to Gibbethon.] It was a City in the Tribe of *Dan*, *Joſh.* xix. 44. and given to the *Levites*, xxi. 23. who quitted it, as they did the reſt of their Cities, when *Jeroboam* would not ſuffer them to execute their Office (2 *Chron.* xi. 14.) and the *Philiſtines* it is likely ſeized upon it, being adjoining to their Country. But *Nadab* now endeavoured to recover it out of their Hands, as of right belonging to him.

Ver. 28. *Even in the third year of Aſa king of Judah did Baaſha ſlay him, and reigned in his ſtead.*] What was the Pretence for this Conſpiracy we are not told; but it is likely he had many joined with him in it; otherwiſe it had not been eaſy to ſlay him, when he was in the midſt of his Army before *Gibbethon*.

Ver. 29. *And it came to paſs, when he reigned, that he ſmote all the houſe of Jeroboam, he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed, until he had deſtroyed him, according to the ſaying of the LORD, which he ſpake by Ahijah the Shilonite:*] His Intention was not to fulfil this Prophecy (mentioned xiv. 10.) but to ſecure himſelf in his uſurped Throne, by cutting off all that had any Title to it. But by this Means God fulfilled his own Intentions; and that as ſpeedily as *Ahijah* the Prophet had foretold, xiv. 14.

Ver. 30. *Becauſe of the ſins of Jeroboam which he ſinned, and which he made Iſrael to ſin by his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD God of Iſrael to anger.*] Which cauſed great Miſeries in *Iſrael*; eſpecially in the Beginning of that Kingdom; when they reigned by Force, not by Succeſſion. Whereas in *Judah* the Son ſucceeded the Father, by right of Blood, according to the Promiſe made to *David*.

Ver. 31. *Now the reſt of the acts of Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?*] His Acts could not be many; yet more were recorded in the publick *Annals* than are here mentioned, xi. 41.

Ver. 32. *And there was war between Aſa and Baaſha king of Iſrael, all their days.*] We read the very ſame Words before (*ver.* 16.) in the Hiſtory of *Aſa*; which are now repeated in the Hiſtory of *Baaſha*, to ſhew the Reaſon why *Aſa* was his Enemy, which he would not have been (but his Friend) had he feared God after his cutting off the whole Houſe of *Jeroboam*. But he would make no Covenant with him, notwithſtanding he had fulfilled the Word of God, becauſe he walked in the Sins of *Jeroboam*. Thus *Abarbinel*.

Ver. 33. *And in the third year of Aſa king of Judah, began Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah to reign over all Iſrael in Tirzah, twenty and four years.*

Ver. 34. *And he did evil in the ſight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his ſin wherewith he made Iſrael to ſin.*] Which makes it evident, that he did not cut off *Jeroboam*'s Family becauſe they were Idolaters; but becauſe he aſpired to the Throne; which when he poſſeſſed, he endeavoured to eſtabliſh himſelf in it, by the ſame wicked Policy which *Jeroboam* uſed. For he reformed nothing in Religion; but continued to worſhip the Calves which *Jeroboam* had ſet up; to keep the People from going to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*.

CHAP. XVI.

Verſe 1. *AND the word of the LORD came to Jehu the ſon of Hanani againſt Baaſha, ſaying,*] This is a Prophet that lived till the End of *Jehoſhaphat*'s Reign. See 2 *Chron.* xix. 1. xx. 34. And his Father *Hanani* was a Prophet before him, 2 *Chron.* xvi. 7. Nor was there wanting a Succeſſion of Prophets during the Kingdoms of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, as *Abarbinel* hath obſerved through every Reign, their Names being ſet down in holy Scripture: He hath ſhewn in a Catalogue he hath made of the Kings, and the Prophets in their Time; too long to be here tranſcribed.

Ver. 2. *Forasmuch as I have exalted thee out of the dust,*] It seems he was of a mean Family in the Tribe of *Issachar*. Perhaps, but a common Soldier, or some small Officer in the Army which laid Siege to *Gibbethon*; but being bold and daring, formed a Conspiracy against *Nadab*.

And made thee prince of my people Israel,] God's Providence interposed, that nothing should hinder the Success of his Design against *Nadab*: Because he intended to make use of him to punish the House of *Jeroboam*.

And thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger by their sins:] Continued them in their Idolatry; against which he ought to have shewn the greatest Zeal; because it provoked God's Anger against the Family of *Jeroboam*.

Ver. 3. *Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house: and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.*] So that neither any of his own Children, or the Children of any of his Relations should remain; but his Name be quite put out.

Ver. 4. *Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat: and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat.*] The very same Threatning that was pronounced against *Jeroboam* and his Posterity, by *Ahijah*, xiv. 11.

Ver. 5. *Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*

Ver. 6. *So Baasha slept with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah, and Elah his son reigned in his stead.*] He was not slain, as *Nadab* was; but died, as *Jeroboam* did; and his Son suffered like his, *ver.* 9, 10.

Ver. 7. *And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani, came the word of the* LORD *against Baasha, and against his house,*] This Command of God being given to *Jehu*, *ver.* 1. he executed it, and delivered this Message to *Baasha* some Time before he died. Which is said to be done *by the hand of Jehu*, because he was the Minister of God in this Business.

Even for all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, *in provoking him to anger with the work of his hands; in being like to Jeroboam, and because he killed him.*] That is, killed *Nadab*, who was *Jeroboam*'s Son: Or rather (as *Abarbinel* judiciously observes) that relates to the whole House of *Jeroboam* before-mentioned; which *Baasha* destroyed not because they were Idolaters, and that he might fulfil the Word of the LORD (as perhaps he pretended) but to satisfy his own Ambition, being guilty of the very same Crime that *Jeroboam* was: And therefore was no better than a Murderer in the Slaughter he made of his Family; and accordingly is threatned to be punished for that very Act, which was committed, not in Obedience to God, but to serve himself.

Ver. 8. *And in the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah, began Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel*] This seems to contradict what *Ezra* saith in 2 *Chron.* xvi. that *Baasha* built *Ramah* in the thirty-sixth Year of *Asa*. Of which I shall give an Account in my Notes on that Place. For the present it may suffice to say, that *Ezra* doth not speak of the thirty-sixth Year of *Asa*'s Reign, but of the thirty-sixth Year after the Division of the Kingdom. For it could be, at the most, but the twenty-sixth Year of *Asa*'s Reign when *Baasha* died.

In Tirzah, two years.] Not compleat; but one intire Year, and part of another: As appears from *ver.* 10, and 15.

Ver. 9. *And his servant (Zimri, captain of half of his chariots)*] A considerable Commander in his Army, who had a great Interest in the Soldiery.

Conspired against him as he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, steward of his house in Tirzah.] He seems to have been a debauched young Man, who staid at home following his Pleasures, whilst his Army was besieging *Gibbethon*, ver. 15. Which gave *Zimri*, who it is likely was Captain of his Guard, the better Opportunity to kill him.

Ver. 10. *And Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him in the twenty-seventh year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned in his stead.*] Here was a speedy Execution of the Vengeance threatned against him by *Jehu*, that God would make his House like the House of *Jeroboam*, ver. 3. For as *Nadab* the Son of *Jeroboam* reigned but two Years, xv. 25. so *Elah* the Son of *Baasha* reigned no more: And then, as *Nadab* was killed with the Sword, so was *Elah*. Thus, as *Abarbinel* notes, there was a wonderful Likeness between *Jeroboam* and *Baasha*, in their Lives, and in their Deaths; in their Sons, and in their Family.

Ver. 11. *And it came to pass when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he slew all the house of Baasha: he left not one that pisseth against the wall,*] That is, not a Man. See xiv. 10.

Neither of his kinsfolk, nor of his friends.] He not only destroyed all that were descended from *Baasha*, as *Baasha* had done the Family of *Jeroboam*; but he extended the Destruction, and increased it, as *Abarbinel* speaks for he killed all that were of Kin to *Baasha*, with all his Friends, which *Baasha* did not: This seems to be contained in the Threatning of *Jehu*, *ver.* 3.

Ver. 12. *Thus Zimri destroyed all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the* LORD, *which he spake against Baasha by Jehu the prophet;*] Ver. 1, 2, 7.

Ver. 13. *For all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son,*] This shews that *Elah* walked in his Father's Ways; though it be not before mentioned.

By which they sinned, and by which they made Israel to sin, in provoking the LORD *God of Israel to anger with their vanities.*] So the Golden Calves are called, being (as *Forsterus* well translates the Word) *Commentitia numina*, Gods of their own devising. See 1 *Sam.* xii. 21.

Ver. 14. *Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] Here is no mention of *his Might* (as there is of his Father's,

ther's, *ver.* 5.) for he was, as I ſaid, a Man of Pleaſure.

Ver. 15. *In the twenty-ſeventh year of Aſa king of Judah did Zimri reign ſeven days in Tirzah: and the people were encamped againſt Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philiſtines.*] Which had been beſieged many Years ago, when *Baaſha* ſlew *Nadab*, xv. 27. But was then relieved, or afterward retaken by the *Philiſtines*, while the *Iſraelites* were in a diſtracted Condition; but now again inveſted.

Ver. 16. *And the people that were encamped heard ſay, Zimri hath conſpired, and hath alſo ſlain the king:*] Had Succeſs in his Conſpiracy, and made himſelf King.

Wherefore all Iſrael made Omri, the captain of the hoſt, king over Iſrael that day in the camp.] Juſt as the *Roman* Army, in After-times, made their chief Commander *Emperor*.

Ver. 17. *And Omri went up from Gibbethon, and all Iſrael with him,*] All the Army that were at the Siege.

And beſieged Tirzah.] Where *Zimri*, a more dangerous Enemy, was.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs, when Zimri ſaw that the city was taken,*] Which he was not able to defend, againſt a powerful Army; from whom he ſuſpected no Oppoſition; but hoped they would have let him reign as quietly as they did *Baaſha*.

That he went into the palace of the kings houſe,] Into the ſtrongeſt Part of the Houſe.

And burnt the kings houſe over him with fire, and died;] He was afraid, I ſuppoſe, of ſuffering ſome ſhameful Puniſhment, if he had been taken alive; and therefore choſe to die deſperately in this manner. So *Sardanapalus* ended his Life.

Ver. 19. *For his ſins which he ſinned, in doing evil in the ſight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his ſin which he ſinned, to make Iſrael to ſin.*] Though he lived but a very ſhort Time after he uſurped the Crown, yet he gave ſufficient Demonſtration of his Reſolution to continue the Idolatry of *Jeroboam*; and therefore was abandoned by God.

Ver. 20. *Now the reſt of the acts of Zimri, and the treaſon which he wrought, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?*] It is likely, other Acts that he did before he conſpired againſt *Elah*, were recorded in that Book; together with the Manner how he wrought his Treaſon.

Ver. 21. *Then were the people of Iſrael divided into two parts:*] For when it is ſaid, *ver.* 16. *all Iſrael* made *Omri* King in the Camp; the Meaning is, only the whole Army, and they that attended them.

Half of the people followed Tibni the ſon of Ginath, to make him king;] For they did not like to have a King impoſed upon them by the Soldiery; and *Tibni* had as good a Title as the other, being alſo a valiant Man; who ſucceeded *Zimri*, perhaps, in his Command, as Captain of half his Chariots.

And half followed Omri.] As already advanced to the Royal Dignity; and a greater Man than *Tibni*; being Captain of the whole Hoſt.

Ver. 22. *And the people that followed Omri prevailed againſt the people that followed Tibni the ſon of Ginath:*] For *Omri* had the Advantage of having the Army on his Side.

So Tibni died.] In this Civil War (into which they fell by God's juſt Judgment upon them) many of the People, in all likelihood, died together with him.

And Omri reigned.] Without Competitor. The *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba*, whom *Raſi* and others follow, ſay it contributed much to his Advancement, that *Aſa* King of *Judah* married his Son *Jehoſhaphat* to *Omri*'s Daughter. For which they have no other Ground, but that it is ſaid, 2 *Chron.* xviii. 1. *he joined in affinity with Ahab.*

Ver. 23. *In the thirty and one year of Aſa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Iſrael twelve years:*] Theſe twelve Years of his Reign are to be computed not from the thirty-firſt of *Aſa*'s Reign; for it is evident he began to reign in the twenty-ſeventh Year of *Aſa*, *ver.* 15. and his Son began to reign in the thirty-eighth Year of *Aſa*, *ver.* 29. Therefore the twelve Years are to be computed from the Beginning of *Omri*'s Reign: Which was, as I ſaid, the twenty-ſeventh of *Aſa*'s. From which Time (as *Abarbinel* obſerves) the Conteſt continued between *Omri* and *Tibni*; unto the thirty-firſt Year of King *Aſa*. In the End of which *Tibni* died; and then *Omri* reigned over all *Iſrael*, whereas he reigned but over half the People before. And *Tibni* being extinct, all the foregoing Years are accounted to *Omri*; viz. from the Beginning of *Aſa*'s ſeven and twentieth Year, when *Zimri* died, to the End of this eight and thirtieth Year, which make twelve Years.

Six years reigned he in Tirzah.] Half of his Time he made this his Royal Seat; which was, as ſome think, all the Time his Contention with *Tibni* laſted, and ſome Time after.

Ver. 24. *And he bought the hill of Samaria of Shemer, for two talents of ſilver; and built upon the hill, and called the name of the city which he built after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill of Samaria.*] The King's Houſe in *Tirzah* being burnt, as we read *ver.* 18. he built a Royal Palace in this City, which he alſo built upon this Hill; and called it after the Name of him, who was the Owner of it before he bought it, *viz. Shemer*, from whom it had the *Hebrew* Name of *Shomeron*. Which was ever after made the Royal Seat of the Kings of *Iſrael*

Ver. 25. *But Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worſe than all that were before him.*] For he not only walked in the Way of *Jeroboam*, but; it is likely, began to introduce other Idolatries, which his Son *Ahab* eſtabliſhed among them. Or, he compelled the People to worſhip the Calves; and by ſevere Laws reſtrained the People from going up to *Jeruſalem:* Which, as ſome think, are meant by *the ſtatutes of Omri*, *Micah* vi. 16.

Ver. 26. *For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, and in his ſin wherewith he made Iſrael to ſin, to provoke the LORD God of Iſrael to anger with their vanities.*] Though he had

had ſeen *Elah*, and all the whole Houſe of *Baaſha* deſtroyed by his Predeceſſor for their Idolatry, and *Zimri* himſelf periſhed in the ſame Sin, (*ver.* 13, 19.) yet he perſiſted in their Iniquity, and brought down the Wrath of God upon him, and upon his Family, as the foregoing Kings had done.

Ver. 27. *Now the reſt of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might which he ſhewed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?*] It ſeems he was a valiant Man, which *Elah* was not; concerning whoſe *Might* there is no mention, as I noted upon *ver.* 14.

Ver. 28. *So Omri ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria,*] Which now began, as I ſaid, to be the Royal City of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, as *Jeruſalem* was of *Judah*.

And Ahab his ſon reigned in his ſtead.] Who was ſo eminent upon ſeveral Accounts, that we have a long Account of him, in the following part of this Book.

Ver. 29. *And in the thirty-eighth year of Aſa king of Judah, began Ahab the ſon of Omri to reign over Iſrael; and Ahab reigned over Iſrael in Samaria, twenty and two years.*] In this Space of Time *Aſa* ſaw ſix Kings of *Iſrael* buried; whilſt *Judah* flouriſhed under one and the ſame King: Which no doubt was a great Advantage to them.

Ver. 30. *And Ahab the ſon of Omri did evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *above all that were before him.*] Was more idolatrous than his Father *Omri*: For he brought in the Worſhip of *Baal*, (as it follows in the next Verſe) that is, of the Sun, and of all the Hoſt of Heaven.

Ver. 31. *And it came to paſs, as if it had been a light thing to him to walk in the way of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat;*] He was not ſatisfied with the Worſhip which *Jeroboam* had invented, though highly diſpleaſing to God. For ſo the Words are in the *Hebrew*, *was it a light thing?* As much as to ſay, it was a moſt heinous Crime; and yet *Ahab* reſolved to be more wicked. For *Jeroboam* did not quite forſake the LORD God of *Iſrael*, but worſhipped him by a Repreſentation of his own Invention: And this more out of Policy than any Love to this kind of Worſhip. But *Ahab*, out of pure Love to ſtrange gods, forſook the LORD, without any ſuch Reaſon for it as *Jeroboam* had; the People being now ſufficiently eſtranged from *Jeruſalem*.

That he took to wife Jezabel the daughter of Eth-baal] Called in profane Writers *Ithobalus*.

King of the Zidonians,] Who had been old Idolaters.

And ſerved Baal, and worſhipped him.] That God whom the *Chaldeans* and *Babylonians* called *Bel*, the *Phœnicians* (of whom the *Zidonians* were a Part) called *Baal*: Which in *Hebrew* ſignified *Lord*. Which anciently was the Name of the true God, as Mr *Selden* obſerves; but when the World grew wicked, was given to the Sun by the *Phœnicians*: Who, as *Philo Biblius* tells us, reputed the Sun to be μόνον οὐρανῦ θεόν, *The only God of Heaven*. And at laſt this Name was given to other Stars, and to their dead Kings, whoſe Memory was dear to them. And various Rites, Ceremonies, and Sacrifices, were deviſed in their Honour, as that great Man obſerves (*Syntag. de Diis Syris* 2. Cap. 1.) who underſtands theſe words of the *Phœnician Belus* or *Baal*, who was the very ſame with the *European Jupiter*: And *Zidon* being ſituated on the Sea, their *Baal* was called by the *Greeks* the *Sea Jupiter*. So *Heſychius* Θαλάσσιος Ζεὺς ἐν Σιδῶνι τιμᾶται, *the Sea Jupiter is worſhipped at Sidon*. But our Mr *Mede* is very confident, that the *Baal* whoſe Worſhip *Jezabel* brought with her from *Zidon*, was a deify'd King of the *Phœnicians*: As *Baal* was the firſt King of *Babel*, who was deify'd after his Death. Whence all the Souls of Men who were canonized after Death, were called *Baalim*. See *Book* i. *Diſcourſe* xlii. and his *Apoſtacy of the later times*, P. 1. Cap. 3. Whence it came that there were not more *Jupiters* among the *Europeans*, than there were *Baals* among the *Syrians*. And hence ſo many Mountains, and Springs, and Woods, and Cities, were called by the Name of *Baal*, when *Joſhua* conquered *Canaan*; As *Baal-Meon*, *Bamoth-Baal*, *Baal-Gad*, *Baal-Thamar*, *Baal-Zephon*, and many more. In which Places no doubt *Baalim* were worſhipped, and from thence they had their Names.

Ver. 32. *And he reared up an altar for Baal in the houſe of Baal, which he had built in Samaria.*] He built a Temple for this God in the Royal City; and ſet up an Altar, where he ſacrificed to him. Which was more directly to worſhip other gods, than *Jeroboam* did: Who pretended the Worſhip he performed to the Calves, was to the true God; whom he honoured in them.

Ver. 33. *And Ahab made a grove;*] Which was another Piece of Idolatry; which God commanded to be aboliſhed, *Deut.* vii. 5.

And Ahab did more to provoke the LORD *God of Iſrael to anger, than all the kings of Iſrael that were before him.*] In this Grove, it is likely, all manner of Impurities were practiſed: For *Jezabel* was a filthy Woman.

Ver. 34. *In his days did Hiel the Bethelite*] A Man that lived in the very Seat of Idolatry: And, it is likely, was deeply infected with it.

Build Jericho:] A Place which being under a *Cherem*, was never to be rebuilt; becauſe it was devoted to God, as the firſt Fruits of the Conqueſts of *Canaan*. Which this Man either did not know, (becauſe ignorant of the Law, which now was little read) or was ſo impious as not to regard the Words of *Joſhua*, believing no other God but *Baal*.

He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firſt-born, and ſet up the gates thereof in his youngeſt ſon Segub; according to the word of the LORD, *which he ſpake by Joſhua the ſon of Nun.*] But he found to his Coſt, that the Sentence which *Joſhua* pronounced againſt the Rebuilder of this City proved true; for his eldeſt Son died when he laid the firſt Stone of it: And ſo all the reſt of his Children, one after another, as the Building advanced; 'till at laſt his youngeſt Son died, when it was finiſhed. A moſt remarkable Inſtance of the Certainty of Divine Threatnings; and that God never forgets what he hath ſaid, but continues alſo always the ſame. This Sentence

being pronounced more than four hundred and forty Years ago, and now fulfilled exactly in all its Circumſtances: Which might have been a Warning to the whole Nation, not to deſpiſe the long Suffering and Patience of God; who though he had not yet carried them out of their good Land, according to the Word of *Ahijah*, xiv. 15. would certainly do it, if they continued in their Impenitence.

CHAP. XVII.

Verſe 1. *AND Elijah the Tiſhbite,*] The Care of God over this People (as I noted before) was ſo great, that in every King's Reign, from the firſt to the laſt, there was one or more Prophets to inſtruct, admoniſh, and correct them. And now in the Reign of *Ahab* (when there was the greateſt need of it) God raiſed up an extraordinary Prophet far exceeding all others, whom *Abarbinel* calls the *Prince of the Prophets*, next unto *Moſes*. Whoſe Original being not known (for here is no mention of his Father or Mother) ſome of the *Jews* have fancied him to have been an Angel ſent from Heaven to reduce them to the true Religion. So *Abarbinel* relates, upon the Book of *Judges*, as *Joh. Friſchmuthus* obſerves, in a *Diſſertation* about *Elijah*. Whoſe Name, which in the *Hebrew* is *Elijahu*, carries ſomething Divine in it; being compounded, *Ægid. Camartus* imagines, of three of the Names of God, *viz. Eli*, and *Jah*, and *Hu*. There is no Doubt, the two firſt are the Names of God, but there is Reaſon to queſtion the laſt, though a great Man of our own, *Edm. Caſtellus*, in his *Polyglot Lexicon*, doth put *Hu* among the Divine Names, and ſo do the *Cabbaliſts*. He was indeed a very eminent Meſſenger of God, ſent to call the *Iſraelites* to Repentance; from whence our learned Dr *Lightfoot* thinks he had the Name of *Thiſbite*: From the *Hebrew* Word *Shub*, which ſignifies to *return*; for he was ſent to be the *Converter* of the Nation. See him upon St *Luke* i. 17. Other Conjectures there are about this Name, which *Friſchmuth* hath collected; and *Dionyſius Petavius* hath delivered his Opinion about it, upon *Epiphanius* (*Hæreſ.* lv. n. 3.) who ſaith *Elijah* was ἐξ ἱερέων of the Prieſts, and Grandſon to *Zadok*. But *Kimchi* ſeems to have given the plaineſt Account of this Name of *Thiſhbite*, from *Thesbe* a Town or Region where he was born: Juſt as *Ahijah* is called *Shilonite*, from *Shilo*, where he was born, or dwelt.

Who was of the inhabitants of Gilead,] It is not certain, that he was a Native of this Country; but only that he came, and ſettled among the *Gileadites*; being born, as ſome think, in the Tribe of *Benjamin*; though moſt are rather of Opinion in the Tribe of *Gad*.

Said unto Ahab, As the LORD liveth, before whom I ſtand, there ſhall not be dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word.] To make his Words the more regarded, he ſwore ſolemnly by the Eternal God, whoſe Miniſter he was (for that is meant by *ſtanding before him*) and to whom he had prayed, that there ſhould be no Moiſture from the Clouds for three Years and an half enſuing; unleſs it was by his Prayers. Thus St *James* teaches us to expound theſe Words, *theſe years: James* v. 17. And *Abarbinel* makes out the Connection of this Chapter with the foregoing in this manner. *Elijah* admoniſhed *Ahab* to lay to Heart the Puniſhment of *Hiel* the *Bethelite*; ſaying, fear the LORD leſt he be angry with thee, as he was with *Hiel*, for breaking his Command. But *Ahab* deſpiſed his Admonition, and ſaid; that was a Chance; for you ſay we are all Idolaters, and yet the Threatning in the Law of *Moſes* (*Deut.* xi. 16, 17.) is not come upon us. Whereupon *Elijah* in a great Anger ſaid; *as the LORD liveth there ſhall be no dew*, &c. Which Story is told with more Circumſtances in the *Talmud*.

Ver. 2. *And the word of the LORD came to him, ſaying,*] The King being incenſed at this Threatning, God took care to ſecure *Elijah* from his Fury, by the following Direction.

Ver. 3. *Get thee hence,*] For he ſaw that *Ahab* intended to lay hold of him.

And turn thee eaſtward, and hide thy ſelf by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.] This Brook *Bochartus* takes to be the ſame with *Kana*, mentioned by *Joſhua*, xvi. 5. xvii. 9. So called from the Plenty of *Reeds* (for *Kana* ſignifies a *Reed*) in which the Prophet lay hid, while he ſtayed in this Place.

Ver. 4. *And it ſhall be, that thou ſhalt drink of the brook, and I will command the ravens to feed thee there.*] This ſeems ſo ſtrange, that ſome will have the Word *Orebim* not to ſignify *Ravens*, but *Merchants*: Becauſe they find the Word *Orebe* in *Ezek.* xxvii. 17. ſignifying Merchants that traded in the Market of *Tyre*. But as *Bochartus* hath obſerved, they are never called ſimply *Orebim*. Nor is their Opinion better, who think *Arabians* to be here meant: For there were none thereabout; and *Elias* his lurking-place would ſoon have been diſcoverd to *Ahab*, if Merchants, or any other People that travelled that Way, had been acquainted with it. We muſt therefore acknowledge a miraculous Care which God took of *Elijah*, as all the Ancients do, none excepted. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* xiii. Nor did ſuch Things ſeem incredible to the Heathen; who tell us as ſtrange Stories. For Example, that *Jupiter* was fed in his Cradle by Bees: And *Janus* the Son of *Apollo* and *Evadne* with Honey by Dragons: and *Midas* when an Infant, had Corn put into his Mouth, as he lay aſleep, by Ants: *Æſculapius* nouriſhed by a Goat; and a great many more mentioned by that excellent Perſon *Huetius* in his *Quæſtiones Alnetanæ*, Lib. 2. Cap. xii. N. 17.

Ver. 5. *So he went, and did according to the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.*

Ver. 6. *And the ravens brought him bread and fleſh in the morning, and bread and fleſh in the evening: and he drank of the brook.*] God amply provided for his Servant; ſending him not only Bread, but Fleſh alſo, that he might make a good Meal: And this twice a Day, at Dinner and Supper. This Proviſion ſome of the *Jews* fancy (in *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. xi. N. 76.) the Ravens brought from *Ahab*'s Houſe; others fancy, from *Jehoſhaphat's*; as

as if he was fed with Royal Dainties. But *Bochartus* thinks it is better to say, that they had this Provision from some of the seven thousand Persons who had never bowed to *Baal*. But it is best of all to confess we cannot tell whence they had it; God perhaps making Meat ready prepared, on purpose for him. They who object that these were unclean Creatures who polluted the Meat which they touched, should consider, that all this was done by an extraordinary Dispensation. And St *Chrysostom* fancies, there was this moral Instruction in it; that *Elijah* should learn to be more mild and gentle, toward the deluded *Israelites*; by these Birds, who were cruel to their young, but kind to him. And indeed it is very wonderful, as *Victorinus Strigellius* here glosses, that the Ravens, who do not feed their own young ones, should constantly feed the Prophet. For such is the ἀσοργία of these Creatures, as Naturalists report, that they forsake their young before they be fledged: Whom God feeds by Worms, which are produced by the Dung, and out of the Carcases that have been brought into their Nests, 'till they be able to fly, and provide for themselves. I think he hath this out of St *Ambrose*, *L. x. Epist.* 82. The *Psalmist* is thought to allude to it, *Psal.* cxlvii. 9. And God himself in *Job* xxxviii. 41.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain.*] In the *Hebrew* it is, *at the end of days*, that is, of a Year: As that Phrase, I have shewn, is often used.

Ver. 8. *And the word of the* LORD *came to him, saying,*

Ver. 9. *Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there:*] It was a Place between *Tyre* and *Zidon*; but belonged to the Territory of the latter; and so was not in the Land of *Israel*, but inhabited by *Gentiles*.

Behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.] He had appointed and disposed her, just as he did the Ravens, *ver.* 4. For she had no Command from God for it (it appears from *ver.* 12.) and this was an extraordinary Providence, that a poor Widow, and a Gentile should support him; though in all likelihood, she was not a Stranger to the true Religion, but a pious Woman of another Nation.

Ver. 10. *So he arose, and went to Zarephath: and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering sticks:*] Which shews she was but in a poor Condition.

And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink.] For he knew, by a Divine Inspiration, this was the Woman that was to sustain him.

Ver. 11. *And as she was going to fetch it,*] This shews she was a good Woman; being ready to succour a Stranger.

He called unto her and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand.] Which was very natural to desire, having asked for Water: But he said it to move her to acquaint him with what follows.

Ver. 12 *And she said, As the* LORD *thy God liveth,*] By this it appears she knew the LORD God of *Israel*; and that *Elijah* was a Prophet; or, at least, one of his Worshippers.

I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oyl in a cruse: and I am gathering two sticks,] By *two sticks* is meant a few: As *two* frequently signifies, *Isa.* xvii. 6. *Jerem.* iii. 14.

That I may go, and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.] The famine it seems was sore in that Country, as well as in *Israel*. For they of *Zidon* had their Provision from the *Israelites*; and besides, it is likely, had no Rain: But were punished as their Neighbours were; being all alike Idolaters.

Ver. 13. *And Elijah said unto her, Fear not;*] Be not afraid of being famished.

Go, and do as thou hast said: but make me a little cake thereof first, and bring it unto me; and after that make for thee, and for thy son.] A very hard Command: Whereby he tried her Faith and Obedience.

Ver. 14. *For thus said the* LORD *God of Israel, the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oyl fail, until the day that the* LORD *send rain on the earth.*] This was a Miracle, which they that were not Christians did not think incredible: As *Huetius* shews in the same Book, and the Chapter above mentioned, *ver.* 4.

Ver. 15. *And she went, and did according to the saying of Elijah:*] By which it is evident that she trusted in the LORD God of *Israel*.

And she, and he, and her house did eat many days.] Some by *many days* understood a full Year: As it is the Margin. But it rather signifies *two years:* For one year was past before he came from the Brook *Cherith*. (See *ver.* 7.) And therefore they lived upon this Meal and Oil two Years more, 'till the End of the Famine.

Ver. 16. *And the barrel of meal wasted not; neither did the cruse of oyl fail, according to the word of the* LORD *which he spake by Elijah.*] But what they took out for their daily Use, was immediately supplied by the Power of God.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass after these things,*] After this Demonstration of the Power and Goodness of God,

That the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick, and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.] He expired and died.

Ver. 18. *And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God?*] Some take the Meaning to be, *wherein have I offended thee?* But the following Words seem to imply, that in a great Agony of Spirit she asked him wherefore he came to her House, if this were his Intention.

Art thou come to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?] This she thought was hard, to requite his Entertainment at her House with such a Punishment for her Sins. For then Sins are said to be *called to remembrance* before God, when he punishes them.

Ver. 19. *And he said unto her, Give me thy son.*] He reached out his Hands, and bid her put him into his Arms.

And he took him out of her bosom,] It seems he was but a little Child: Who the *Jews* think afterwards proved a Prophet, *viz. Jonah*.

And carried him up into a loft, where he abode,] The LXX tranſlate it ὑπερῶον, an upper Room: Which he had to himſelf for his Study, Meditation, and Prayer; as *Eliſha* afterwards had in another Place, 2 *Kings* iv. 10.

And laid him upon his own bed.] By this it appears it was a private Room, where he lodged.

Ver. 20. *And he cried unto the LORD,*] Prayed moſt earneſtly.

And ſaid; O LORD my God, haſt thou alſo brought evil upon the widow, with whom I ſojourn, by ſlaying her ſon?] He humbly expoſtulated with God; Repreſenting what an Addition it was to his other Afflictions, that this Widow ſhould ſuffer, who had been ſo kind to him; and ſuffer in her Son, the great Comfort of her Life; and that while he was in her Houſe.

Ver. 21. *And he ſtretched himſelf upon the child three times, and cried unto the LORD, and ſaid, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this childs ſoul come into him again.*] He lay proſtrate in Prayer before God, and ſtretched out himſelf upon the Child, as if he would inſpire him with a new Life. And this he did three Times; believing God would be moved by his Importunity, to do what he deſired.

Ver. 22. *And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah, and the ſoul of the child came into him again, and he revived.*] Hereby it appeared not only that this was done by God, to whom *Elijah* prayed; but that he did it for *Elijah*'s ſake.

Ver. 23. *And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the houſe, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah ſaid, See, thy ſon liveth.*] There was no need, one would think, to bid her obſerve and lay to Heart the great Power and Mercy of God, in reſtoring her Son to Life. But the beſt of us muſt be awakened to our Duty.

Ver. 24. *And the woman ſaid to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God;*] She believed it before, *ver.* 20. But when ſhe ſaw he did not cure her Child when he lay ſick, but ſuffered him to die, ſhe began to doubt of it. But her Faith revived, together with her Son, and was mightily confirmed.

And that the word of the LORD in thy mouth, is truth.] She believed all that he delivered as the Mind of God; and gave up her ſelf intirely to his Inſtructions. The Benefit of which ſhe enjoyed, 'till God ſent *Elijah* to meet *Ahab*; reſolving to ſend Rain upon the Earth, as it follows in the next Chapter.

CHAP. XVIII.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs after many days,*] See upon *ver.* 15. of the foregoing Chapter. *Grotius* expounds it *after ſix months*, upon St *Luke* iv. 25.

That the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, ſaying,] Our Saviour ſaith, and ſo doth St *James*, that the Drought continued three Years and ſix Months, *Luke* iv. 25. *James* v. 17. which doth not diſagree with theſe Words, which are thus to be explained. At the Beginning of the Drought it is likely *Ahab* imputed the want of Rain to Natural Cauſes, and ſo did not ſeek to ſlay *Elijah*: But after ſix Months neither the former nor the latter Rain falling in their Seaſon, he began to be enraged at him as the Cauſe of the Drought: Which forced *Elijah*, at God's Command, to ſave his Life by Flight. And from that Time the three Years here mentioned are to be computed; before the Word of the LORD came to him: He being one Year at the Brook *Cherith*, and two Years at *Sarepta*; in the End of which Year God took pity upon the Country, having fulfilled the Words of *Elijah*, xvii. 1. I ſee no Ground for *Abarbinel*'s Obſervation, that the Famine continued three Years, to ſhew that it was a Puniſhment inflicted for the Sins of three Families: *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat*, and his Son *Nadab*; *Baaſha*, and his Son *Elah*; *Omri*, and his Son *Ahab*. The Obſervation of *Grotius* is far better upon St *Luke* iv. 25. See there.

Go ſhew thy ſelf unto Ahab; and I will ſend rain upon the earth.] He would not deſtroy the Earth becauſe it was inhabited by wicked Men (as *Abarbinel* ſpeaks) and yet would have them know that *Elijah*'s Prayers procured Mercy for them.

Ver. 2. *And Elijah went to ſhew himſelf unto Ahab: and there was a ſore famine in Samaria.*] Which made it the more dangerous for him to appear in *Ahab*'s Preſence: Leſt being ſo ſorely afflicted, he ſhould in his Rage cauſe him to be killed, before he could deliver his Meſſage to him.

Ver. 3. *And Ahab called Obadiah which was the governour of his houſe:*] Some, both *Jews* and Chriſtians, think this was *Obadiah* the Prophet: For which I can find no Ground, but what is ſaid in 2 *Chron.* xvii. 7. that *Obadiah* was one of the Princes whom *Jehoſhaphat* ſent to inſtruct the People. And *Ezra* from the next Words infers he was not a Prophet.

(*Now Obadiah feared the LORD greatly:*] Was a truly religious Man, and worſhipped the LORD alone with great Affection to his Service: Which one would have expected ſhould have made *Ahab* diſcard him, if not perſecute him. But, I ſuppoſe, he was ſo very uſeful a Servant to him, in the Management of the affairs of his Family (which he ordered with ſingular Prudence and Fidelity) that he connived at his not worſhipping *Baal*, nor the Calves. Eſpecially ſince he did not (we may well think) go up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip; with which Defect God was pleaſed to diſpenſe, as *Ahab* did with his Religion.

Ver. 4. *For it was ſo, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD,*] There were Schools of the Prophets, it is likely, ſtill remaining in *Iſrael*, unto her Time; but ſhe endeavoured to deſtroy them, and thoſe who were bred up in them; that there might be none to inſtruct the People in the true Religion. For ſuch, I ſuppoſe, are here meant; not thoſe that were indued with the extraordinary Gift of Prophecy; for *Elijah* ſaith, *ver.* 22. that he only was left a Prophet of the LORD; though that may ſignify no more, but that he knew of no body beſide.

That Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave,] Which was an Act of great Piety and Zeal; whereby he hazarded his own Life.

And fed them with bread and water.)] Sent them Meat and Drink privately every Day.

Ver. 5. *And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts.*] Many were dead for want of Grass, which he hoped they might find growing in such moist Places, enough to preserve the rest.

Ver. 6. *So they divided the land between them, to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.*] *Ahab* would make this Search himself, lest it should not be done faithfully by others; who might be persuaded by Prayers and Intreaties, or the Presents of those who had any Grass, not to discover it. Only he trusted *Obadiah*.

Ver. 7. *And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou my lord Elijah?*] He shewed by the profound Reverence he made to him, how much he honoured him.

Ver. 8. *And he answered him, I am: Go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.*] The Prophet also approved the Honour *Obadiah* did his Master, whom he owned for his *lord*, though he was a very wicked Man. (See *ver.* 10.) For Kings, by their Office, are sacred Persons; and therefore are to be had in great Veneration (tho' bad Men) even by the High Priest, and by the Prophets, who did not approach them, as the *Jews* observe, without due Reverence. And it is a famous Saying of *R. Jedaiah, Do not dwell in a City, where no Reverence or Fear is paid to the King.*

Ver. 9. *And he said, What have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me?*] For that he concluded would be the Effect of such a Massage delivered by him to *Ahab*, as he shews in the following Discourse.

Ver. 10. *As the LORD thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee:*] That is, to all the Countries thereabouts, with whom he was in League. For it is a very foolish Conceit of some of the *Jews*, (which the best of them disown) that *Ahab* was as great an Emperor as *Nebuchadnezzar*, or *Ahasuerus*, who ruled over all Nations.

And when they said, He is not there, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not.] These Words incline me to think, that he sought him only throughout all his own Dominions; through every Tribe, which is called a *Nation*; and every Government, which is called a *Kingdom*. For how could he take an Oath of any but his own Subjects? It may be said indeed, that there might be such Compacts between him and the *Moabites*, *Edomites*, *Ammonites*, and other Neighbouring Nations, that they should harbour none of his rebellious Subjects: And that if he required it, they should swear they knew of none in their Country. But such a Treaty is so unusual, that I see no Reason to suppose it.

Ver. 11. *And now thou sayest, go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here.*

Ver. 12. *And it shall come to pass, as soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not;*] Snatch thee away from hence, as sometimes the Prophets were suddenly transported by an invisible Power to Places far distant from that where they were at present, 2 *Kings* ii. 16. *Ezek.* iii. 12, 14. *Acts* viii. 39, 40. And, in all likelihood, there had been Instances of it before this Time; which made *Obadiah* fear, it might fall out so in this Case.

And so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me:] Because he did not seize and secure *Elijah* when he was in his Power; but let him escape.

But I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth.] Therefore he hoped the Prophet would take Care to preserve him, because he was not like the rest of the Court.

Ver. 13. *Was it not told my lord, what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD? how I hid an hundred men of the LORDs prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water?*] Sometimes a virtuous Man may speak the Truth of himself; though it be in his own Praise.

Ver. 14. *And now thou sayest, Go tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here: and he shall slay me.*] When it would expose him to manifest Danger of losing his Life.

Ver. 15. *And Elijah said, As the LORD of hosts liveth,*] He who commands all Creatures in Heaven and Earth.

Before whom I stand,] Whom I serve, as one of his Ministers.

I will surely shew my self unto him to day.] He feared not to shew himself to *Ahab*; for a greater King than he, the LORD of all things, he knew would preserve him.

Ver. 16. *So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah.*] The solemn Oath of *Elijah* made *Obadiah* readily obey him; and assured him *Ahab* should not be disappointed, but certainly find him.

Ver. 17. *And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?*] He troubles a Country, who confounds all Things in it, and puts them out of Order. In such a Condition *Israel* now was, by a grievous Famine; which made them not know which way to turn themselves. And this he ascribed to *Elijah*.

Ver. 18. *And he answered, I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD,*] They trouble a Nation, who break the Laws of God; not they that defend them.

And thou hast followed Baalim.] There were more *Baals* than one worshipped by the Heathen, as I observed before: And it is very probable, that *Ahab* worshipped all the Host of Heaven, as well as the Sun. See xvi. 30, 31.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel,*] That he might prove, in the Face of all the People, that it was not he who troubled them.

And

And the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred,] By the *prophets of the groves* (as we tranſlate it) Mr *Selden* underſtands the Prophets of *Aſtarte*, the great Goddeſs of the *Zidonians*; which he proves by comparing many Places of Scripture together, *L. de Diis Syris Syntag.* 2. Cap. 3. *Maimonides* hath a peculiar Notion, that the Prophets of *Baal*, and of the *Groves*, were ſuch as had drunk in the Opinion of the ancient *Zabii*; who made Images to receive the Influences of the Stars; Golden ones for the Sun, and Silver ones for the Moon, *&c.* which gave to Men the Gift of Prophecy, and ſhewed what was good for them. The ſame they ſaid of Trees; which were ſome under the Influence of one Star, ſome under the Influence of another; and were planted in their Names, and worſhipped after ſeveral Manners, and infuſed ſpecial Virtues into the Trees, and made Men Prophets. This he avers he found expreſsly in their Books. *More Nevochim*, Pars iii. Cap. 29.

Who eat at Jezebels table.] So high an Eſteem they had of theſe Prophets, that ſhe kept a Table on purpoſe for them, to do them Honour with the People.

Ver. 20. *So Ahab ſent unto all the children of Iſrael, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel.*] I ſuppoſe the *Iſraelites* ſent the great Men of their ſeveral Tribes to repreſent them; and the Prophets readily aſſembled at the King's Command; who did not diſtruſt their Power, and was promiſed Rain, I ſuppoſe, by *Elijah*, if he did as he deſired.

Ver. 21. *And Elijah came to all the people, and ſaid, How long halt ye between two opinions?*] Like lame Men, who tread not firmly, but dubiouſly; not knowing which to chooſe, the LORD or *Baal*; and therefore joining both together.

If the LORD be God, follow him: If Baal be God, follow him.] As much as to ſay, there cannot be more Gods than one. That's the firſt Article of your Faith, *Hear, O Iſrael, the LORD our God is one LORD, Deut.* vi. 4. If the LORD be he, then ſtick to him: If *Baal*, then reject the other. This is moſt rational: For both of them cannot be God.

And the people anſwered him not a word.] Either not knowing what to reſolve; or being aſhamed.

Ver. 22. *Then ſaid Elijah unto the people, I, even I only remain a prophet of the LORD; but the prophets of Baal are four hundred and fifty Men.*] He was the only Prophet that appeared in behalf of the LORD, and yet feared not to conteſt with a great Multitude, who came to defend *Baal*.

Ver. 23. *Let them therefore give us two bullocks, and let them chooſe one bullock for themſelves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under: and I will dreſs the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under:*] He propounded a plain Way to decide this Controverſy, and ſettle the Peoples Minds in their Belief. To whom he firſt propounded it, that they might approve of it, if they thought it a ſure Way to diſcover the Truth.

Ver. 24. *And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that anſwereth by fire, let him be God.*] That is, he that ſendeth Fire to conſume the Sacrifice, which is preſented to him.

And the people anſwered and ſaid, It is well ſpoken.] They looked upon this as a reaſonable Propoſition; becauſe they knew that Sacrifices had been approved by God, in this manner; and they were very deſirous to make the Experiment, and be ſatisfied, by this Means, who was the true God. Thus *Moſes* his Sacrifice was approved, *Levit.* xx. 24. and *Gideon*'s, *Judges* vi. 21. and *David*'s, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 20. and *Solomon*'s, when he conſecrated the Temple, 2 *Chron.* vii. 1, 3. By this Means, in all theſe Caſes, God hath ſhewn that he accepted the Sacrifices, and that the Perſons who offered them were his Servants.

Ver. 25. *And Elijah ſaid unto the prophets of Baal,*] Having the Peoples Approbation, he turned to *Baal*'s Prophets, and deſired them to agree to this Trial.

Chooſe you, one bullock for your ſelves, and dreſs it firſt;] No doubt they produced both the Bullocks, as he propounded at the firſt, *ver.* 22. and if there was any Advantage in chooſing one, and dreſſing it before the other, he deſired they might have it.

For ye are many:] And he being a ſingle Perſon, was willing to give them the Precedence.

And call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under.] It may be tranſlated, call on the Name *of your god*, viz. *Baal*. Or elſe, it may relate to their *Baalim*, which were many, as they themſelves were: And deſire them all to try their Power, by putting no Fire under the Sacrifice; but expecting it to come down from Heaven.

Ver. 26. *And they took the bullock which was given them,*] The Choice of which was left to them.

And dreſſed it,] Flead it, and cut it in Pieces, and laid it upon the Wood. Which they durſt not refuſe to do, becauſe the People thought it a reaſonable Motion which *Elijah* made; and they had utterly loſt their Credit with the People, if they had not accepted it. And perhaps they did not diſtruſt the Power of *Baal*; which *Ralbag* thinks was *Mars*, a fiery Planet; but rather the *Sun*, which far exceeds all the other Heavenly Bodies in Heat. Which they thought might poſſibly exert its Power, upon this great Occaſion, and burn up their Sacrifice. At leaſt they might hope that *Elijah* might not be able to bring Fire down from Heaven, becauſe he ſacrificed in a High Place not at the Temple: Which was contrary to the Law of God, who therefore would not hear him; and then they ſhould ſtand upon equal Ground with him, though they obtained no Fire to conſume their Sacrifice.

And called upon the name of Baal, from morning even until noon,] When the Sun was in its greateſt Strength.

Saying, O Baal here us. But there was no voice, nor any that anſwered.] Not the leaſt Flaſh of Fire.

And they leaped upon the altar which was made.] Or, they danced about it, after the manner of the ancient *Salii.* Or, as *Bochartus* interprets it, *Quaſi furore Prophetico extra ſe rapti, incompoſitis motibus huc illuc ferebantur.* They ran about hither and thither, as Men in an Ecſtacy with a Prophetical Fury, which put them into uncouth and diſorderly Motions. For it appears they acted like Prophets from *ver.* 29. who ſometimes acted as Men beſide themſelves. *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. II. Cap. 50. *Abarbinel* thinks this Leaping or Dancing was a Rite uſed in the Worſhip of the Sun: Which puts all Things in Motion.

Ver. 17. *And it came to paſs at noon,*] When the Morning Sacrifice was ended.

That Elijah mocked them,] He did not think it unlawful, or unſeemly to jeer them, and their God; that he might awaken them out of their Stupidity, and expoſe them to all the By-ſtanders as Corrupters of Religion, and Deceivers of the People.

Cry aloud: for he is a god,] He bid them raiſe their Voices; for they believed he was a God, but might be ſomething deaf, or or a great Way off from them, and ſo could not hear what they ſaid, unleſs they cried louder.

Either he is talking,] Buſy about Diſpatches: Either in ſending Ambaſſadors, or giving Audience.

Or he his purſuing,] Some Notion (as the *Hebrews* underſtand it) being in a deep Study, or deliberating about ſome weighty Buſineſs. It is commonly underſtood, he is hunting, or purſuing Enemies.

Or he is in a journey,] Not at Home; but travelling to ſome other Place; whither they muſt ſend after him.

Or paradventure he ſleepeth,] As they uſed to do in thoſe hot Countries after Dinner.

And muſt be awaked.] With loud Noiſes.

Ver. 28. *And they cried aloud, and cut themſelves after their manner, with knives and lancers, 'till the blood guſhed out upon them.*] They did more than *Elijah* bad them: Hoping to move him with their own Blood, in which, perhaps, they thought he more delighted, than in the Blood of Beaſts, or in their Cries. For many Nations offered human Sacrifices to their Gods: And their Prieſts, when they were poſſeſſed with a ſacred Fury, were wont to ſlaſh themſelves 'till their Blood guſhed out. Thus among the *Romans* the Prieſts did in the Worſhip of *Bellona:* In which *Sacerdotes non alieno, ſed ſuo cruore ſacrificant*, &c. The Prieſts ſacrificed not with another's Blood, but with their own. (See *Lactantius* in his *Divin. Inſtitut.* Lib. I. Cap. 21.) For cutting their Shoulders, and running their drawn Swords through both Hands, they run about like mad Men. And ſo *Apuleius* ſaith, they that carried about the *Syrian Goddeſs*, after many other Things, took out their Knives as Swords and cut themſelves. See *Lib.* viii. *Metamorph.* p. 172, 173. and *Pricæus* and *Rigaltius* upon that Place. But our Mr *Mede* hath a peculiar Notion, which is, that *Baalim* being the deified Souls of dead Men, therefore the Prophets of *Baal* cut themſelves in his Worſhip; becauſe this was a Funeral Rite or Ceremony, *Levit.* xix. 28. xxi. 5. *Deut.* xiv. 1. and therefore retained in the Service of ſuch Gods, in Token that they were but deified Men. See upon xvi. 31.

Ver. 29. *And it came to paſs, when mid-day was paſt, and they propheſied to the time of the offering the evening ſacrifice;*] When all was done, they fell into a Fury, and raved, as if they were poſſeſſed with an inviſible Power; ſinging Hymns and Praiſes to *Baal.* For that is ſometimes meant by *propheſying*, 1 *Chron.* xxv. 2, 3. or, it may be ſimply meant, they ſtill continued praying to *Baal* (*ver.* 26.) for that was Part of a Prophet's Office

That there was neither voice, nor any to anſwer, nor any that regarded.] No more Tokens of Regard to their Praiſes than to their Prayers; nor any, the leaſt Intimation, that *Baal* was a God, that minded what they ſaid, or did

Ver. 30. *And Elijah ſaid unto all the people, Come near unto me. And they came near unto him:*] They had ſtood hitherto by the Prophets of *Baal*, to attend them in their Sacrifice. Now *Elijah* calls them to him, that they might be Witneſſes of what he could do.

And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was broken down.] I ſuppoſe *Carmel* had been one of the moſt eminent high Places in the whole Kingdom: Where the People, as they had been long accuſtomed, offered Sacrifices to God in ancient Times. But the Worſhippers of *Baal* had broken down the Altar, and ſet up one of their own. For there were two Sorts of High Places, I have before noted, ſome for the Worſhip of the true God, which continued in *Judah*, even under religious Princes: Others for the Worſhip of Idols; which good Kings took away, when they let the other remain. On the contrary, *Abab* broke down the Altars of God in the high Places, and allowed none but thoſe for *Baal.*

Ver. 31. *And Elijah took twelve ſtones, according to the number of the tribes of the ſons of Jacob,*] That he might ſhew he worſhipped the God of the Patriarchs, and no other: And that all the People, though divided in Civil Government, ought to be united in the ſame Religion, and have but one Altar for them; being the Sons of one Man, who was very dear to God, as it here follows.

Unto whom the word of the LORD came, ſaying, Iſrael ſhall be thy name.] He purged his Family from all Idolatry; and then God appeared to him, and talked with him, and called him by a new Name; importing the Power he had with God, *Gen.* xxxv. 2, 3, 4, 10, 13, 15.

Ver. 32. *And with the ſtones he built an altar in the name of the LORD:*] Which he might do, being a Prophet; for ſuch Perſons were free from the leſſer Laws, that they might preſerve the greater.

And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two meaſures of ſeed.] That is, a large Trench; for two Meaſures are thought to be the third Part of an *Ephah.*

Ver. 33. *And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood,*] To be a whole Burnt-offering.

And

And ſaid, Fill four barrels with water,] Which they might have out of the Brook at the Foot of the Mount (*ver.* 40.) or out of the Sea, which was not far off.

And pour it on the burnt-ſacrifice, and on the wood.] From hence ſome gather, the Altar was hollow into which this Water run.

Ver. 34. *And he ſaid, Do it the ſecond time: and they did it the ſecond time. And he ſaid, Do it the third time: And they did it the third time.*] That is, they did it 'till all was full of Water, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 35. *And the water run round about the altar, and he filled the trench alſo with water.*] This ſeems to prove the altar was hollow, and that there was a Trench alſo round about it: Both which were as full of Water, as they could hold, to make the Miracle more conſpicuous and convincing. For what more contrary than Fire and Water?

Ver. 36. *And it came to paſs, at the time of the offering of the evening ſacrifice,*] When the People of God were offering their ſolemn Prayers to God at the Temple in *Jeruſalem.* This is a noted Time for great Things that were then done. See upon *Levit.* ix. 24.

That Elijah the prophet came near,] To the Altar.

And ſaid, LORD God of Abraham, and Iſaac and Jacob, let it be known this day, that thou art God in Iſrael; and that I am thy ſervant, and that I have done all theſe things at thy word.] He deſires him to demonſtrate at once by this Miracle, that he was the only true God, and that *Elijah* was his Prophet, and that he had done nothing (in bringing, for Inſtance, a long Famine upon them) but by his Command. Such Miracles were proper, either where a new Religion was to be ſet up, or the old one reſtored after a general Depravation.

Ver. 37. *Hear me, O LORD, hear me,*] He was the more earneſt, and fervent in his Prayer, as *Abarbinel* thinks, becauſe he had undertaken to make this Experiment of God's Power, without any particular Command from God of his own Accord; nothing doubting but he would appear to vindicate his own Honour; though he offered Sacrifice in an High Place, which was againſt the Law.

That this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou haſt turned their heart back again.] God turns Mens Hearts, though they be not turned; becauſe he not only doth that which evidently tends to convert them, and is ſufficient to do it; but for the preſent alſo ſo affects them that they are converted: Though they will not take care to continue in that pious Bent, but ſtart back again from him.

Ver. 38. *And the fire of the LORD fell, and conſumed the burnt-ſacrifice, and the wood, and the ſtones, and the duſt, and licked up the water that was in the trench.*] It is called the Fire of the LORD, becauſe it was ſent from him out of Heaven to teſtify that he was the only God (as the People could not but acknowledge) and it was of ſuch unuſual Force, that it conſumed not only the Fleſh of the Bullock and the Wood, but the very Stones, and the Duſt, and all the Water that had been poured out there in great Quantity.

Ver. 39. *And when all the people ſaw it, they fell on their faces:*] Worſhipping the LORD of Heaven and Earth.

And, ſaid, The LORD is God; the LORD he is God.] This repeated Acknowledgment ſhews how deeply they were affected at preſent, with the Demonſtration God had given, that he only was to be worſhipped. Which extorted this publick Confeſſion from them: But they ſoon forgat their own Convictions, and continued in their Idolatry.

Ver. 40. *And Elijah ſaid unto them, Take the prophets of Baal, let none of them eſcape:*] The Prophets of the Groves, I ſuppoſe, were not there: *Jezabel*, on whom they attended (*ver.* 19.) not ſuffering them to appear. It is likely they were *Zidonians*, which ſhe brought along with her from her own Country, when *Ahab* married her, and were peculiarly under her Command.

And they took them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kiſhon, and ſlew them there.] As Perverters of the Law, and Teachers of Idolatry; upon whom the People, in that Fit of Zeal wherein they now were, readily executed the Sentence *Elijah* pronounced againſt them. And *Ahab* could make no Oppoſition; being himſelf alſo, it is likely, aſtoniſhed at the ſtupendious Miracle.

Ver. 41. *And Elijah ſaid unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink,*] They had faſted and prayed all the Day 'till the Even Sacrifice was over, that they might have Rain; or, that God would decide the Controverſy in Queſtion.

For there is a ſound of abundance of rain.] He bid him be ſolicitous no longer; for Plenty of Rain was coming.

Ver. 42. *And Ahab went up to eat and drink,*] From the River that was at the Bottom of the Mount, he went up to a Place on the ſide of it, where a Tent was pitched for him, that he might refreſh himſelf, now that the Sacrifice was finiſhed; and by *Elijah's* Prayer he obtained Rain, which he aſſured him he heard coming. By theſe two Verſes it is apparent, that *Ahab* himſelf was preſent to ſee how this Conteſt between his Prophets and *Elijah*, that is, between *Baal* and God, would end. And in all Probability was as much convinced as the People, that the LORD was the only God.

And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel;] The Prophet went a great deal higher, where he could ſee the Mediterranean Sea; and would neither eat nor drink, till he actually ſaw the Rain gathering.

And he caſt himſelf down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees,] He fell upon his Knees, and bowed his Head to the very Ground; ſo that it touched his Knees: In Token of great Humility, and moſt earneſt Deſire, that God would remember his People, and ſend them Rain.

Ver. 43. *And he ſaid to his ſervant,*] Who ſome of the *Jews* ſay was the Widow of *Sarepta's* Son. But he was too young to wait upon him.

Go up now, and look towards the ſea. And he went up, and looked, and ſaid, There is nothing. And he ſaid, go again ſeven times.] It is not eaſy to

give an Account of these Phrases, so often here used, *he went up*. First *Ahab* went up, and then *Elijah*, and now he sends his Servant, and at last he bid his Servant (*ver.* 44.) go up to *Ahab*. It is most likely there were several Risings in this Mountain, some higher than others. *Elijah* went to the Top of them; but there was another higher, to which he bid his Servant go up. Or, *Elijah* perhaps was near the Top; and he sent his Servant to the very Top of all: And then bid him go down from thence, and go up to that Part of the Mount, where *Ahab* was eating and drinking.

Ver. 44. *And it came to pass, that at the seventh time there arose a little cloud out of the sea, like a mans hand: and he said, Go up and say to Ahab, prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not.*] For he saw such abundance of Rain coming, as would cause Floods, and render the Way, for the present, unpassable, if he did not make haste home.

Ver. 45. *And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heavens were thick with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain,*] While the Servant went to *Ahab*, and his Chariot was making ready, that little Cloud spread it self, and in a great Thickness covered the Face of the Sky.

And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel.] He did not go to *Samaria*; for *Jezreel*, I suppose, was nearer: And there he had a Palace, xxi. 1.

Ver. 46. *And the hand of the LORD was upon Elijah, and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab,*] They wore loose and long Garments in this Country: And therefore girded them up when they had Occasion to run; that they might not hinder them. And God now gave *Elijah* more than human Strength, so that (though he was an old Man, xix. 4.) he was made able to run, as fast as *Ahab*'s Chariot drove, like one of his Footmen. In which he shewed his Readiness to do the King all the Honour imaginable, and that he was far from being his Enemy; but only desired he would become a Worshipper of the true God; which was, he could not but see, the LORD God of *Israel*.

Unto the entrance of Jezreel.] He thought it not prudent, it is likely, to venture into the City, lest *Jezebel* should seize him; but stopt at the Gate of the City, or of the Palace, and retired to some private Place.

CHAP. XIX.

Verse 1. *AND Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done.*] How he had called for Fire from Heaven; and had made Rain to fall upon the Earth.

And withal that he had slain all the prophets with the sword.] That is, all the Prophets of *Baal*, for they only are mentioned, xviii. 22, 25. and the Prophets of the Groves (who are said to be four hundred, xviii. 19.) were still in being, as appears from xxii. 6.

Ver. 2. *Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let God do to me and more also, if I make not thy life, as the life of one of them, by to morrow about this time.*] This shews the great Folly of Rage; which gave him Notice of his Danger, and admonished him to avoid it: Or, perhaps she thought him as couragious as she was furious; and that he would not flee; and then she knew her Power would be greater than his.

Ver. 3. *And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba which belongeth to Judah,*] Whither her Power did not reach; being in another Kingdom.

And he left his servant there.] Because he intended to go into the Wilderness, where he resolved to spend the rest of his Days, and die; and he would not have the Youth put to the same Straits, in which he was like to be. We read of no Command from God to fly; nor doth he forbid it; but left him to his own Prudence. Which made him think it in vain to hope for *Ahab*'s Protection; who he saw would continue an Idolater, and by his Example make the People revolt to the Worship of *Baal*. Though some are of Opinion, it was a Fault in *Elijah* to run away, and not to depend upon God to preserve him, in his pious Endeavours to keep the People in the true Religion; who had so solemnly acknowledged the LORD to be God.

Ver. 4. *And he himself went a days journey into the wilderness,*] This Wilderness was that wherein the *Israelites* wandred forty Years; and he now travelled as many Days.

And came and sat down under a juniper-tree,] Which some look upon as a Sign he did not value Life; because the Shade of this Tree (under which he not only sat, but lay down and slept) is thought to be very noxious, as *Virgil* observes.

And he requested for himself that he might die, and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life.] He thought he could do God no further Service; and therefore desired to be discharged from his Office by Death; for all that he could say or do, proved ineffectual.

For I am not better than my fathers.] Unto whose Age, it is likely, he had lived.

Ver. 5. *And as he laid and slept under the juniper-tree, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.*] Perhaps he was faint with his Day's Journey, for want of Food at the End of it.

Ver. 6. *And he looked, and behold there was a cake baken on the coals,*] It should be translated *upon hot stones*, as *Bochartus* shews in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 33.

And a cruse of water at his head, and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.] Being weary, and wanting Rest.

Ver. 7. *And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, saying, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.*] Without extraordinary Strength; he being an old Man, and much tired with one Day's Journey.

Ver. 8. *And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days*

and forty nights, unto Horeb the mount of God.] It was a Journey of not above four or five Days, if ſo much; but he went about by private Ways, that he might not be diſcovered; and perhaps reſted ſometimes, and lay hid, if there was any Danger of his being ſeen. The *Jews* have made a Compariſon between him and *Moſes*, in twenty-four Particulars. But *Abarbinel* ſhews they were very different, and *Moſes* had the Superiority, eſpecially in this thing here mentioned. For he is of Opinion that *Elijah* eat and drank every Day, when he could meet with Food, as he might in ſeveral Places of the Wilderneſs. But ordinary Food would not have enabled him to travel ſo long as he did: But it was by the Power of that cœleſtial Food which the Angel brought him, that he held out, it giving him Vigour beyond all that he could receive from any other Nouriſhment. But in this *Moſes* went beyond him, that he had no Food at all; being ſupported by a miraculous Power, forty Days and forty Nights, without any Suſtenance of Meat and Drink.

Ver. 9. *And he came thither into a cave, and lodged there; and behold the word of the* LORD *came to him, and ſaid to him, What doſt thou here, Elijah?*] As much as to ſay, I have no Buſineſs for thee here. This is not a Place wherein to do me Service. Which was a ſecret Reproof for flying ſo far away: *Judæa*, *Samaria*, or *Damaſcus*, being fitter Places for him to be employed in.

Ver. 10. *And he ſaid, I have been very jealous for the* LORD *God of hoſts:*] He profeſſed that he had not wanted Zeal for the LORD's Service; but been moved with great Indignation againſt Idolatry.

For the children of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, and thrown down thine altars,] He calls the Altars that had been erected in high Places by the ancient Patriarchs, or other pious People in following Times, God's Altars: Becauſe they ſacrificed upon them to him alone, and not to Idols.

And ſlain thy prophets with the ſword;] So *Jezebel* had done, xviii. 4.

And I, even I only am left,] There were many Prophets beſides him; but none of them appeared publickly in Defence of Religion, but he alone.

And they ſeek my life to take it away,] Theſe Words anſwer the Queſtion, *What doſt thou here?* He fled thither to ſave his Life.

Ver. 11. *And he ſaid, Go forth, and ſtand upon the mount before the* LORD,] Where the SCHECHINAH, I ſuppoſe, appeared unto him, after ſome Preparations for it.

And behold, the LORD *paſſed by, and a great and ſtrong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks*] He heard a Sign of the Divine Preſence coming, before he went out of the Cave. For his Angelical Miniſters which attended his Majeſty, paſſed by the Mouth of the Cave in a mighty terrible Wind; which had thoſe dreadful Effects here mentioned.

Before the LORD;] Theſe Words ſhew, that in exact ſpeaking it was not *the* LORD that paſſed by when this Wind blew, but his Uſhers, as I may call them, who went *before the* LORD: So it here follows.

But the LORD *was not in the wind:*] The SCHECHINAH did not yet appear.

And after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD *was not in the earthquake:*] The Divine Preſence ſtill did not manifeſt it ſelf.

Ver. 12. *And after the earthquake a fire;*] Lightning and Thunder, juſt as there was at the giving of the Law, which *Elijah* endeavoured to reſtore.

But the LORD *was not in the fire:*] Still he heard nothing from God; who by theſe things prepared him to receive his Majeſty with the greateſt Humility and Compoſure of Spirit.

And after the fire a ſmall ſtill voice.] At the laſt the LORD himſelf came; as he perceived by the whiſpering of a Voice; which bad him liſten an attend to what the LORD ſhould ſay unto him. There are many pious Meditations, which this Appearance of the Divine Majeſty hath ſuggeſted to Interpreters. Particularly *Strigelius* looks upon it, as repreſenting the Divine Nature to be inclined not to terrify and deſtroy; but placidly to invite and preſerve. God eaſily lays aſide his Anger (as *Nazianzen* ſpeaks in his Oration upon his Father) and delights to exerciſe Mercy. For he is compelled to Anger by us, πρὸς δὲ τοῦτο τὴν ὁρμὴν ἔχει, but to Mercy he is very prone, as we may ſpeak, and by his own Nature bent unto it, &c. To the ſame Purpoſe *Ralbag* diſcourſes among the *Jews*. Others look upon all this as a Figure of the Goſpel Diſpenſation, which came not in ſuch a terrible manner as the Law did, with Storms, Thunders, Lightnings, and Earthquakes, (*Exod.* xix. 16. *Hebr.* xii. 18, &c.) but with great Lenity and Sweetneſs, God ſpeaking to us by his Son, in the moſt mild and gentle manner. And herein alſo ſome think he intended to ſhew *Elijah* that he had all the Elements ready armed at his Command, if he pleaſed to make uſe of them, to deſtroy Idolaters: But by that *ſtill Voice* he declared the Divine Patience and Tenderneſs, which he would have him to imitate, by bridling his Anger to which he was by Nature very prone.

Ver. 13. *And it was ſo, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and ſtood in the entrance of the cave:*] He firſt covered his Face, in token of great Reverence to God; not being able to look upon the Divine Glory, which now appeared; and then went out of the Cave (as God had commanded him, *ver.* 11.) and ſtood in the Entrance of it, to liſten what God would ſay to him.

And behold, there came a voice to him,] From the SCHECHINAH, or Divine Glory.

And ſaid, What doſt thou here, Elijah?] The ſame Words are repeated which he had heard before, *ver.* 9. Only there they were ſpoken by the Angel; but here by the LORD himſelf.

Ver. 14. *And he ſaid, I have been very jealous for the* LORD *of hoſts: becauſe the children of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and ſlain thy prophets with the ſword; and I, even I only am left, and they ſeek my life, to take it away.*] He makes the ſame Anſwer that he had done before, *ver.* 10. He was ſo full

full of Anger (as *Ralbag* thinks) that he did not apply his Mind as he ought to underſtand the Viſion; and therefore only repeats his former Words. But God informs him in the following Verſe, that he would take care to chaſtiſe the *Iſraelites* in due Time, for their Apoſtacy from him; and for that End bad him go and anoint *Hazael*, &c.

Ver. 15. *And the* LORD *ſaid unto him, Go return thy way to the wilderneſs of Damaſcus:*] He bids him return the Way he came to *Hebor*; 'till he came to the Way that led to the Wilderneſs of *Damaſcus*, and go thither.

And when thou comeſt, anoint Hazael to be king of Syria.] As much as to ſay (as the forenamed Author expounds it) ſince thou art ſo angry with the *Iſraelites* for their Impiety, go and anoint one to be King of *Syria*, who ſhall be a Scourge to them. But this was not done preſently, nor did he himſelf anoint *Jehu*: But ordered that it ſhould be done by his Succeſſor *Eliſha*: Though it may be doubted whether any of them were *anointed*, except *Jehu*. For the Word *anoint* may be no more than appoint him King, as Kings were conſtituted in *Iſrael* by Unction. Hence by a Metaphor it is accommodated to the Preferment of Men to all Dignities. As in *Pſal.* cv. 15. touch not mine *anointed*: And *Cyrus* is called the LORD's anointed, *Iſa.* xlv. 1.

Ver. 16. *And Jehu the ſon of Nimſhi*] He was Grandſon of *Nimſhi* (as appears from 2 *Kings* ix. 2.) who are frequently called *Sons* in the Holy Books.

Anoint to be king over Iſrael: and Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat of Abel-meholah, ſhalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.] This laſt was the chiefeſt Command (to anoint, that is appoint, *Eliſha* to be his Succeſſor) for the other two were to be performed by him, not by *Elijah*: Who ordered *Eliſha* to do it, in convenient Time: And firſt he appointed *Jehu* King, and afterwards *Hazael*.

Ver. 17. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that him that eſcapeth the ſword of Hazael, ſhall Jehu ſlay: and him that eſcapeth from the ſword of Jehu, ſhall Eliſha ſlay.*] This is not to be underſtood, as if the Sword of *Hazael* ſhould do Execution before the Sword of *Jehu*, and the Sword of *Jehu*, before that of *Eliſha*: But it only ſignifies, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, that God in his Providence had appointed three Perſons to puniſh the *Iſraelites* according to their Deſerts. Thus he intended *Hazael* ſhould deſtroy them in Battle; which he mentions firſt, becauſe it is a general Calamity. But *Jezabel*, and the Children of *Ahab*, and the Prieſts of *Baal*, not going out to fight, and conſequently not falling in Battle, God ordered *Jehu* ſhould cut them off in that manner as he did, with all the Worſhippers of *Baal*. But he did not inflict Evil upon all the People of *Iſrael*, becauſe he was to be their King. And though he ſlew Idolaters, he did not meddle with little Children, whoſe Diſpoſition he did not know: But they were reſerved to be puniſhed by *Eliſha*, who foreſaw they would prove Idolaters. Thus he, with too much Subtilty. But in general he ſaith well; that the Scripture doth not mention theſe things according to the Time wherein they fell out; but according to the Decree of God, who appointed every one to execute that which was proper for him to do.

Ver. 18. *Yet I have left me ſeven thouſand in Iſrael,*] This ſeems to be a Correction of *Elijah*'s Miſtake, who imagined that he alone was the only true Worſhipper of God that remained in *Iſrael*. Though *Abarbinel* will have it relate to what goes immediately before, that all the *Iſraelites* ſhould not be deſtroyed: For he had a great Number (*ſeven thouſand* being put indefinitely for many thouſand) of pious People in *Iſrael*, who had never worſhipped *Baal*; and ſhould not therefore be hurt either by *Hazael*, or otherways.

All the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that hath not kiſſed him.] Every one knows that bowing the Knee was an Act of Worſhip; and ſo was kiſſing the Idol: Which was done two Ways. Either by applying their Mouth immediately to the Image (as *Cicero* againſt *Verres* relates of the Image of *Hercules*) or kiſſing their Hand before the Image, and then ſtretching it out, and, as it were, throwing the Kiſs to it. Concerning which Rite of Adoration *Salmaſius* hath given a large Account in his Annotations upon *Flav. Vopiſcus* in the Life of the Emperor *Probus*; where he obſerves ſuch Kiſſes were called *labrata oſcula*; and from hence the Phraſes *oſcula jacere*, and *baſia jactare*, and *manu venerari*, and *manu ſalutare*: Which he ſhews out of many Authors, are uſed for this Way of Adoration: The ſame he notes in his *Plin. Exercit.* p. 936. where *Pliny* ſaith, *in adorando dextram ad oſculum referimus totum corpus circumagimus.* When we worſhip, we kiſs our Hand, and turn about our whole Body.

Ver. 19. *So he departed thence,*] From Mount *Horeb*.

And found Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat,] In his Journey towards *Damaſcus*.

Who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth:] His Servants managed the reſt, and he himſelf drove the laſt. This ſhews him to have been a great Man; who, according to the Manner of thoſe ancient Times, looked after his Buſineſs himſelf; and was taken from the Plow to be a Prophet, as the *Romans* took ſome from thence to be Dictators and Conſuls. For nothing was in greater Eſteem than Agriculture among the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, as well as among the *Hebrews*. In *Homer* we ſee Kings and Princes living upon the Fruits of their Lands and their Flocks, and labouring with their own Hands. *Heſiod* hath made a Poem on purpoſe to recommend the Country Life and Labour to his Brother. It would be too tedious to ſhew how the *Carthaginians* and *Perſians*, and indeed all other ancient Nations, did not think that to do nothing, was to live nobly; but they ſtudied how to cultivate their Lands, and employed themſelves, as well as their Servants, in that Buſineſs. Whence ſuch Perſons, who were of the beſt Quality, were called αὐτουργοὶ, Men that did their Work themſelves, and

did not commit the Care of it to others, but plowed with their own Hands. So *Quinctius Cincinatus* is ſaid by *Dionyſ. Halicarn.* L. X. to have returned from his Conſulſhip, to lead, τὸν ἀυλικὸν βίον, a Ruſtick Life, as he did before it. As the learned *Jac. Perizonius* obſerves upon *Ælian*'s *Var. Hiſtor.* L. 1. Cap. 31. As for the reſt, the *Greeks* aſcribe this Invention of yoking Oxen together to plow withal either to *Ceres*, and *Triptolemus*, or *Bacchus* (or ſome other great Perſon) though *Moſes*, who was before them all, was well acquainted with it, *Deut.* xv. 9. And *Job* before him, *Job* i. 3. xliii. 12.

Abarbinel thinks theſe twelve Yoke of Oxen with which *Eliſha* was plowing, denoted that he ſhould be Leader of the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael.*

And Elijah paſſed by him, and caſt his mantle upon him.] He put upon him the Prophetical Habit; which was his Inauguration. Or, as ſome underſtood it, this was a Token that he muſt become his Servant, and attend upon him; and conſequently ſucceed in his Office. For Servants were wont to carry their Maſters Shoes after them, and their Garments. And accordingly he waited upon him, as appears from two Phraſes, in the laſt Verſe. *Firſt* he *went after him*; and *ſecondly*, he *miniſtred unto him.*

Ver. 20. *And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah,*] To deſire him to ſtay a little.

And ſaid, Let me kiſs my father and my mother,] Take his Leave of them.

And then I will follow thee.] For he underſtood that to be the Meaning of his throwing his Mantle upon him.

And he ſaid unto him, Go back again;] Return to thy Oxen; and do as thou deſireſt.

For what have I done unto thee?] He aſks him whether he thought he had done any thing to hinder him? And ſo this was ſaid to try whether he underſtood his Meaning, and was inclinable to attend him. But *Abarbinel* thinks theſe Words ſignify, that he had conferred a great Dignity upon him; which required him to diſpatch his Buſineſs immediately; and taking Leave of his Father and Mother, to come after him without any Delay; ſince he had done ſuch a great thing to him. Which illuſtrates the Words of our Saviour, *Matth.* xix. 21.

Ver. 21. *And he returned back from him,*] Went Home, and then came to thoſe that were plowing.

And took a yoke of oxen and ſlew them, and boiled their fleſh with the inſtruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat:] He made a Feaſt for his Servants, Neighbours, and Friends, before he parted with them; in token of the Joy he conceived at his new Calling. Which ſhews he was not a poor Peaſant, ſuch as our Ploughmen are; but a Man of Condition, who was able to make a great Expence upon Occaſion.

And he aroſe and went after Elijah, and miniſtred unto him.] Glad to leave his Eſtate, his Friends, and all that he had; glad to ſerve God in a lower Station firſt, before he executed the Office of a Prophet.

CHAP. XX.

Verſe 1. *AND Ben-hadad king of Syria.*] *Ben-hadad* is as much as the *Son of Hadad.* Which *Hadad* was of the Seed Royal in *Edom*, and eſcaped into *Egypt* when *David* ſlew all the Males in *Edom.* (xi. 16, 17.) But infeſted *Solomon* in his latter Days, and endeavoured to recover his Kingdom: In which he not ſucceeding, it is probable he eſtabliſhed himſelf in *Syria.*

Gathered all his hoſt together,] The Father of this King had taken ſeveral Cities from the *Iſraelites* (*ver.* 34. xv. 20.) and perhaps had made them Tributaries to the *Syrians:* Which Tribute *Ahab* refuſing to pay, he made War upon him.

And there were thirty and two kings with him,] Such petty Princes as thoſe in the Land of *Canaan* before the Conqueſt of it by *Joſhua*; who were under the Protection of the King of *Syria*, and bound to ſerve him in his Wars. But he had better have been without them, and imployed his own natural Subjects only; who had done his Buſineſs more ſucceſsfully (*ver.* 24.) becauſe it was their own.

And horſes and chariots:] It is not ſaid what Number; which is an Argument it was not very great.

And he went up and beſieged Samaria, and warred againſt it.] He did not actually beſiege it; for his Army was routed before he could do it. Therefore the Senſe is, *he went up to beſiege Samaria*, and aſſault it. Which is like that Speech, *Gen.* xxviii. 10. *Jacob went out from Beerſheba and went to Haran.* Which *Raſi* interprets, *he went out to go to Haran.* For it preſently follows, that God appeared to him in the Way.

Ver. 2. *And ſent meſſengers to Ahab king of Iſrael into the city, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith Ben-hadad.*] He ſpeaks in a haughty Stile; juſt like the Meſſengers of the *Aſſyrian* Monarch to *Hezekiah, thus ſaith the great king, the king of Syria.*

Ver. 3. *Thy ſilver and thy gold are mine, thy wives and thy children, even the goodlieſt, are mine.*] This Meſſage is explained, by the King of *Iſrael*'s Anſwer.

Ver. 4. *And the king of Iſrael anſwered and ſaid, My lord, O king, according to thy ſaying, I am thine, and all that I have.*] He was content to be his Vaſſal, and to hold all that he enjoyed of him: For ſo he underſtood his Demands. But *Ben-hadad* intended more: Or, from his ſubmiſſive Anſwer, took Occaſion to enlarge his Demands: requiring the Property of all he had; which he reſolved (as appears from his ſecond Meſſage, in the next Verſes) to take into his own Poſſeſſion.

Ver. 5. *And the meſſengers came again, and ſaid, Thus ſpeaketh Ben-hadad, ſaying; Although I have ſent unto thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt deliver unto me thy ſilver, and thy gold, thy wives and thy children:*

Ver. 6. *Yet I will ſend my ſervants unto thee, to morrow about this time, and they ſhall ſearch thy*

thy houſe, and the houſes of thy ſervants; and it ſhall be, that whatſoever is pleaſant in thine eyes, they ſhall put it in their hand, and take it away.] He tells him the Meaning of his firſt Demand, that he ſhould deliver all he had into his Hands. Unto which, if he now conſented, it ſhould not ſuffice; but he would ſend ſome of his Officers to take all, and to ranſack every Corner of his Palace, and carry away from him and from his Courtiers (who are meant, I ſuppoſe, by his *Servants*) whatſoever was valuable. Or, perhaps, by *Servants* he means all his Subjects.

Ver. 7. *Then the king of Iſrael called all the elders of the land, and ſaid,*] Summoned a general Council of all the great Men, to adviſe what to do.

Mark, I pray, and ſee how this man ſeeketh miſchief: for he ſent unto me for my wives, and for my children; for my ſilver and my gold, and I denied them not.] But now nothing will content him but my utter Ruin, and inſlaving of our Country. In this *Ahab* ſhewed ſome Sparks of Virtue remaining in him; in that while *Ben-hadad* deſired only what he had in his own Diſpoſal, that is, all his private Goods, he agreed to it: But when all the People, and the publick Good was concerned, he would do nothing without their Conſent.

Ver. 8. *And all the elders, and all the people ſaid unto him, Hearken not unto him, nor conſent.*] They promiſing unanimouſly, I ſuppoſe, to ſtand by him, and defend him againſt ſo inſolent an Enemy.

Ver. 9. *Wherefore he ſaid unto the meſſengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king,*] Of whom he ſpeaks, in as humble a manner as he did at firſt, *ver.* 4.

All that thou didſt ſend for to thy ſervant at the firſt, I will do: But this thing I may not do.] For his People would not yield to it.

And the meſſengers departed, and brought him word again.] Delivered this Anſwer to *Ben-hadad*, that *Ahab* ſtuck to his firſt Conceſſion, according as he underſtood his Demands; but would not conſent to more.

Ver. 10. *And Ben-hadad ſent unto him, and ſaid, The gods do ſo to me, and more alſo, if the duſt of Samaria ſhall ſuffice for handfuls, for all the people that follow me.*] He wiſhes he may periſh, if he did not bring ſuch an Army againſt the King of *Iſrael*, that if every Soldier in it ſhould take an Handful of his Country, nothing of it would be left remaining. Others explain it thus; I will not leave a Bit of *Samaria* ſtanding. But the other is moſt natural; and this is included in it.

Ver. 11. *And the king of Iſrael anſwered and ſaid, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on his harneſs boaſt himſelf, as he that putteth it off.*] A Speech like that, *Do not ſing a Triumph before the Victory.*

Ver. 12. *And it came to paſs when Ben-hadad heard this meſſage (as he was drinking, he and the kings in the pavillions) that he ſaid unto his ſervants, Set your ſelves in aray: And they ſet themſelves in aray againſt the city.*] Whilſt the Treaty laſted between him and *Ahab*, he was remiſs: But now he commands his Army to be put in Order; and that they ſhould inveſt *Samaria*, and plant their Batteries againſt it.

Ver. 13. *And behold there came a prophet to Ahab king of Iſrael, ſaying,*] One of thoſe that had been hid; but was now commanded by God to appear and carry a Meſſage to *Ahab*. Which the Prophet thought he might do ſafely, when he brought him ſuch good News, as that which follows.

Thus ſaith the LORD, *haſt thou ſeen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day,*] Hereby God ſhewed, that as he hated Idolatry, of which *Ahab* was notoriouſly guilty, ſo he hated alſo inſolent proud Boaſters, who imagine they have no Superiour; and that they can carry all Things as they pleaſe, by their own Power.

And thou ſhalt know that I am the LORD.] Have a new Demonſtration that he was the LORD of all Things. For *Ahab* had no ſuch Meſſage brought by any of *Baal*'s Prophets; which was ſufficient to convince him, that the LORD, who could foretel and do ſuch wonderful Things, was the only God.

Ver. 14. *And Ahab ſaid, By whom?*] He gave ſome Credit to his Word; and only aſks by whom this Deliverance ſhould be wrought: For he knew he had not Forces enough to encounter and overthrow ſuch powerful Enemies.

And he ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD; *even by the young men of the princes of the provinces.*] The *Princes of the Provinces* were the Governors of the ſeveral Provinces, into which the Kingdom was divided. And their *young Men* ſeem to ſignify their Servants, or their Pages, (as we ſpeak) that waited on them. As much as to ſay, not by old experienced Soldiers, but by Youths; who, perhaps, had never ſeen a Fight, but had always lived at Court.

And he ſaid, Who ſhall order the battle?] Or, who ſhall begin the Fight (as ſome underſtand theſe Words) they or we? Shall we make a Sally, or expect 'till they aſſault us?

And he anſwered, Thou.] He bids the King begin, and lead them on. Which was commanded, to encourage the young Men, and to try whether *Ahab* would thus far truſt God, or no.

Ver. 15. *Then he numbred the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred thirty and two: And after them he numbred all the people, even all the children of Iſrael, being ſeven thouſand.*] All that he could get together; for theſe ſure were not all the Men of War in *Iſrael*.

Ver. 16. *And they went out*] Of *Samaria*.

At noon:] When they knew the *Syrians* were at Dinner, taking a Repaſt; if not debauching themſelves, as their King was.

And Ben-hadad was drinking himſelf drunk in the pavillions, he, and the kings, the thirty-two kings that helped him.] Being perfectly ſecure that the *Iſraelites* durſt not appear to diſturb him.

Ver. 17. *And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out firſt,*] And *Ahab*, no doubt, at the Head of them.

And Ben-hadad ſent out, and they told him, There are men come out of Samaria.] The Meaning

ing is, that upon their first coming out *Ben-hadad*, hearing a Bustle, sent to know what was the Matter: and they told him a small Party was come out of *Samaria*.

Ver. 18. *And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or whether they be come out for war, take them alive.*] It was against the Law of Nations to apprehend those that came to treat of Peace: But he, in his insolent Pride, bad his People not trouble themselves to examine what they came for, but to take them alive; which he thought they might easily do, being so few.

Ver. 19. *So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the army which followed them.*] The young Men only appeared at first; but the rest of the Army came out a little after.

Ver. 20. *And they slew every one his man:*] Who came to apprehend them.

And the Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them:] At which the *Syrians* were so amazed, by the Suddenness of the Attempt, that they fled: Imagining them to be stronger and better prepared for War, than they were.

And Ben-hadad the king of Syria escaped on an horse, with the horsemen.] He was possessed with the same Fear; and did not endeavour to make his Men rally again, but fled away together with them.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.*] He went out, by the Prophet's Order, at the Head of the young Men, when they first issued out of the City. But now he went out further than he had done at the Beginning, and overtook the Chariots and Horsemen; among whom he made a great Slaughter.

Ver. 22. *And the prophet came to the king of Israel, and said, Go and strengthen thy self, and mark, and see what thou dost:*] He bad him make what Preparations he was able, and take Care that nothing was wanting to oppose the Designs of the *Syrians* against him; who would certainly return, and renew the Fight the next Year.

For at the return of the year, the king of Syria will come up against thee.] At the Time when Kings used to go out to War. Of which see 2 *Sam.* xi. 1.

Ver. 23. *And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, Their gods are gods of the hills, therefore they were stronger than we:*] They did not know the God of the Universe, but only worshipped particular gods; who they thought ruled over particular Countries, and distributed several Parts of those Countries among them (some being gods of the Woods, others of the Rivers, *&c.*) and they imagined the God of the *Hebrews* to be ὀρειβάτης, as *Pan* was called by the Heathen. For they had heard, perhaps, that their Law was given from Heaven upon a Mountain, and there God appeared to them: And the Country of *Israel* also was very hilly: Where, upon one eminent Hill, God's Temple was built, and he was worshipped. And it was known, that the *Israelites* delighted to sacrifice in *high Places:* Insomuch, that when they could not come at them, they sacrificed on the House-Tops, *Jerem.* xx. 13.

But let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.] For besides that the *Syrian* gods, they thought, had more Power in a flat plain Country; wherein they delighted: There also they should have more Service of their Horses and Chariots, which could not fight so well upon Mountains.

Ver. 24. *And do this thing, take the kings away, every man out of their place, and put captains in their rooms.*] He had made the thirty-two Kings, who were his Tributaries, chief Commanders in his former Army: Which his Counsellors represented to him, as a great Error; and therefore advised him to displace them, and put his own Captains in their stead, who would fight better. For they fought for their Country, which the others did not: And besides, the Kings, it is likely, were too delicate to be Warriours; and were not so obedient to Discipline, as his Captains would be.

Ver. 25. *And number thee an army like the army thou hast lost, horse for horse, chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they.*] For his Army they knew would be superior; and they should have the Advantage of the Ground.

Ver. 26. *And it came to pass that, at the return of the year, Ben-hadad numbred the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel.*] This was a City in the Tribe of *Asher:* Which it is probable, was one of those that *Benhadad*'s Father had taken from the King of *Israel*, *ver.* 34. Not far from which was the Plain of *Galilee*, where he intended to fight.

Ver. 27. *And the children of Israel were numbred, and were all present, and went against them:*] That is, as many as could be got together were numbred, and put in Order to give them Battle.

And the children of Israel pitched before them, like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians filled the country.] The *Hebrew* Word *Chasiph* is no where found, but in this Place; which *Kimchi* and others translate, *a little Flock.* But there is no need to add the Word *little:* For the Flocks of Goats are always small; never so great as those of Sheep. For they love to ramble, and are scattered up and down, as *Bochartus* observes; who translates these Words, *two flocks of young Kids*; denoting their contemptible Number, and that they were weak, feeble, and timorous, like those fugacious Creatures, as he speaks, *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 51.

Ver. 28. *And there came a man of God, and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, because the Syrians have said, the LORD is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys: therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the LORD,*] This Man of God, the *Jews* say, was the Prophet *Micaiah.*

Ver. 29. *And they pitched one over against the other seven days; and so it was, that on the seventh day the battle was joined:*] It may seem strange that they should look upon one another so

ſo long, and watch for Advantages, without coming to any Action: For the *Syrians* had ſo much Advantage in their Numbers, that one would think they ſhould have immediately incompaſſed the *Iſraelites*, and deſtroyed them all. But, perhaps, the *Iſraelites*, were pitched upon a riſing Ground, and the *Syrians* durſt not attack them, 'till they came down into the Plain.

And the children of Iſrael ſlew of the Syrians an hundred thouſand footmen in one day.] In all Probability they ſurprized them, by a ſudden unexpected Aſſault: And God diſmayed them, and ſtruck ſuch a Terror into them, that they could make no Reſiſtance.

Ver. 30. *And the reſt fled to Aphek, into the city; and there a wall fell upon twenty and ſeven thouſand of the men that were left:*] The Wall of the City, under which they lay, to be ready to defend it, fell down; either by the *Iſraelites* Batteries, or by an Earthquake; and killed, or maimed a great Number of them that fled thither for Safety.

And Ben-hadad fled into the city, into an inner chamber.] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *into a Chamber within a Chamber*; that is, into a very ſecret Place, where he thought he ſhould not be eaſily found.

Ver. 31. *And his ſervants ſaid unto him, Behold now, we have heard that the kings of Iſrael are merciful kings:*] Better-natured than other Kings unto thoſe who were in Diſtreſs; they retaining ſtill ſomething of the Temper of that good King *David*; who was full of Humanity and Tenderneſs, unto which true Religion diſpoſes Men above all other things.

Let us, I pray thee,] One of his principal Courtiers ſpake this in the Name of the reſt.

Put ſackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Iſrael; peradventure he will ſave thy life.] This it ſeems was the Poſture in thoſe Times, wherein Supplicants preſented themſelves, when they petitioned for Mercy; as among the *Greeks* and *Romans* they came in a mournful manner, with a Branch of Olive in their Hands. The Sackcloth upon their Loins, was a Token of great Sorrow for what they had done; and Halters about their Necks, a Token of their Subjection to what Puniſhment he pleaſed to inflict.

Ver. 32. *So they girded ſackcloth on their loins, and put ropes upon their heads, and came unto the king of Iſrael, and ſaid, Thy ſervant Ben-hadad ſaith, I pray thee let me live.*] He now as humbly petitions *Ahab*, as *Ahab* a little while ago had petitioned him (*ver.* 4.) and he begs of him his Life. Such are the ſtrange Turns of human Affairs, which the ancient Hiſtorians among the Heathen have obſerved, as Admoniſhments to Men not to bear themſelves high in a proſperous Condition, nor truſt to their preſent Fortune (as they called it) not knowing, *Quid ſerus veſper vehat*, what might fall out before the Day was done.

And he ſaid, Is he yet alive? he is my brother.] He rejoiced to hear that he did not periſh in the Battle; and not only pardoned him at the firſt Word, and gave him his Life; but expreſſed as great Affection to him, as if he had been his Brother. This was Folly, not Mercifulneſs, or Good-nature. It had been enough not to have tormented him: But to let him not only live, but own him for a Brother, was ſtupid Inconſideration. For a Man that lately treated him ſo diſdainfully, could never make a true Friend.

Ver. 33. *And the men did diligently obſerve whether any thing would come from him, and did haſtily catch it: and they ſaid, Thy brother Ben-hadad.*] They were wiſe Perſons whom he employed in his Embaſſy; who watched attentively whether any kind Word would drop from his Mouth, on which they might lay hold, and make their Advantage of it, before he could retract it. And they catched at the Word *Brother*, and ſaid thy Brother *Ben-hadad* lives, and implores this Favour that he may live.

And he ſaid, Go ye, bring him.] This was ſtrange Raſhneſs, to make ſuch haſte, as not to adviſe with his Privy-Council what to do in ſuch a Caſe.

And Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he cauſed him to come up into the chariot.] It ſeems that *Ahab* was ſtill in the Field.

Ver. 34. *And Ben-hadad ſaid unto him, The cities which my father took from thy father, I will reſtore,*] The Word *Ben-hadad* not being in the *Hebrew*, *Oſiander* and ſome others think that *Ahab*, who was ſo kind as to take him up into his Chariot, made this Speech to him whem he came there, that he would not only give him his Life, but his Kingdom alſo, which he had now Power to take from him; and be ſo far from diminiſhing his Power, that he would reſtore all that had been taken from him by his Father. Which ſenſeleſs Kindneſs was the thing that provoked God to pronounce that heavy Doom upon him, *ver.* 42. But the next Words do not well a gree with this: Therefore I take theſe to be *Ben-hadad*'s Words to *Ahab*, whereby he endeavoured to ſmooth him up and ſweeten him, by offering to become his Subject (as the next Words ſignify) and making Reſtitution of all that had been taken from his Predeceſſor.

And thou ſhalt make ſtreets for thee in Damaſcus, as my father made in Samaria.] Some think by *Streets* he means *Market-places*, where Commodities were ſold, the Toll of which ſhould belong to *Ahab*. Others think he means *Courts of Judgment*, where he ſhould maintain a Juriſdiction over *Ben-hadad*'s Subjects: Others, that we now call a *Piazza*, of which *Ahab* ſhould receive the Rents. But commonly Interpreters think he means *Fortifications*, whereby he might bridle the chief City of the Kingdom of *Syria*; that they might not make new Irruptions into the Land of *Iſrael*. *Cittadels* as we now ſpeak, to keep them in Awe, and to be a Check to them, if they attempted any thing deſtructive to the *Iſraelites*: Yet after all, *Gotf. Vallandus* hath ſaid a great deal to prove that the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies *Palaces*, which he being allowed to build, was a great Token of Subjection. We do not read of any ſuch thing that

that were built by the *Syrian* Kings in *Samaria:* Nor of any Cities they took from the *Iſraelites*; unleſs thoſe taken from *Baaſha*, xv. 20. who was not *Ahab*'s Father.

Then ſaid Ahab, I will ſend thee away with this covenant; ſo he made a covenant with him, and ſent him away.] Wherein he diſcovered his great Weakneſs: For his Covenant was ſoon broken, as we read in the laſt Chapter of this Book.

Ver. 35. *And a certain man of the ſons of the prophets,*] This the *Jews* will ſtill have to be *Micaiah:* Which is not likely, for he is called *a Prophet of the* LORD, not one of the *Sons of the Prophets.*

Said unto his neighbour in the word of the LORD, *Smite me, I pray thee,*] He bad him give him ſuch a Blow, as might wound him, *ver.* 37.

And the man refuſed to ſmite him.] Becauſe it looked like Inhumanity, to ſtrike an innocent Perſon, who had done him no Wrong.

Ver. 35. *Then ſaid he unto him, Becauſe thou haſt not obeyed the voice of the* LORD, *behold, as ſoon as thou art departed from me, a lion ſhall ſlay thee.*] This may ſeem too ſevere a Puniſhment 'till theſe two things be conſidered. *Firſt*, that the Prophet commanded him to ſmite him, and that *by the Word of the* LORD. Not of his own Will, and from his proper private Motion; but God required it. As if he had ſaid (ſo *Theodoret* gloſſes on it) οὐκ ἐγώ σοι, &c. *It is not I that require this of thee, but the Spirit that is within me.* And accordingly the Puniſhment was inflicted, becauſe he *obeyed not the voice of the* LORD. And *Secondly*, the Prophet commanded this in God's Name, not to an ordinary Man, but *El Reehu:* Which ſhould not be tranſlated *to his Neighbonr*, but, as St *Hierom*, to his *Companion.* And ſo the *Targum* and other ancient Interpreters, *to his Fellow:* That is, a Prophet bred in the ſame School with himſelf: Who well underſtood the Weight of theſe Words, I command thee in *the Name of the* LORD.

And as ſoon as he was departed from him, a lion found him and ſlew him.] The *Jews* ſay in the Title *Sanhedrin*, and other Places, that ſome Prophets were put to Death by the Hand of Man, and others by the Hand of God. They that propheſied what they were not told by God, or they that propheſied in the Name of Idols, were to be put to Death by the Judges. But they who concealed their Prophecy, or rejected a Prophecy, their Death was by the Hand of God.

Ver. 37. *Then he found another man, and ſaid, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man ſmote him, ſo that in ſmiting he wounded him.*] The Intention of this was that he might find the freer Acceſs to *Ahab*, as a Soldier well deſerving; and that he might the better feign his Story: For in ſuch a Matter the King was not to be dealt withal in downright Words.

Ver. 38. *And the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and diſguiſed himſelf, with aſhes upon his face.*] As a Man in a very mournful Condition. The *Hebrews* underſtand it, that he covered his Face with a Vail, or an Handkerchief, or bound it about with a Fillet (for one cannot tell how *Aſhes* ſhould cover it) in token that he was wounded. So that the King could not know who he was. See *Bochart* his *Canaan*, Lib. 2. Chap. 8.

Ver. 39. *And as the king paſſed by, he cried to the king: and ſaid, Thy ſervant went out into the midſt of the battle,*] He pretended that he had adventured his Life in the late Fight; being engaged in the hotteſt Service.

And behold, a man turned aſide, and brought a man unto me, and ſaid, Keep this man. If by any means he be miſſing, then thy life ſhall be for his life; or elſe thou ſhalt pay a talent of ſilver.] He pretended, I ſuppoſe, that his Captain having a Priſoner of great Quality, charged him with him; telling him that he ſhould be anſwerable for him with his Life, if he let him eſcape; or redeem his Life with a greater Sum of Money than he was able to pay.

Ver. 40. *And as thy ſervant was buſy here and there,*] Endeavouring, in the Fight, to do the beſt Service he was able every where.

He was gone.] In the *Hebrew*, *he could not be found.*

And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto him, So ſhall thy judgment be; thy ſelf haſt decided it.] Thou haſt pronounced thy own Sentence; according to your Agreement, ſo ſhalt thou ſuffer. He had forgot how he diſmiſſed a greater Perſon willingly, elſe he could not have been ſo hard-hearted as to condemn one that had offended unwillingly. But he ſoon made him think of it.

Ver. 41. *And he haſted and took away the aſhes from his face,*] Threw away his Diſguiſe immediately; by pulling off the Cloth wherein his Face was wrapped.

And the king of Iſrael diſcovered him, that he was of the prophets.] Some of the By-ſtanders perhaps knew him, when they ſaw his bare Face. Or, by the very Motion of his Eyes before he ſpake (which he did immediately) he ſufficiently diſcovered what he was.

Ver. 42. *And he ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the* LORD, *Becauſe thou haſt let a man go out of thy hand, whom I appointed to utter deſtruction,*] For the Battle was the LORD's; and the Victory being obtained purely by the Divine Power, and the ſingular Favour of God, *Ahab* ought not to have reſolved how to diſpoſe of *Ben-hadad* without God's Leave; but have conſulted him (who had put him into his Hands) what he would have done with him: For he was God's Priſoner; who was to have his Part of the Spoil, which he would pleaſe to chooſe.

Therefore thy life ſhall go for his life, and thy people for his people.] The former Part of this Decree of God was fulfilled three Years after, when *Ahab* was killed in a Battle againſt the *Syrians*, xxii. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. But the latter Part was deferred 'till the Reign of *Hazael*, who fulfilled it by the Wars he had with the *Iſraelites*, 2 *Kings* x. 32, 33.

Ver. 43. *And the king of Iſrael went to his houſe heavy and diſpleaſed: and came to Samaria.*] This heavy Sentence turned all their Joy for the late Victory, into Mourning: *Ahab*

being much troubled for what he had done, and for what he was like to ſuffer.

CHAP. XXI.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs after theſe things, that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel,*] After all thoſe wonderful things which God had done, in giving ſuch Victories to *Ahab*, he coveted the Vineyard of a Neighbour of his. Which is peculiarly noted, as *Abarbinel* thinks, to have followed the foregoing Hiſtory, to ſet forth the extream great Wickedneſs of *Ahab*: Who ſpared *Ben-hadad*, as *Saul* did *Agag* King of the *Amalekites*, and killed *Naboth*, that he might get his Vineyards. This was an high Aggravation of his Crime, that he baſely murdered a juſt *Iſraelite*, and let an impious enemy eſcape.

Hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria.] Not far from it, if not adjoining to it: Being planted on the ſame riſing Ground, whereon the Palace ſtood; for Vines throve beſt in Mountainous Places.

Ver. 2. *And Ahab ſpake unto Naboth, ſaying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs,*] For a Flower-Garden, as ſome underſtand it.

Becauſe it is near my houſe, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or if it ſeem good to thee, I will give the worth of it in money.] This was a fair Propoſal; but the Law was againſt it.

Ver. 3. *And Naboth ſaid to Ahab, The LORD forbid it me, that I ſhould give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee.*] As it is natural to all Men to value and love the ancient Poſſeſſions that have been in their Family; ſo the Law of *Moſes* prohibited the Alienation of Lands, from one Tribe or Family to another, unleſs a Man was reduced to Poverty; in which caſe he might ſell it 'till the Jubilee; but then it was to return to him. See *Levit.* xxv. 15, 25, 28. Now as *Naboth* was in no need, ſo he conſidered that if he ſhould, out of Reſpect to the King, and meerly to do him a Pleaſure, part with his Vineyard, he ſhould never get it out of his Hands at the Jubilee; being made part of the Ground belonging to the Royal Palace. This makes it probable that *Naboth* was one of the Seven Thouſand, who obſerved the Law ſtrictly.

Ver. 4. *And Ahab came to his houſe, heavy and diſpleaſed,*] Juſt as he had done, after the Prophet had pronounced the ſevere Sentence againſt him, xx. 43.

Becauſe of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had ſpoken unto him: for he had ſaid, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers:] Made him a peremptory Denial; which he could not bear.

And he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.] He was ſo vexed to be denied by a Subject, that he fell into ſuch a Paſſion, as made him ſick, and took away his Stomach, and made Company unacceptable to him. In ſhort, he was very melancholy.

Ver. 5. *And Jezebel his wife came to him, and ſaid, Why is thy ſpirit ſo ſad, that thou eateſt no bread?*] She ſoon found his Mind was more out of Order than his Body; and therefore deſired to know what had diſturbed him.

Ver. 6. *And he ſaid, Becauſe I ſpake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, and ſaid unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or elſe if it pleaſe thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it: and he anſwered, I will not give thee my vineyard.*] He doth not acquaint her with his Reaſon; but reports his Anſwer, as if he gave him a ſurly Refuſal. Which was far otherwiſe; *Naboth* repreſenting it as a Religious Duty (*ver.* 3.) founded upon the Law of God, not to part with the Inheritance of his Fathers, which was allotted to them by *Joſhua*; never to be alienated. For in truth they that poſſeſſed them were only *Uſufructuaries* (*i. e.* enjoyed the Profits of them) God himſelf being the true Proprietor, *Levit.* xxv. 23. who charged their Land with no other Payments, but *Tenths* and *firſt Fruits* to his Miniſters: After which he gave them an entire Poſſeſſion of it, to remain in their ſeveral Families for ever, without any Alteration; which none could make but himſelf.

Ver. 7. *And Jezebel his wife ſaid unto him, Doſt thou now govern the kingdom of Iſrael?*] Is this like a King, to torment thy ſelf in this manner? as *Ralbag* gloſſes. Or, doth it become a King to beg and pray, and not rather command? Thou knoweſt not thine own Power, but acteſt like a Minor, who hath no Authority. Or, as *Abarbinel* underſtands it, Canſt thou expect things ſhould go well in thy Kingdom, if thou haſt neither Will nor Power to do any thing, in ſuch a ſmall Matter as this?

Ariſe, and eat bread, and let thy heart be merry, and I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.] She would not have him trouble himſelf; but leave her to accompliſh his Deſires.

Ver. 8. *So ſhe wrote letters in Ahabs name, and ſealed them with his ſeal,*] Theſe Seals were wont to be worn upon one of the Fingers of their Hand (*Jerem.* xxii. 24.) and never to be taken off Night nor Day, but when they uſed them. Which ſhews ſhe was an audacious Woman, that durſt ſteal this from *Ahab*'s Finger (for it doth not appear he knew of theſe Letters) and write what ſhe pleaſed in his Name; that is, uſe his Kingly Authority to what Purpoſes ſhe thought good.

And ſent the letters unto the elders, and to the nobles that were in his city dwelling with Naboth.] The *Iſraelites*, it ſeems, after their Separation from *Judah*, kept up the civil Polity which was ordained by *Moſes* (though they forſook his Religion) having Elders and Judges in their ſeveral Cities, as they had here at *Jezreel*: Where they had not only *Elders*, but alſo *Nobles*: That is, Captains of Thouſands, and Hundreds, as *Bon. Bertram* obſerves, Cap. 12. *de Repub. Judaica.*

Ver. 9. *And ſhe wrote in the letters, ſaying, Proclaim a faſt,*] As if there had been ſome grievous Crime committed, or ſome great Calamity had befallen them; which all the People were to bewail, and purge themſelves from that Sin, leſt they alſo ſhould become guilty. And conſequently they were to ſee the Crime

puniſhed very ſeverely: For ſuch Days of Faſting were ſpent in puniſhing Offences, and doing Juſtice, and praying to God for Pardon. Some aſk where it was kept? And *Vitringa* thinks it might poſſibly be in the very Streets of the City: Where *Ezra* kept his Faſt, *Nehem.* viii. 1, 2, 3.

And ſet Naboth up on high among the people:] In this religious Aſſembly of the People. For he being a Perſon of an illuſtrious Houſe (as *Joſephus* reports) was ordered to be ſet in an honourable Place: That ſo it might not be thought they condemned him out of Hatred, but with Grief and Reſpect to his Perſon; being conſtrained meerly by the Evidence given againſt him. Yet, others will have it, that the Reaſon he was ſet in an eminent Place, was only becauſe all People accuſed and arraigned were wont ſo to appear before the Judges; that all the People might ſee them, and hear what was alledged againſt them, and the Proofs of it, and their Defence.

Ver. 10. *And ſet two men of Belial*] Men of no Conſcience, that would ſwear any thing for Money.

Before him, to bear witneſs againſt him, ſaying,] Such was the *Roman* Cuſtom alſo (which was moſt rational) that the Accuſed ſhould *have the Accuſers Face to Face:* As *Feſtus* ſaith, *Acts* xxv. 16. But ſome think that ſhe need not have put her ſelf to this Trouble, of proceeding in ſuch a formal manner againſt *Naboth* in a Court of Juſtice; for by the *Jus Regium* mentioned by *Samuel* (1. viii. 14.) ſhe might have taken his Vineyard from him, by *Ahab*'s abſolute Power. But that is a great Miſtake; for *Samuel* only meant, that their Kings would take the Fruits of their Vineyard upon Occaſion for their Uſe; but not the Poſſeſſion of the Vineyards themſelves; for ſo all the Land might have become the King's: And that *Jus Regium Joſephus* calls a meer Tyranny.

Thou didſt blaſpheme God and the king:] The *Hebrews* ſo much abhorred this Crime of Blaſphemy, that they would not expreſs it by its proper Name; but ſaid *Bleſs*, inſtead of *Curſe*; as here and in the Book of *Job*. Now it was Death by the Law of *Moſes* to blaſpheme God, *Levit.* xxiv. 16. and by Cuſtom it was Death to blaſpheme the King, which is forbidden in thoſe Words, *Exod.* xxii. 28. And perhaps they might ſtretch that Law hither, which forbad any Man upon Pain of Death, to curſe his Father or his Mother, *Exod.* xxi. 17. For the Prince is the Father of his Country. But, to make all ſure, they accuſed *Naboth* of both, of Treaſon againſt God, and againſt the King; that ſo the People might be the better ſatisfied, to ſee him ſtoned. But there is this Difference to be obſerved between theſe two: That if a Man had only blaſphemed God, he was to be tried by the great Court at *Jeruſalem* (as the *Hebrew* Doctors tell us) and his Goods came to his Heirs: But when any Man was executed for Treaſon againſt the King, his Eſtate went to the Exchequer, being forfeited to him againſt whom the Offence was committed. And therefore it was that they accuſed *Naboth* of this Crime, on purpoſe that his Eſtate might be confiſcated, and *Ahab* enjoy his Vineyard. Aud they accuſed him of Blaſphemy againſt God for other Reaſons: That Juſtice might be done the ſooner upon him; or, as the *Talmudiſts* ſpeak, to increaſe their Indignation. See *Selden de Succeſſionibus*, Cap. 25. Fol. 87, 88.

And then carry him out,] Not meerly out of the Aſſembly, but out of the City, *ver.* 13. For in the Wilderneſs, and before the Conqueſt of *Canaan*, they executed Puniſhments without the Camp, *Levit.* xxiv. 23. *Joſh.* vii. 24. and afterwards without the Gate of the City: Whereby they intended to teſtify that they would take the Evil out of the midſt of them, and not ſuffer Wickedneſs to remain among them. So it is explained, *ver.* 13. See *Grotius* Matth. xxvii. 32.

And ſtone him that he may die.] For this was the Puniſhment of Blaſphemy: As we ſee by their Attempt to ſtone our Saviour, and their killing St *Stephen* in this manner.

Concerning this Puniſhment, ſee the *Sanhedrin*, Cap. 6.

Ver. 11. *And the men of the city, even the elders, and the nobles, who were the inhabitants of his city,*] The principal Inhabitants.

Did as Jezebel had ſent unto them, and as ſhe had written in the letters which ſhe had ſent unto them.] Perhaps ſhe ſent private Meſſengers to tell them by Word of Mouth, what ſhe expected from them, and how ſhe would reward them; as well as publick Letters to authorize what they did. And Princes never want Inſtruments to execute their Pleaſure. But it is much there ſhould be none among the Judges, and great Men, that abhorred ſuch Villany: Which argues the great Corruption of their Manners by Idolatry.

Ver. 12. *They proclaimed a faſt, and ſet Naboth on high among the people.*

Ver. 13. *And there came in two men, children of Belial, and ſat before him:*] As the Witneſſes uſed to do in Courts of Judgment; teſtifying to his Face the Truth of the Accuſation brought againſt him.

And the men of Belial witneſſed againſt him, even againſt Naboth, in the preſence of the people, ſaying, Naboth did blaſpheme God and the king.] This ſignifies no more, but that they had the Impudence publickly to teſtify a Falſity. Though *Bertram* in the Book before-mentioned, Cap. 12. from theſe Words in *the preſence of the people*, argues, *Poteſtatem Populi*, the Power of the People in this Kingdom: Becauſe theſe ſuborned Witneſſes gave their Teſtimony before them. So that it was a mixed Government, like ours, conſiſting of the Power of the King, of the Nobles, and of the People. If this be true, it argues all the People of that Place to be very wicked; in that none of them excepted againſt the Teſtimony of ſuch Perſons, which ought not (as *Maimonides* obſerves) to have been admitted.

Then they carried him forth out of the city, and ſtoned him with ſtones, that he died.] And his Sons with him, as many gather from 2 *Kings* ix. 26. they being condemned as Acceſſories to his Crime.

Ver. 14. *Then they ſent to Jezebel, ſaying, Naboth is ſtoned, and is dead.*] They knew that the Order came from her; and therefore let her know they had obeyed it.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs, when Jezebel heard that Naboth was ſtoned, and was dead, that Jezebel ſaid to Ahab, Ariſe, take poſſeſſion of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refuſed to give thee for money: for Naboth is not alive, but dead.*] But by what Title did he take Poſſeſſion? The *Hebrews*, I obſerved before, think it was by the right of Confiſcation; which was practiſed in all ſuch Crimes againſt the King. See upon 2 *Sam.* ix. 7. and *Grotus* upon *Joſh.* i. 18. and upon this Place. Though others think, he took Poſſeſſion for want of Heirs; his Children being condemned with him.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab roſe up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take poſſeſſion of it.*] He could not but know how *Naboth* died; and therefore by this conſented to that Wickedneſs, which was committed alſo by his Authority, *ver.* 8.

Ver. 17. *And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tiſhbite, ſaying,*] Some leſſer Prophets were employed in the late Meſſages ſent unto him, xx. 13, 28, 35. But upon this great Occaſion God ſends *Elijah*, whom he dreaded, not meerly to reprove him, but to condemn him to a Puniſhment ſuitable to the Crime he had committed.

Ver. 18. *Ariſe, go down to meet Ahab king of Iſrael, which is in Samaria:*] That is, who reigns in *Samaria*, ver. 1.

Behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to poſſeſs it.] That he might be ſure not to loſe his Labour, he tells him where he might find him.

Ver. 19. *And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto him, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, haſt thou killed, and alſo taken poſſeſſion?*] He expreſſes in Brief the Barbarity of this Fact: As if he had ſaid, Was it not enough that thou haſt taken away his Life, but thou muſt ſeize on his Eſtate, and go thy ſelf in Perſon to take Poſſeſſion of it?

And thou ſhalt ſpeak unto him, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, ſhall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.] He declares the Cauſe of this Judgment upon him, but doth not aſſign the Place; for the Dogs licked *Ahab*'s Blood in *Samaria*, xxii. 38. Therefore theſe Words ſhould be tranſlated, *as the Dogs licked*, or *in like manner* as they licked *Naboth*'s Blood, ſo ſhall they lick thine: Mark what I ſay, *even thine.*

Ver. 20. *And Ahab ſaid to Elijah, Haſt thou found me, O my enemy?*] As much as to ſay, Wilt thou never ſuffer me to be quiet? How dareſt thou to appear in my Preſence again, with ſuch terrible Threatnings?

And he anſwered, I have found thee: becauſe thou haſt ſold thy ſelf to work evil in the ſight of the LORD.] They that ſell themſelves, are wholly under the Power of their Maſters: So was *Ahab* under the Power of Sin; a perfect Slave to his ſinful Luſts and Paſſions, which hurried him into the fouleſt Crimes.

Ver. 21. *Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy poſterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that piſſeth againſt the wall, and him that is ſhut up, and left in Iſrael,*] See upon xiv. 10.

Ver. 22. *And I will make thy houſe like the houſe of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, and like the houſe of Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou haſt provoked me to anger, and made Iſrael to ſin.*] Theſe two Families were utterly extirpated, (See xv. 29. xvi. 11, 12, &c.) as he propheſied *Ahab*'s ſhould be.

Ver. 23. *And of Jezebel alſo ſpake the LORD, ſaying, The dogs ſhall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.*] In the Territory where *Naboth* was judged, and unjuſtly condemned.

Ver. 24. *Him that dieth of Ahab in the city, the dogs ſhall eat: and him that dieth in the field ſhall the fowls of the air eat.*] See xiv. 11.

Ver. 25. *But there was none like unto Ahab, which did ſell himſelf to work wickedneſs in the ſight of the LORD,*] Made himſelf a perfect Bond-ſlave to all manner of Wickedneſs.

Whom Jezebel his wife ſtirred up.] Which did not excuſe him, yet ſomething mitigated his Puniſhment: For ſhe died more miſerably than he.

Ver. 26. *And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites,*] There was no Abomination which the People of *Canaan* committed (who are here called the *Amorites*, according to the ancient Language, *Gen.* xv. 16.) which he did not imitate.

Whom the LORD caſt out before the children of Iſrael.] As he intended to caſt out the whole Family of *Ahab*: Who by God's Judgments upon the *Amorites*, might have taken Warning not to tread in their Steps.

Ver. 27. *And it came to paſs when Ahab heard theſe words, that he rent his clothes, and put on ſackcloth upon his fleſh, and faſted, and lay in ſackcloth, and went ſoftly.*] All theſe were Expreſſions of very great Sorrow and Heavineſs; which were uſual in Mourning. And the laſt Words the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt tranſlates, *he went barefoot.* But it is rejected by the greateſt Part of Interpreters, who take it as we do, for ſuch a ſlow Pace as ſignified he was reduced to great Weakneſs and Feebleneſs of Body, by Faſting, and Grief; or that he had no Heart to go about any Buſineſs. The *Jews* tell us in *Pirke Elieſer*, Cap. xliii. that he ſent to *Jehoſhaphat* King of *Judah*, who came and gave him a certain Number of Stripes every Day; and that three Times in a Day. But without this fabulous Addition, here is enough to ſignify that he was extreamly caſt down, and very much troubled; I cannot ſay for his Sin, but for the heavy Puniſhment God had laid upon him. It is likely, indeed, for the preſent he might have ſome Senſe of his Sins; but it did not laſt to bring him to true Repentance; that is, to make him forſake them. For we read not ſo much as of any Reſtitution of the Vineyard; much leſs of his forſaking Idols.

Ver. 28. *And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tiſhbite, ſaying,*

Ver. 29. *Seeſt thou how Ahab humbleth himſelf before me? Becauſe he humbleth himſelf before me,*] Which neither *Jeroboam* nor *Baaſha* had done, but obſtinately went on, without the leaſt Token of Sorrow, when the ſame Doom was paſſed on them.

I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his ſons days will I bring the evil upon his houſe.] Such a Power there is in hearty Repentance and Reformation of Life to obtain a Pardon, that God remitted part of *Ahab*'s Puniſhment, at leaſt deferred it, upon this imperfect Repentance. Which argued ſome Degree of Belief of what the Prophet ſaid: And accordingly it was his Son's Blood, not his, which was licked up by the Dogs in that Portion of Ground where *Naboth*'s was, 2 *Kings* ix. 25, 26.

CHAP. XXII.

Verſe 1. *AND they continued three years*] Not compleat, but Part of three Years. See 2 *Chron.* xviii. 2.

Without war between Syria and Iſrael.] Tho' God was very angry with *Iſrael*, and intended to plague them by the *Syrians*; yet his Anger being deferred for ſome Time upon *Ahab*'s *Humiliation*, *Elijah* did not cauſe *Hazael* to be anointed King of *Syria*, who was to be the Executioner of God's Wrath, becauſe it was prolonged for the Reaſon now named. Thus *Abarbinel.*

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs that in the third year, Jehoſhaphat king of Judah came down to the king of Iſrael.*] For there was an Affinity made between him and *Ahab*, (2 *Chron.* xviii. 1.) *Jehoſhaphat*'s Son having married *Ahab*'s Daughter, 2 *Kings* viii. 18.

Ver. 3. *And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto his ſervants, Know ye that Ramoth-Gilead is ours, and we be ſtill, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Syria?*] Some think *Ben-hadad* had not made good his Covenant to reſtore all the Cities the *Syrians* had taken from *Iſrael* (xx. 34.) whereof this, it is likely, was one.

Ver. 4. *And he ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-Gilead?*] He acted now like a prudent Man; who, before he reſolved upon a War, deſired to know whether he might depend upon *Jehoſhaphat* for his Aſſiſtance in it: For his Forces, in Compariſon with the *Syrians*, were very ſmall, xx. 27.

And Jehoſhaphat ſaid to the king of Iſrael, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horſes as thy horſes.] He profeſſes himſelf intirely at his Service; as if they were but one Perſon and People.

Ver. 5. *And Jehoſhaphat ſaid unto the king of Iſrael, Enquire, I pray thee at the word of the LORD to day.*] But he deſired firſt, that the Prophets who were in *Iſrael* might be forthwith conſulted, whether God approved of their Deſign, and would give them Succeſs in it. So good Men were wont to do, *Judges* i. 1. 1 *Sam.* xxiii. 2.

Ver. 6. *Then the king of Iſrael gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men,*] Some think theſe were the Prophets of the Groves, who were not ſlain with the Prophets of *Baal*, becauſe they are juſt the ſame Number, xviii. 19. But perhaps there were Schools of the Prophets kept up ſtill in *Iſrael*, in imitation of thoſe in *Judah*, wherein Men were bred up, who pretended to have this Gift. But it is plain they were falſe Prophets; for *Micaiah* calls them *Ahab*'s Prophets. See *ver.* 23.

And ſaid unto them, Shall I go up againſt Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or ſhall I forbear? And they ſaid, Go up; for the LORD ſhall deliver it into the hand of the king.] They ſpeak, as if they were inſpired by the LORD, and in his Name promiſe good Succeſs; for they knew *Jehoſhaphat* regarded not *Baal*, nor *Aſtarte*, but only the LORD.

Ver. 7. *And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD beſides, that we might enquire of him?*] He doth not reject theſe as no Prophets of the LORD, though he ſuſpected them; and therefore deſired to know, if there was any other that was accounted a Prophet of the LORD, from whom he might receive further Satisfaction. And indeed it is not likely that *Ahab* would adventure to ſend for ſuch Prophets, as were profeſſed Servants of *Baal*, from whom *Jehoſhaphat* he knew would receive no Advice: But they profeſſed themſelves to be Servants of the LORD; for whom *Elijah*'s late Miracle had wrought in *Ahab* ſome Reſpect. And Dr *Jackſon* ſeems to me to have produced a good Argument for this, from *Jehoſhaphat*'s continuing his Reſolution of accompanying *Ahab* to Battle, notwithſtanding all that *Micaiah* had ſaid againſt it. Which he would never have done, had he believed that *Micaiah* alone belonged unto the LORD, and his Adverſaries unto *Baal*, Book 2. upon the *Creed*, Chap. 18. paragr. 2.

Ver. 8. *And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, There is yet one man (Micaiah the ſon of Imlah) by whom we may enquire of the LORD; but I hate him, for he doth not propheſy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, Let not the king ſay ſo.*] We ought to love thoſe who ſpeak the Truth; not thoſe who ſpeak what pleaſeth us.

Ver. 9. *And the king of Iſrael called an officer, and ſaid, Haſten hither Micaiah, the ſon of Imlah.*] He would not deny *Jehoſhaphat*'s Deſire of hearing him, as well as others; leſt he ſhould fly off from his kind Offer, *ver.* 4.

Ver. 10. *And the king of Iſrael, and the king of Judah ſat each on his throne, having on their robes,*] Their Royal Apparel, and all the Enſigns of Majeſty.

In a void place, in the entrance of the gate of Samaria,] Where the People uſed to meet, and Cauſes were heard by the Courts of Juſtice. See upon 2 *Sam.* xix. 8.

And all the prophets propheſied before them.] Continued to encourage them in their Deſign.

Ver. 11. *And Zedekiah the ſon of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he ſaid, Thus ſaith the*

the LORD, with these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them.] Such was the manner, it seems, of Prophets in ancient times, by external Signs to represent future Events: As *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah* continued to do in future Ages, *Isaiah* xx. 2. *Jeremiah* xxvii. 2.

Ver. 12. *And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-Gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the kings hand.*] Every one of them accorded in the same Sense; that he should certainly be victorious.

Ver. 13. *And the messenger that was gone to call Micaiah, spake unto him, saying, Behold now the words of the prophets declare good unto the king with one mouth: Let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good.*] So mightily did the Opinion of *Universality* sway with the superstitious People, that the Messenger thought he could perswade *Micaiah* not to dissent from the rest; lest he should fall under the Censure of Singularity, Peevishness, and Privacy of Spirit. And thus it is in the Church at this Day, as the same excellent Doctor there observes.

Ver. 14. *And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.*] He seems as yet to have no Revelation about the matter; but when the Question was put to him, God taught him what to answer.

Ver. 15. *So he came to the king; and the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go against Ramoth-Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear?*] The very same Question that had been asked the rest of the Prophets, *ver.* 6.

And he answered him, Go, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king.] And he gave the very same Answer in the same Word that the other Prophets had done, *ver.* 12. But spake them in such a manner, that *Ahab* plainly discerned, he derided and mocked: It being as if he had said, To what Purpose shall I contradict your Prophets? For you have a mind to go, and do so; try the Truth of their Prediction.

Ver. 16. *And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee, that thou tell me nothing but that which is true, in the name of the LORD?*] He had not adjured him at all; but now he doth; and would do it again, and again, if he did not speak seriously, and tell him what God said to him: Which *Micaiah* had not yet done. For he doth not use the common Preface of Prophets, to the foregoing Answer, *Thus saith the LORD:* Because he did not speak in God's Name, but in his own.

Ver. 17. *And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills,*] Routed, and flying from their Enemies, to the Hills for Safety.

As sheep that have not a shepherd:] In a most miserable Condition, as Sheep are without a Shepherd to look after them: They being neither strong, nor cunning, nor nimble and swift of Feet; but exposed to the Injuries of all Creatures, when they are left to themselves without a Shepherd. Which is very often repeated in the Scriptures, as if it were a *Proverbial* Speech among the *Hebrews*, *Numb.* xxvii. 17. 2 *Chron.* xviii. 16. *Zachar.* x. 2. xiii. 7. *Matth.* ix. 36.

And the LORD said, These have no master,] They have lost their King and Governour. Who was represented by the *Shepherd* beforementioned.

Let them return every man to his house in peace.] All go home, and think no more of War: having lost their Ruler. This was an exact Representation of what followed.

Ver. 18. *And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee, that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?*] He had always been wont to bring threatning Messages from God to him: And therefore was not (as the *Jews* imagine) the Prophet who brought him that gracious Message, when *Ben-hadad* treated him so insolently, xx. 13.

Ver. 19. *And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD:*] If thou dost not delight only in Lies, hear what I have further to say from the LORD.

I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left.] This is a Parabolical Speech, as *Abarbinel* calls it, signifying that there was a greater King than *Ahab*, who would judge him according to his Works. And in a Vision he saw him sitting on a Throne, for that purpose, and attended by the Heavenly Host, as *Ahab* was by his Prophets: Some on his *right hand*, by which many think he means the good Angels; and some on his *left hand*, by which are meant the bad, who are the Executioners of his Judgments, when he pleases.

Ver. 20. *And the LORD said, Who shall perswade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?*] It is not to be thought there was any such Consultation before the Divine Majesty, who should be employed to perswade him to undo himself: But these Representations are contrived to bring down invisible things to the meanest Capacities of Men. Who were to know that the LORD resolved to let *Ahab* be deceived and perish at *Ramoth-Gilead*, rather than any other Place: That he who let *Benhadad* escape, might be punished by *Ben-hadad*.

And one said on this manner, and another on that manner.] This is said, only to signify that God hath many Ways of bringing Men to Ruin, when he declares it.

Ver. 21. *And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will perswade him.*] This is not to be understood literally; but that there are evil Spirits who are very forward to entice Men to their own Destruction, and have Power so to do, if the LORD do not hinder them.

Ver. 22. *And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith?*] God was not ignorant of what he could, and would do: But this is said, to represent more familiarly to vulgar Understandings, by what means *Ahab* was led into Destruction.

And he ſaid, I will go forth, and will be a lying ſpirit in the mouth of all his prophets.] Suggeſt to them that which will deceive him.

And he ſaid, Thou ſhalt perſwade him, and prevail alſo: Go forth, and do ſo.] God permitted this lying Spirit to follow his own Inclinations, which he knew would have Succeſs, and prevail with *Ahab* to believe he ſhould proſper in this War; wherein God intended he ſhould be deſtroyed. For the Prophets had obſerved how proſperous *Ahab* had been in former Wars with the King of *Syria:* Which made them forward to promiſe the ſame Succeſs in this alſo. And *Ahab* was as forward to believe it, as they were to aſſure it.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore behold, the* LORD *hath put a lying ſpirit in the mouth of all theſe thy prophets,*] They were properly *Ahab*'s Prophets, not the LORD's: Who only employed them to miſlead him.

And the LORD *hath ſpoken evil concerning thee.*] The LORD hath decreed he ſhould periſh in this War; and in order to it, ſtirred up the Spirit of the Prophets (as *Abarbinel* ſpeaks) to propheſy according to their own Inclination; and him to believe them, and ruſh into his own Ruin.

Ver. 24. *And Zedekiah the ſon of Chenaanah went near,*] He ſeems to be the chief of *Ahab*'s Prophets: The Head perhaps of the whole College.

And ſmote Micaiah on the cheek,] By way of Reproach and Scorn, *Jerem.* xx. 2. S. *Mark* xiv. 45. and other Places.

And ſaid, Which way went the ſpirit of the LORD *from me to ſpeak unto thee?*] He was confident he had the Spirit, and could not imagine how it ſhould depart from him, and enter into *Micaiah*, bidding him contradict all that he and his Brethren had propheſied.

Ver. 25. *And Micaiah ſaid, Behold, thou ſhalt ſee in that day, when thou ſhalt go into an inner chamber*] Into a ſecret Place, xx. 30.

To hide thy ſelf.] For fear he ſhould be ſeized and puniſhed as a falſe Prophet, and the Cauſe of *Ahab*'s Death.

Ver. 26. *And the king of Iſrael ſaid, Take Micaiah, and carry him back to Amon the governour of the city, and to Joaſh the kings ſon:*] It ſeems he was in Cuſtody, when he was ſent for by the Meſſenger to come to *Ahab.*

Ver. 27. *And ſay, Thus ſaith the king, put this fellow in priſon,*] He ordered him, I ſuppoſe, to be kept a cloſer Priſoner than before.

And feed him with the bread of affliction, and the water of Affliction, 'till I come again in peace.] He would not have him ſtarved, but fed with coarſe Bread, and bad Water; 'till he came home and brought Victory along with him. And then perhaps he intended to put him to Death.

Ver. 28. *And Micaiah ſaid, If thou return at all in peace, the* LORD *hath not ſpoken by me. And he ſaid, Hearken, O people, every one of you.*] He deſires all the People to mark, and be Witneſſes of what he ſaid; and take this for a Sign whether he was a true Prophet or no.

Ver. 29. *So the king of Iſrael, and Jehoſhaphat king of Judah, went up to Ramoth-Gilead.*] Notwithſtanding the long Declaration *Micaiah* had made of God's Decree (which was altogether concerning *Ahad*) *Jehoſhaphat* gave ſome Credit to the other Prophets, who ſpake in the Name of the LORD, as well as he. See upon *ver.* 7.

Ver. 30. *And the king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, I will diſguiſe my ſelf, and enter into the Battle,*] Like a private Man.

But put thou on thy robes.] Appear like a King.

And the king of Iſrael diſguiſed himſelf, and went into the battle.] He knew they would aim moſt at him, as the Author of this War; and therefore he would not be known; but gives *Jehoſhaphat* the Honour (as he pretended) of leading the Army, and appearing as the chief Commander of it. But this ſeems a very odd Compliment, to pray him to expoſe himſelf to the Danger, which he ſhunned. Therefore others render it, *put on theſe robes* (which he then offered him) After my Example, lay thy Cloak, the Garment of a chief Commander, aſide; and put on theſe Robes. For he brought a double Change of Raiment into the Field; that neither of them might be known by their Cloaths.

Ver. 31. *And the king of Syria commanded his thirty-two captains who had rule over his chariots,*] Which were divided, it is likely, into ſo many diſtinct Bodies.

Saying, fight neither with ſmall nor great,] With common Soldier, or Officer, belonging to *Jehoſhaphat.*

Save only with the king of Iſrael.] Whom he looked upon (as I ſaid) as the ſole Author of the War; into which he had drawn *Jehoſhaphat.*

Ver. 32. *And it came to paſs, when the captains of the chariots ſaw Jehoſhaphat, they ſaid, Surely it is the king of Iſrael.*] Which ſhews that whatſoever his Robes were, he looked like more than a common Man.

And they turned aſide to fight with him: and Jehoſhaphat cried out.] Unto the LORD for Help. Who delivered him, and moved them to depart from him, as we read in 2 *Chron.* xviii. 31.

Ver. 33. *And it came to paſs, when the captains of the chariots perceived that it was not the king of Iſrael*] By calling upon the LORD for Help; or, perhaps, ſome of them knew him.

That they turned back from purſuing him.] Which was to be aſcribed to the ſecret Providence of God, as *Ezra* tells us in the Place above named; who reſolved as wonderfully to preſerve *Jehoſhaphat*, as to deſtroy *Ahab.*

Ver. 34. *And a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and ſmote the king of Iſrael between the joints of the harneſs:*] The LORD, no doubt, directing the Arrow to that Part, where it ſhould penetrate into his Vital Parts. The LXX, into his Breaſt, through his Lungs; for it entred between his upper and lower Armour.

Wherefore he said to the driver of his chariot, Turn thy hand, and carry me out of the host, for I am wounded.] He bid him drive to some Place, where he might look after his Wound, which was very painful to him.

Ver. 35. *And the battle increased that day: and the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even:*] There was a sharp Fight after this: Insomuch that the King, for fear his Soldiers should run away, would return into the Field, notwithstanding his Wounds, and be supported in his Chariot, to encourage his Army, 'till the Even parted them, and then he died.

And the blood ran out of the wound, into the midst of the chariot.] It could not be stanched by any Means they could use, but ran out of his Body into his Chariot.

Ver. 36. *And there went a proclamation throughout the host, about the going down of the son, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country.*] I suppose, *Jehoshaphat* ordered a Retreat to be sounded; and the *Syrians*, it is likely, were content to be gone, having slain their capital Enemy. By this Proclamation, the Prediction of *Micaiah* was exactly fulfilled, according to his Vision, *ver.* 17.

Ver. 37. *So the king died, and was brought to Samaria, and they buried the king in Samaria.*

Ver. 38. *And one washed the chariot in the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up the blood, and they washed his armour, according to the word of the* LORD *which he spake.*] The Dogs licked up the Blood, which was mixed with the Water, wherewith his Chariot and Armour were washed: The LXX add the Word ὗες, as if *Swine* as well as Dogs had licked it up. But as there is no such Word in the *Hebrew*, so neither is it in the *Chaldee*, *Arabick*, or *Syriack*; no, nor in the *Latin* Translation. And it is very absurd; Swine being not commonly kept in this Country.

Ver. 39. *Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house that he made, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?*] It appears by this short History, that he had several noble Qualities in him, and would have been a great Man, if he had not been incurably addicted to Idolatry. But it is not to be imagined that the House here mentioned, was built of Ivory; but only inlaid with it.

Ver. 40. *So Ahab slept with his fathers, and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.*] See *ver.* 51.

Ver. 41. *And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over Judah, in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel.*

Ver. 42. *Jehoshaphat was thirty-five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem: and his mothers name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.*] The Intention of the Divine Writer of this Book was as *Abarbinel* observes, principally and in the first Place to give us the History of the Kings of the House of *David*, with which he begins, and then joins to it the History of the Kings of *Israel*. Thus having finished the History of *Asa* King of *Judah*, he recounts the Affairs of *Israel* under *Ahab*; who being dead, he returns to the History of the Kings of *Judah*, who were the chief Objects of his History.

Ver. 43. *He walked in all the ways of his father Asa, he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the* LORD: *Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away; the people offered and burnt incense yet in the high places.*] This Error was so deeply rooted, that the best of the Kings 'till *Hezekiah*'s Time (as I noted before) connived at it: And a great Man of ours thinks the Prophets accidentally gave Countenance to it. Who had this Power, that if they dispensed with any positive Precept of the Law, that Precept was to cease for a Time. Nor can any other Reason be given of the Toleration of High Places, before the Temple was built, and after that, of *Elijah*'s sacrificing upon Mount *Carmel*, and the Forbearance of Circumcision in the Wilderness. See Mr *Thorndike*'s *Review of the Rights of the Church*, pag. 107.

Ver. 44. *And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel.*] He did not take the Advantage which *Ahab*'s Death gave him, to seize upon the Kingdom of *Israel*, and take it from his Son.

Ver. 45. *Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See xi. 41.

Ver. 46. *And the remnant of the Sodomites which remained in the days of Asa his father, took he out of the land.*] He made a narrower Search after them, than his Father had done, who is said to have removed them; but some remained without his Knowledge, xv. 12.

Ver. 37. *There was no king in Edom: a deputy was king.*] The King of *Judah* deputed one to govern the *Edomites*; who was the Viceroy (as we now speak) of the King of *Judah*. This continued from the Days of *David*, who began this Dominion over them (2 *Sam.* viii. 14.) unto those of *Jehoshaphat*; whose Son lost this Authority, 2 *Kings* viii. 21.

Ver. 48. *And Jehoshaphat made ships of Tharshish, to go to Ophir for gold:*] These Ships were not to go to *Tarshish*, but to *Ophir*. But they are called *Ships of Tharshish*, from their Form: For they were made after the Mold of those Ships which traded to that Place. And all such Ships, wheresoever they were built, were called *Ships of Tharshish*. Thus *Abarbinel*. Which seems not to agree with 2 *Chron.* xx. 36, 37. See there.

But the ships were broken at Ezion-Geber.] Before they sailed.

Ver. 49. *Then said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships: but Jehoshaphat would not.*] He had contracted an Amity with this King, and engaged himself so far, as to let him join with him in this Navy, 2 *Chron.* xx. 35, &c. But being better instructed by his ill Success, and by the Reproof of a Prophet, he would not continue this League with him.

Ver. 50. *And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers, in the city*

city of David his father: and Jehoram his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

Ver. 51. *And Ahaziah the ſon of Ahab began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria the ſeventeenth year of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah,*] This ſeems not to agree with the Account we have before, that *Jehoſhaphat* began his Reign in the fourth Year of *Ahab*, and *Ahab* reigned two and twenty Years. Now if we take four from twenty and two, there remains eighteen; and ſo *Ahaziah* began to reign in that Year, not the ſeventeenth of *Jehoſhaphat*. But this is eaſily and truly ſolved: For the Years which the Kings of *Iſrael* reigned, are taken from the Years of the Kings of the Houſe of *David*: So that if any one reigned in the latter End of the Reign of a King of the Houſe of *David*, and the Beginning of the following Year, he is ſaid to have reigned two Years. An inſtance of which is in the very next Words of this Verſe.

And reigned two years over Iſrael.] Not compleat, as appears from 2 *Kings* iii. 1. but part of two Years: For *Ahaziah* died before his ſecond Year was ended.

Ver. 52. *And he did evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother,*] Who was ſtill alive, to keep him in his Idolatry.

And in the way of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin.] He was in nothing amended, by all that had befallen his Father, and the Family of *Jeroboam*.

Ver. 53. *For he ſerved Baal, and worſhipped him,*] Which Worſhip had been introduced by his Mother *Jezabel*: Beyond the Impiety of *Jeroboam*.

And provoked to anger the LORD *God of Iſrael, according to all that his father had done.*] Taking no Warning by the Hand of God againſt his Father, which was very remarkable; nor believing the dreadful Threatnings of *Elijah* againſt his Mother, and their whole Family.

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A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

SECOND BOOK

OF THE

KINGS.

CHAP. I.

Verse 1. *THEN Moab rebelled againſt Iſrael, after the death of Ahab.*] They payed them no more Tribute, but utterly diſclaimed their Authority over them; which they had owned ever ſince the Days of *David*, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 2. Whereas *Edom* (which it ſeems in the Diviſion of the Kingdom, fell to *Judah*, as *Moab* did to *Iſrael*) continued ſtill under the Dominion of the King of *Judah*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 47.

Ver. 2. *And Ahaziah fell down through a latteſs in his upper chamber that was in Samaria,*] By this Latteſs, the *Jews* underſtand ſome Network that was in the Dining-room; which being decayed, and he leaning upon it, it fell down, and he together with it.

And was ſick:] Was bruiſed, and perhaps fell into a Fever.

And he ſent meſſengers, and ſaid unto them, Go, enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, whether I ſhall recover of this diſeaſe.] Many think this god was called *Baal Semin*, the Lord of Heaven; whom the *Jews*, by way of Contempt, called *Baal-zebub*; *i. e.* the Lord of a Fly, as a god that was nothing worth; or rather, becauſe his Temple was full of Flies: Whereas the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, though ſo many Sacrifices were offered there daily, never had a Fly in it; as the *Jews* relate in *Pirke Avoth*. But it is not likely, the King of *Iſrael* would have called this god, for whom he had a great Reverence, by a contemptible Name; which ſignifies therefore no more than Μυῖα Δὸς μυίαγρος, ἀπόμυιος, among the *Greeks*, which were the Titles of *Jupiter* and *Hercules*; becauſe they were thought to free their Countries from Flies, with which the *Ekronites* were peſtered, lying in a moiſt, and hot Soil, near to the Ocean. *Theodoret*, *Procopius*, and others, think they worſhipped this god in the image of a Fly: But the latter of them doubts whether it was the Name of a *Dæmon*, or of an old Woman canonized for a goddeſs. And after all, Mr *Selden* thinks the Reaſon of this Name cannot be found.

But the moſt probable Conjecture is, that he was ſo called from the Cure of a contagious Diſeaſe. For *Pliny* tells us, that there being a great Peſtilence in *Africa*, which was brought among them by a Multitude of Flies, it was extinguiſhed by the killing of them all after they had ſacrificed to the god *Achore*. He ſhould have ſaid, the god worſhipped at *Ekron*; from whence that Word *Achore* plainly came. *Lib.* 10. *Nat. Hiſt. Cap.* 27. And if this was the Original of the Name, it is no Wonder that *Ahaziah* ſent to enquire of him about his Sickneſs, ſince he was thought ſo powerful, as to cure the Peſtilence.

Ver. 3. *But the Angel of the* LORD *ſaid to Elijah the Tiſhbite, Ariſe, go up to meet the meſſengers of the king of Samaria, and ſay unto them, Is it not becauſe there is not a God in Iſrael, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?*] There are two Negatives in the *Hebrew* Text, which increaſe the Senſe, *Is it not becauſe there is no God, none in Iſrael?* That is do you not plainly declare, that you think there is no God, none at all, in *Iſrael?* That he knows nothing, nor can do any thing? Which makes you ſend to *Ekron*, as if there was a more knowing, and mighty, if not the only God there.

Ver. 4. *And now therefore, thus ſaith the* LORD, *Thou ſhalt not come down from the bed, on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely die. And Elijah departed.*] Unto Mount *Carmel*, it is very probable: For he was preſently after this ſitting on the Top of a Hill, *ver.* 9.

Ver. 5. *And when the meſſengers turned back unto him, he ſaid, Why are ye now come back?*] He knew by their ſpeedy Return, that they had not executed his Command, and aſked the Reaſon.

Ver. 6. *And they ſaid unto him, There came up a man to meet us, and ſaid unto us, Go, turn back unto the king that ſent you, and ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the* LORD, *Is it not becauſe there is not a God in Iſrael, that thou ſendeſt to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Therefore thou ſhalt not come down from the bed, on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely die.*] *Elijah* was a Man of ſuch a venerable Preſence, and ſpake to them with ſuch Authority, in the Name of the LORD, that they were over-awed thereby to obey him, rather than the King.

Ver. 7. *And he ſaid unto them, What manner of man was he that came to meet you, and told you theſe words?*] He was not ſo angry at them for not obeying him, as deſirous to know who he was that was ſo preſumptuous as to ſtop their Journey.

Ver. 8. *And they anſwered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins: And he ſaid, It is Elijah the Tiſhbite.*] Some think he is ſaid to be *an hairy man*, becauſe he had long Hair on his Head and his Beard, like the *Greek* Philoſophers: But it is more probable, it was becauſe he was clad with an hairy Garment, which the Prophets were wont to uſe, *Iſaiah* xx. 2. *Zachar.* xiii. 4. St *Matthew* iii. 4. And indeed the leathern Girdle ſhews what kind of Garment he wore. See Dr *Hammond* upon the Place laſt mentioned, *Annot.* d. This was the ſimpleſt, and moſt ancient Garment, and therefore the old *Heroes* are ſaid to have been cloathed in the Skins of Lions, or Tigers, or Bears, *&c.* And perhaps, by this rude Habit the Prophets expreſſed their great Grief for the ſad Condition the *Iſraelites* were in, when they came to call them to Repentance.

Ver. 9. *Then the king ſent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty: and he went up unto him*] Not to the Place where he was, but ſo near that he might hear him deliver his Meſſage.

(*And behold he ſat upon the top of an hill*) *and he ſpake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath ſaid, Come down.*] Sent him with an Order, to command him to come down to him. But the Prophet thought he did but mock him, when he called him *a man of God*, as appears by the Puniſhment he inflicted on him. For it is as if he had ſaid, Thou that calleſt thy ſelf a Man of God, come down, or I will fetch thee. He would not be at the Pains to go to the Top of the Hill; but thought it ſufficient to require him, in the King's Name, to come down, and ſurrender himſelf into his Hands.

Ver. 10. *And Elijah anſwered and ſaid unto the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and conſume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and conſumed him and his fifty.*] If I be a Man of God, as thou ſayeſt, but doſt not think, then I am not bound to obey the King, but God, (as *Abarbinel* gloſſes upon theſe Words) nor am I ſubject to his Power, but unto God's; who will make thee know that he judges in the Earth. And immediately he and his Men were conſumed with Lightning, according to *Elijah*'s Word. Who choſe to deſtroy them by Fire from Heaven (as he goes on) becauſe he had at Mount *Carmel* called for Fire to conſume the Sacrifice. Which Miracle they ſlighting, and coming now in a proud manner to carry him by Force to *Samaria* (where he knew *Jezabel* would put him to Death) he called for Fire to conſume them.

Ver. 11. *Again alſo he ſent unto him another captain of fifty, with his fifty; and he anſwered and ſaid unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king ſaid, Come down quickly.*] This Man was more inſolent than the former, charging the Prophet to obey without Delay, and not make him ſtay; or think to dally with him. And by the following Words, it appears, this was the Voice of the whole Company.

Ver. 12. *And Elijah anſwered and ſaid unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and conſume thee, and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and conſumed him and his fifty.*] He knew that Evil was determined againſt him by *Ahaziah*, and therefore defended himſelf, in this manner, from his Cruelty; that he might be afraid to meddle with him, when he ſaw the Divine Vengeance ſo terrible againſt thoſe that came to apprehend him.

Ver. 13. *And he ſent again a captain of the third fifty, with his fifty; And the third captain went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and beſought him, and ſaid unto him, O man of God, I pray thee let my life, and the life of theſe fifty thy ſervants, be precious in thy ſight.*] He

humbly intreated him, on his bended Knees, to ſpare his Life, and the Lives of thoſe that accompanied him, who did not come willingly, much leſs of their own Accord: But were commanded by their Lord and Maſter to make known his Pleaſure to him.

Ver. 14. *And behold, there came fire from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties, with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy ſight.*] He was ſenſible of the Hand of God againſt thoſe that came with ſuch a Command before, and acknowledges he was at *Elijah*'s Mercy; but hoped he would take Compaſſion upon him, ſince he owned him really to be a Man of God, and believed his Power; as appeared by his falling down moſt reverently before him, and beſeeching his Pity, and calling thoſe with him *his Servants.*

Ver. 15. *And the angel of the* LORD *ſaid unto Elijah, Go down with him, and be not afraid of him. And he aroſe and went down with him unto the king.*] This is a great Inſtance of the Prophet's Faith and Obedience to God; who he truſted would protect him from the Wrath of the King, and the Malice of *Jezabel.* Of whom he had great Reaſon to be afraid, having ordered the Prophets of *Baal* to be ſlain, and now ſent the King an unwelcome Meſſage, and done terrible Execution upon two of his Captains and their Companies. The firſt of which made him fly the Country (1 *Kings* xix. 3.) *Jezabel* threatning his Deſtructron; and had conſtrained him to conceal himſelf for a long Time, and not come to *Samaria:* Which was the Reaſon, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, that we hear nothing of him in the War of *Ben-hadad* againſt *Iſrael*, (1 *Kings* xx.) nor in the War of *Ahab* againſt *Ben-hadad*, Chap. xxii. But now having a Command from God for it, as he had in the Caſe of *Naboth*, he boldly goes to the King, and confirms with his own Mouth, that ungrateful Truth, which he had already told him by his Meſſengers.

Ver. 16. *And he ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the* LORD, *foraſmuch as thou haſt ſent meſſengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, (is it not becauſe there is no God in Iſrael, to enquire of his word?) therefore thou ſhalt not come down from off that bed on which thou art gone up, but ſhalt ſurely die.*] There was more Diſcourſe paſſed between them, no doubt, than this: But this was the Concluſion of all, that the Sentence which God had pronounced againſt him, was irreverſible; and therefore he ſhould not think of living much longer, but make uſe of the Time remaining, to repent of his Sins.

Ver. 17. *So he died, according to the word of the* LORD, *which Elijah had ſpoken:*] It is likely he told him the very Day, when he ſhould die.

And Jeroboam reigned in his ſtead, in the ſecond year of Jehoram the ſon of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah: becauſe he had no ſon.] Therefore this Brother of his ſucceeded him. Who began to govern in this ſecond Year of *Jehoſhaphat*'s Son; but was King before (xii. 1.) only very young, and as ſome of the *Jews* think, under the Care of *Jehoſhaphat.* But *Kimchi* ſeems to have better reconciled this ſeeming Difference, That *Jehoſhaphat* declared his Son *Jehoram* King while he lived, and he reigned with him ſeven Years. The Occaſion of which is intimated in 2 *Chron.* xx. 3. *he gave the kingdom to Jehoram, becauſe he was the firſt-born*, and gave Gifts to the reſt of his Sons. Who being many, began to ſtrive about the Succeſſion to the Kingdom: Which belonging to the firſt-born, *Jehoſhaphat*, to quiet them all, declared *Jehoram* King together with himſelf, and he reigned with him ſeven Years. When it is ſaid therefore that *Ahab*'s *Jehoram* reigned in the ſecond Year of *Jehoſhaphat*'s Son *Jehoram*, the Meaning is, the ſecond Year that he reigned with his Father *Jehoſhaphat*, who was then living.

Ver. 18. *Now the reſt of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] They were but few, becauſe he reigned a very ſhort Time; but yet, according to Cuſtom, they were recorded in a publick Regiſter. Of which ſee on 1 *Kings* xi. 41.

CHAP. II.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, when the* LORD *would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind,*] By a mighty Sound of Wind which the Angels raiſed, who came to fetch him: Of which Tranſlation he himſelf had ſome Notice, by the Spirit of Prophecy.

That Elijah went with Eliſha from Gilgal.] Unto this Place he retired before his Aſſumption to Heaven, it having been (as *Abarbinel* diſcourſes) a Place of great Holineſs; where the *Iſraelites* made their firſt Encampment, after they entred the Land of *Canaan*; and where *Joſhua* had ſet up twelve Stones, taken out of *Jordan*, in Memory of their miraculous Paſſage over that River. Here alſo *Joſhua* circumciſed the *Iſraelites*, and kept the firſt Paſſover, and ſet up the Tabernacle, and the Ark of the Covenant, which remained here a long Time.

Ver. 2. *And Elijah ſaid unto Eliſha, Tarry here, I pray thee: for the* LORD *hath ſent me to Beth-el.*] Another Place in ancient Time very holy, God appearing here to *Jacob* more than once, *Gen.* xxviii. 19. xxxv. 6, 9. This *Elijah* ſaid to try *Eliſha*; for he did not intend to conceal his Aſſumption into Heaven, and to have no Witneſſes of it. His Humility indeed was great, but it was not fit to obſcure the Glory of God, which herein miraculouſly appeared.

And Eliſha ſaid unto him, As the LORD *liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee: So they two went down to Beth-el.*] They were not wont anciently to ſwear by the Name of God (out of the Reverence they bare to him) but by ſome leſſer Thing which depended on it; as *Joſeph* did *by the life of Pharaoh*; that is, as true as that *Pharaoh* lives. And *Eliſha* puts both here together, *as ſure as God liveth, and thou liveſt*, I will not leave thee. See *Grotius De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. 2. Cap. 13. N. 2.

Ver. 3. *And the ſons of the prophets that were at Beth-el, came forth to Eliſha,*] In theſe very corrupt Times, and in that Place where the Golden Calves were worſhipped, God did not wholly forſake the *Iſraelites*; but continued the

Schools of the Prophets among them. For by the *Sons of the Prophets* are meant the Scholars of the Prophets, whom they educated, and trained up in Religion and Piety: And God, by Degrees, beſtowed on ſome of them the Spirit of Prophecy. This was a great Teſtimony of God's Love to an Apoſtate People; among whom he left Prophets to recover them from their Idolatry. For even in the chief Place of Impiety (which was *Beth-el*) they were not wanting. And it is ſtill more remarkable, that Prophets of greater Excellency for their Miracles were continued in *Iſrael* than were in *Judah*; becauſe they needed them more, to turn their hard Hearts from the Worſhip of Idols; and to ſupport the pious Perſons that remained among them, and preſerve them from deſerting their Religion. For it ſeems to me very probable, that theſe *Sons of the Prophets* were ſuch Miniſters to the Prophets, as the Evangeliſts were to the Apoſtles: Whom the Prophets ſent to publiſh their Prophecies and Inſtructions to the People, where they could not go themſelves. And perhaps they taught them the Law of God, and explained it to them; of which there was great need in thoſe idolatrous Times.

And ſaid unto him, Knoweſt thou that the LORD *will take away thy maſter from thy head to day?*] It was revealed to ſome of them by God, and they told it to the reſt of the Company of the Prophets. Who allude to their manner of ſitting in their School, when they ſaw God would *take away Elijah from his head:* That is, deprive him of his Inſtructions. For, it is well known that the Scholars ſat below at their Maſter's Feet, and the Maſter above over their Head, when they taught them.

And he ſaid, Yea, I know it, hold you your peace.] Say no more of it: I would not be diſturbed with the Thoughts of it. Or, let not my Maſter know, that I underſtand it.

Ver. 4. *And Elijah ſaid unto Eliſha, Tarry here, I pray thee:*] He doth not lay his Commands upon him (as he did unto a former Servant, 1 *Kings* xix. 3.) but only intreats him, and in a more tender manner than he did before, to accompany him no further.

For the LORD *hath ſent me to Jericho.*] Another remarkable Place, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, to which he went: That as *Moſes*, when he turned his Face towards this Place (*Deut.* xxxiv. 1.) departed this Life; ſo this ſhould be the laſt Place wherein *Elijah* would remain, before he left the World. A Place alſo famous for many Miracles done there.

And he ſaid, As the LORD *liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho.*] He hoped for ſome great Bleſſing from him, when he was carried up to Heaven; and therefore continued firm in his Reſolution, to attend that wonderful Change.

Ver. 5. *And the ſons of the prophets that were at Jericho, came to Eliſha, and ſaid unto him, Knoweſt thou that the* LORD *will take away thy maſter from thy head to day? and he ſaid, Yea, I know it, hold you your peace.*] Here was another School, where the ſame Holy Spirit revealed the Mind of God to them; as it had done at *Beth-el*. And it is a probable Opinion of *Kimchi*, who affirms there were the like Schools in other Cities of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 6. *And Elijah ſaid unto him, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the* LORD *had ſent me unto Jordan.*] Another Place, where God had wrought great Wonders. Not far from which, as *Kimchi* notes, the great Prophet *Moſes* died; and therefore God intended to tranſlate *Elijah* near to this Place.

And he ſaid, As the LORD *liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on.*] From *Jericho*, to the River *Jordan*.

Ver. 7. *And fifty men of the ſons of the prophets went, and ſtood to view afar off:*] They were confident the Time of his Aſſumption drew near, and were very deſirous, if it were poſſible, to ſee the manner of it: But were not admitted to accompany him to the Place, where he was taken up to Heaven, as *Eliſha* did; for they took this View at *Jericho*, ver. 15.

And they two ſtood by Jordan.] The reſt being forbidden, I ſuppoſe, to go thither with him.

Ver. 8. *And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapt it together,*] This *Mantle* of his is mentioned five times in theſe Books, thrice in this Chapter, and twice in 1 *Kings* xix. 13, 19. In all which Places it is called *Adareth:* Which is a Word ſignifying a Royal Robe, as well as a Prophetical, *Jonah* iii. 6. The LXX in all the five Places now mentioned, tranſlate it μηλωτὴ, which properly ſignifies the Prophetical Mantle to be made of Lamb-ſkin: Being an upper Garment thrown over the Shoulders, and ſome think coming down to the Heels.

And ſmote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, ſo that they two went over on dry ground.] God made a dry Path in the middle of the River, whoſe Waters ſtood on each Side of it.

Ver. 9. *And it came to paſs when they were gone over, that Elijah ſaid unto Eliſha, Ask what I ſhall do for thee, before I be taken from thee. And Eliſha ſaid, Let I pray thee, a double portion of thy ſpirit be upon me.*] They are much miſtaken, who imagine he begg'd as much more of the Spirit as *Elijah* had; for that had been very arrogant. He only deſired to have ſuch a Portion of it, as the firſt-born in a Family had of his Father's Eſtate. That is, as much more of his Spirit, as any of the reſt of the Sons of the Prophets: For the Portion of the firſt-born was double to that of the reſt of the Children. In ſhort, he did not deſire to excel his Maſter, but his School-fellows. See *P. Fagius* upon *Deut.* xxi. 17.

Ver. 10. *And he ſaid, Thou haſt asked a hard thing:*] Such Gifts were rarely beſtowed.

Neverthelеſs, if thou ſee me when I am taken from thee, it ſhall be ſo unto thee; but if not, it ſhall not be ſo.] Mark, this is a Sign whether thou ſhalt have what thou deſireſt, or not.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs, as they ſtill went on, and talked,*] Of the happy State, it is likely, to which *Elijah* was going.

That behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horſes of fire, and parted them both aſunder, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.] Angels appeared before them, in the Form of a bright Chariot and Horſes, running towards them upon the Ground; which coming be-

tween them, ſeparated them one from the other. For *Elijah* mounted the Chariot, and in a great Guſt of Wind governed by Angels, was tranſported into Heaven. That is, ſaid *Abarbinel*, into the Air: For he being a Stanger to Chriſtianity, could not conceive how an Earthly Body could live among the Cœleſtial Inhabitants; and therefore, according to the groſs Imaginations of the *Jews*, imagines he is ſtill upon the Earth, in the Garden of *Eden*. But theſe are ignorant Conceits. The plain Senſe is, that his Body being transformed in his Paſſage towards Heaven, he was carried up to live among the Angels.

The Heathens themſelves did not diſbelieve ſuch things: As appears by the Story of *Æganympha*, who was made immortal by *Jupiter*; and of *Dryope* by the *Hamadryades*: And *Bacchus* aſſured *Cadmus*, that by the Help of *Mars* he ſhould live for ever in the Iſles of the Bleſſed, whither they ſaid *Alcumene* was ſnatched up, by *Mercury*, at the Command of *Jupiter*, &c. See *Dan. Huetius* in his *Alnetanæ Quæſtiones*, Lib. 2. Cap. 12. N. 30.

Ver. 12. *And Eliſha ſaw it, and he cried, My father, my father,*] So they called their Maſters and Inſtructers.

The chariots of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof.] And he alludes to what he beheld; and very fitly compared *Elijah* to Chariots and Horſemen, which the *Iſraelites* wanted in their Armies; but he was inſtead of them by his Counſels and Prayers; whereby they might have obtained great Victories, if they would have been obedient to his Word.

And he ſaw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces.] To expreſs his Sorrow for ſo great a Loſs.

Ver. 13. *And he took up alſo the mantle of Elijah that fell from him,*] This dropped from him as he went up to Heaven: In token of the Spirit that ſhould be given to *Eliſha*, according to his Promiſe.

And went back, and ſtood by the bank of Jordan:] Whoſe Waters were come together again, after he and *Elijah* got over.

Ver. 14. *And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and ſaid, Where is the* L O R D *God of Elijah?*] That is, let him ſhew his Preſence with me, and his Power, as he did with *Elijah*. But we do not tranſlate theſe laſt Words exactly, two Words being left out; *viz. Aph-hu*, which the LXX put into one, ἀφφώ, of which I know not the Senſe. And the *Chaldee* tranſlate it, *receive my petition*; without any Reaſon; whoſe Words carrying in them nothing of that Signification. The beſt Account of them is that which I meet with in a ſhort Diſſertation by *Joh. Friſchmuthus, De Orig. & Proſapia Eliæ*. Where he obſerves, that *Eliſha* having aſked this Queſtion, *Where is the* L O R D *God of Elijah?* anſwers himſelf in theſe Words, *Aph-hu, etiam ille adhuc ſuper eſt*; yea, he is yet in being. Thus *Abarbinel* expreſſes the Senſe. *Though Elijah be not here, yet his God is.* The Servant is wanting, but not the L O R D. The bleſſed God is ſtill preſent, and will ſupply his Place.

And when he alſo had ſmote the waters, they parted hither and thither: And Eliſha went over.] Juſt as *Elijah* had done a little before, *ver.* 8.

Ver. 15. *And when the ſons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho, ſaw him, they ſaid, The ſpirit of Elijah doth reſt on Eliſha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themſelves down to the ground before him:*] In token of their Reverence to him, as the Father of the Prophets.

Ver. 16. *And they ſaid unto him, Behold now, there are with us fifty ſtrong men,*] Fit to undertake ſuch an Expedition as they propoſe.

Let them go, we pray thee, and ſeek thy maſter: leſt peradventure the ſpirit of the L O R D *hath taken him up, and caſt him upon ſome mountain, or into ſome valley.*] They had but an imperfect Notice of what God intended, when they aſked *Eliſha*, if he knew the L O R D would take his Maſter from him. For they imagined he might not be quite taken away; but only for a Time: Or, that if his Spirit were taken into Heaven, his Body might poſſibly be thrown upon ſome of the neighbouring Mountains or Valleys.

And he ſaid, Ye ſhall not ſend.] For he knew it would be to no Purpoſe.

Ver. 17. *And when they urged him 'till he was aſhamed, he ſaid, Send.*] He was afraid they ſhould think he wanted Love to his Maſter; or, was ſo ambitious to enjoy his Place, and Authority, that he was loth he ſhould be found alive.

And they ſought him three days, but found him not.] In that Time they ſearched every Place, where they thought it likely he might be caſt.

Ver. 18. *And when they came again to him (for he tarried at Jericho) he ſaid unto them, Did not I ſay unto you, Go not?*] By this he ſettled his Authority, in that he foretold them their Labour would be loſt.

Ver. 19. *And the men of the city ſaid unto Eliſha, Behold, the ſituation of this city is pleaſant, as my lord ſeeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren.*] Things did not thrive in that Soil; but the People, and the Cattle miſcarried, and the Fruit fell off from the Trees; as the Margin tranſlates it. Which Curſe, *Abarbinel* thinks, had been upon this Place, ever ſince the Time of *Joſhua*.

Ver. 20. *And he ſaid, Bring me a new cruſe, and put ſalt therein. And they brought it to him.*] He would have a new Cruſe, *that had* never been uſed; and brought by them, together with the Salt, that there might be no Suſpicion of Fraud, (as *Abarbinel* obſerves) nor the Virtue aſcribed to any thing that was in the Cruſe before, but meerly to the Power of God. The *Jews* alſo in *Michilta* ſay, that his putting Salt into it, made this a *Miracle in a Miracle:* For it makes Water leſs potable, and Ground more barren.

Ver. 21. *And he went forth unto the ſpring of the waters, and caſt the ſalt in there, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the* L O R D, *I have healed theſe waters: there ſhall not be from thence any more death, or barren land.*] He wrought the Miracle at *Jordan*, as the fore-named Author obſerves, for his own ſake; that he might make an Experiment, whether the Divine Influence which was upon *Elijah* was derived unto him. But this at *Jericho* he wrought for the ſake of the Sons of the Prophets, who dwelt there; that they might know the Hand of the L O R D was with him.

Ver. 22.

Ver. 22. *So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the ſaying of Eliſha, which he ſpake.*] By this the People of the City (who beſought this Favour from him, *ver.* 19.) ſaw that he was a Man of God, to whom they owed Obedience.

Ver. 23. *And he went up from thence to Beth-el:*] That he might viſit the Sons of the Prophets who were in that City, and comfort them for the Loſs of *Elijah*; by letting them ſee the Spirit of God was upon him. It is very properly ſaid, he *went up* thither, becauſe it ſtood upon an Hill; and there was an Aſcent from *Jericho* thither (*Joſh.* viii. 3, 17.) though *Elijah* and he, going another Way, are ſaid to go down to *Beth-el*, ver. 2.

And as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city,] The Word *Naarim* ſignifies *grown Youth*, as well as little Children. For *Iſaac*, when he was twenty-eight Years old, is called *Naar*, *Gen.* xxii. 5, 12. And *Joſeph*, when he was thirty, xli. 12. and *Rehoboam*, when he was forty, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 7. And this is to be underſtood here, of adult Perſons; who had a Hatred to the Prophet.

And mocked him,] By the Inſtigation of their Parents, or of *Baal*'s Prieſts (as they will have it, who take them for meer Children) who ſtirred them up, and taught them to jeer at his bald Pate, and ſo laughed at the Aſcenſion of *Elijah*.

And ſaid unto him, Go up thou bald head, go up thou bald head.] The Repetition of theſe Words, expreſſes their Earneſtneſs and Vehemence in their Contempt of him. For as Hair was always accounted a ſingular Ornament, ſo Baldneſs was diſgraceful. Inſomuch that *Cæſar*, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved, could not bear with thoſe who jeered him upon this Account; and thought it the higheſt Honour the Senate did him, in decreeing he ſhould always appear with a Wreath of Laurel upon his Head.

When they call upon *Eliſha* to *go up*, they flouted, as *Abarbinel* thinks, at the Aſcenſion of *Elijah* to Heaven; the News of which had been brought thither, and reported by the Prophets of that Place. Which the Idolaters laughed at, and bad *Eliſha* go up to Heaven alſo; that they might not be troubled with him. This I find alſo the Authors of the Queſtions and Anſwers, *ad Orthodoxo*, underſtands theſe Words: Which were ſpoken πρὸς διασυρμὸν τῆς τοῦ Ἠλίου ἀναλήψεως, to reproach the Aſſumption of *Elijah*: As if they had ſaid, λαμβανέτω καὶ σε πνεῦμα, *Let the Spirit take thee alſo*, and caſt thee upon ſome inacceſſible Mountain; that we may be rid of thee, as we are of him. *Reſponſ.* 80.

Ver. 24. *And he turned back, and looked upon them, and curſed them in the name of the* LORD:] This Contempt of him, not as a Man meerly, but as as Prophet, provoked the Anger of God; who moved *Eliſha* to lay a Curſe upon them, and puniſh them, as *Moſes* did *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*; and St *Peter* did *Ananias*, and *Sapphira*.

And there came two ſhe-bears out of the wood,] Who it is likely had been robbed of their Whelps: Which made them the more fierce and outrageous.

And tare forty and two children of them.] This was done by an extraordinrry Direction of God; who moved the Bears at that Moment to come out of the Wood, when *Eliſha* pronounced the Curſe, and to make ſuch a great Havock among them, when two or three would have ſatisfied their Hunger.

Ver. 25. *And he went from thence to mount Carmel,*] Where it is probable he had many Diſciples: Among whom he intended to be a while retired.

And from thence he returned to Samaria.] To teſtify againſt their Idolatry. And it is highly probable, there was a College of Prophets even in *Samaria*, as there was in *Beth-el*, and *Jericho*; whom he went to encourage.

CHAP. III.

Verſe 1. *NOW Jehoram the ſon of Ahab began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, the eighteenth year of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve Years.*] *Ahaziah* his Brother reigned two Years, and began his Reign in the ſeventeenth Year of *Jehoſhaphat* (1 *Kings* xxii. 51.) That is, part of the ſeventeenth Year, and part of the eighteenth, which was accounted for two Years. In the latter End of which *Jehoram* his Brother began to reign: When *Jehoram*, the Son of *Jehoſhaphat*, had two Years reigned with his Father. See i. 17.

Ver. 2. *And he wrought evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *but not like his father, and like his mother; for he put away the image of Baal which his father had made.*] He did not break it in pieces, as he would have done if he had heartily hated it, but only put it away out of the Temple; being afraid, leſt the Judgments of God ſhould fall upon him, as they had done upon his Father. And the King of *Moab* being now in Rebellion againſt him, *Jehoſhaphat* perhaps refuſed to help him, whilſt he was a Worſhipper of *Baal*. It is much that his Mother, who had brought this Worſhip with her from the *Zidonians*, ſhould ſuffer him to remove this Image; but ſhe was a little daunted perhaps at their many Diſaſters which had befallen their Family; and was contented with worſhipping *Baal* in private.

Ver. 3. *Nevertheleſs, he cleaved unto the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin; he departed not therefrom.*] It was eaſier to remove the Image of *Baal*, than to put away the Calves; for that was new, but the other had been of long ſtanding; and the moſt likely Courſe they could think of, to maintain the Diviſion of the two Kingdoms.

Ver. 4. *And Meſha king of Moab was a ſheepmaſter,*] The Riches not only of private Men, but alſo of Kings, in ancient Time conſiſted much in Sheep, and Cattle: Which, I have obſerved before, they looked after themſelves: And their Sons kept their Sheep, as *Bochartus* ſhews in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 44. And thus the greateſt part of the World lived, during the ſpace of near four Thouſand Years. Which did not hinder them from being, at the ſame Time, a brave and warlike People, as appears by the ancient *Romans*, who were thus bred; and ſubdued all *Italy*, and at laſt made themſelves Maſters of the World. For this ſort of

Life was the Cauſe of their great Strength, making their Bodies robuſt, and hardned to Labour, and accuſtomed to a ſevere Diſcipline. There cannot be a greater Inſtance of this, than we have in *Cato* the *Cenſor*; who paſſed through all the great Offices of the Republick of *Rome*, had governed Provinces, commanded Armies, was a great Orator, Lawyer, and Politician; who did not diſdain to write a Treatiſe concerning all the Ways that are neceſſary for the improving Lands, and how Stables and Houſes were to be built for ſeveral ſorts of Cattle, and how Preſſes were to be made for Wine and Oil, *&c.* Inſomuch that any one may ſee he was perfectly acquainted with Country Buſineſs and that he did not write for Oſtentation, but for the Uſe and Service of Mankind.

And rendered to the king of Iſrael an hundred thouſand lambs, and an hundred thouſand rams, with the wool.] This was a prodigious Number, and being rendred unſhorn, made them more valuable. But we are to conſider that theſe Countries abounded with Sheep; inſomuch that *Solomon* offered an hundred and twenty thouſand at the Dedication of the Temple, 2 *Chron.* vii. 5. and the *Reubenites* drove from the *Hagarens* an hundred and fifty thouſand, 1 *Chron.* v. 7. For they frequently brought forth two at a Time, and ſometimes twice a Year, as that great Man *Bochartus* ſhews in the ſame Book, *Cap.* 46. and produces a famous Place in *Pliny*, which ſhews that this was the moſt ancient Tribute. For he ſaith in the *Cenſorian Tables*, all the Rents of the People are called *Paſtures*, *quia diu hoc ſolum vectigal fuerat*, Lib. 18. Nat. Hiſt. Cap. 3. But *Ludolphus* hath obſerved two things for the illuſtrating this Hiſtory of the King of *Moab*, which ſeem to be very conſiderable. *Firſt*, That this was not Annual Tribute, but Satisfaction for Damages which the *Iſraelites* had ſuſtained in the War with them, or by their Revolt from them, as the LXX underſtand it. And then the Word *Ajil* ſhould not be tranſlated a *Ram*, but a *Weather*: For one Ram will ſerve a great many Sheep, *Lib.* 1. *Comment. in Hiſtor. Æthiop.* Cap. 3. N. 30.

Ver. 5. *And it came to paſs when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled againſt the king of Iſrael.*] As was ſaid before, Chap. i. 1. and here again repeated, only to introduce the following Hiſtory.

Ver. 6. *And king Jehoram went out of Samaria the ſame time, and numbered all Iſrael.*] As ſoon as he was ſettled in his Kingdom, his firſt Buſineſs was to raiſe an Army to reduce *Moab* to Obedience.

Ver. 7. *And he went*] After his Army was raiſed, he went out of *Samaria*.

And ſent to Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah, ſaying, The king of Moab hath rebelled againſt me: wilt thou go with me againſt Moab to battle? And he ſaid, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horſes as thy horſes.] He returned the very ſame Anſwer to him which he had given to *Ahab* his Father, when he deſired his Aſſiſtance againſt *Syria*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 4. wherein he had been ſo unſucceſsful, that it ſhould have made him more cautious how he joined with his Son; eſpecially ſince he ſeemed to have been afraid to have to do with his Brother *Ahaziah*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 49. But *Jehoram* having reformed ſome things (*ver.* 2.) it made him perhaps have a better Opinion of him, and by ſhewing Kindneſs to him, he might hope to perſuade him to proceed further. And beſides, the *Moabites* had lately invaded his Country, 2 *Chron.* xx. 1, 10. which might move him to embrace an Opportunity to chaſtiſe them for it.

Ver. 8. *And he ſaid, Which way ſhall we go up?*] *Jehoſhaphat* having agreed to join with him, it is likely the King of *Iſrael* aſked this Queſtion, and *Jehoſhaphat* made the following Anſwer.

And he anſwered, the way through the wilderneſs of Edom.] Which he choſe, becauſe he would have the Aſſiſtance of the *Edomites*, who were his Tributaries. And it is probable *Moab* was but weakly fortified on that ſide.

Ver. 9. *So the king of Iſrael went, and the king of Judah, and the king of Edom:*] There was no King at this Time in *Edom*, as we read in the laſt Chapter of the foregoing Book, *ver.* 47. but a Viceroy appointed by the King of *Judah*. Yet ſuch are called Kings, 1 *Kings* xx. 1. See *Grotius*. And *Jehoſhaphat*, I ſuppoſe, now required him with his People, to help him in this War.

And they fetcht a compaſs of ſeven days journey:] That they might come upon the Backs of the *Moabites*: Where they did not expect them.

And there was no water for the hoſt, and for the cattle that followed them.] That drew their Carriages. For either there was a great Drought in thoſe Parts; or they had miſtaken their Way.

Ver. 10. *And the king of Iſrael ſaid, Alas! that the LORD hath called theſe three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.*] He doth not cry to God for Help, but only bewail the Straits into which they were fallen: Which his own Guilt made him imagine God had contrived for their Deſtruction.

Ver. 11. *And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, Is not there a Prophet of the LORD, that we way enquire by him?*] This was ſpoken like a pious Man; but it was a Fault that he did not enquire before for Direction in this War; as he did in that with the *Syrians*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 5.

And one of the king of Iſraels ſervants anſwered and ſaid, Here is Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah.] That is was his Servant, and miniſtred unto him.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, The word of the LORD is with him.*] For no doubt he had been informed how *Elijah* had choſen him to be his Succeſſor; and how he attended him 'till he was taken up to Heaven; and what Wonders he had already done.

So the king of Iſrael, and Jehoſhaphat, and the king of Edom went down to him.] It is uncertain whither they went. But it is very obſervable, *Firſt*, How much they honoured the Prophet, for whom they did not ſend to come to them; but went to him. And *Secondly*, How deſirous the Prophet was to do good, in that he followed the Camp into this Wilderneſs. For it is not likely they went back to

Samaria

Samaria to wait on him (where the Story laſt left him, in the laſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter) which would have been a ſeven Days Journey; and the Army might in the mean Time have been loſt. Beſides, *ver.* 16. ſhews he was not far from them; and the Servant in the foregoing Verſe ſpeaks of him as preſent; ſaying, *Here is Eliſha.*

Ver. 13. *And Eliſha ſaid unto the king of Iſrael, What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother.*] He refuſes with great Diſdain to entertain any Diſcourſe with him; and bids him confer with thoſe who he knew could do him no Service.

And the king of Iſrael ſaid, Nay:] That is, I will not conſult them; but do thou give us Counſel how we may be brought out of this great Diſtreſs.

For the LORD hath called theſe three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab.] Though he refuſed to do any thing for his ſake, yet he beſeeches him to have Reſpect to the other two Kings, who muſt periſh as well as he, if he did not help them.

Ver. 14. *And Eliſha ſaid, As the LORD of hoſts liveth, before whom I ſtand,*] It is obſervable, that the Sons of the Prophets are ſaid to ſit before their Maſters the Prophets when they inſtructed them, (iv. 3, 8. and ſee the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 3.) but the Prophets themſelves ſtood before the LORD, their Maſter, when he ſent them upon any Meſſage. See *Corn. Bertram. de Rep. Jud.* Cap. 16.

Surely, were it not that I regard the preſence of Jehoſhaphat the king of Judah, I would not look towards thee, nor ſee thee.] He ſaith nothing of the King of *Edom*, who was a Dependant upon *Jehoſhaphat*: Whoſe Piety he eſteemed, and had ſome Reſpect to all that belonged to him.

Ver. 15. *But now bring me a minſtrel.*] One that could play well upon an Inſtrument of Muſick.

And it came to paſs when the minſtrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.] Every one knows that ſome ſort of Muſick wonderfully quiets and compoſes the Spirits, when they are diſordered; and raiſes them when they are flat and heavy. And therefore holy Men did not neglect ſuch Helps to make them ſo ſedate and chearful, that they might be fit to receive Divine Inſpirations. But it is likely he that played now to *Eliſha* ſung withal ſome Hymn in the Praiſes of God, and of his wonderful Works, whereby the Spirit of the Prophet was ſweetly compoſed, which had been diſturbed, perhaps more than was fit, by his Indignation at the King of *Iſrael*. And from hence we may conclude there were excellent Muſicians in *Iſrael*, as well as in *Judah*, where *David* had ſettled Divine Muſick in great Perfection. And it is very probable, what the Heathen boaſt of their *Muſes*, was from hence derived.

Then the hand of the LORD came upon him.] That is, God wrought in him; and he felt himſelf moved by a Divine Inſpiration.

Ver. 16. *And he ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, make this valley full of ditches.*] This ſhews they were in a Place where the Army was encamped in a Valley, in which he ordered them to be ſet at work, to dig large Ditches to hold Water enough for them all.

Ver. 17. *For thus ſaith the LORD, Ye ſhall not ſee wind, neither ſhall ye ſee rain; yet that valley ſhall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beaſts.*] The Words belonging to one of our Senſes are frequently applied to another. As to *ſee Wind* is to feel it, or hear it. And the Meaning is, there ſhould no Wind ſtir to blow up Clouds (as the South-wind commonly did) nor ſhould they ſee any Rain fall; and yet they ſhould have Plenty of Water in that Valley, for themſelves, and all belonging to them. I ſuppoſe it fell upon the Mountains at a Diſtance from them, and came pouring down into the lower Ground.

Ver. 18. *And this is but a light thing in the ſight of the LORD: He will deliver the Moabites into your hand.*] Of which, I ſuppoſe, they had no Hope, being much diſpirited for want of Water.

Ver. 19. *And ye ſhall ſmite every fenced city, and every choice city, and ſhall fell every good tree, and ſtop up all the wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with ſtones.*] Prophets were to be obeyed, when they commanded things contrary to a poſitive Precept, as ſome part of this was, ſee *Deut.* xx. 19. Which they had Power to diſpenſe withal for a Time, though not always, ſo as to annul the Precept, as *Maimonides* expounds this Matter in his Preface to *Seder Zeraim*. But ſome think this Uſage ſo ſevere, that they take the Prophet's Meaning to be no more than this; that God would give them ſuch an intire Victory, that they might be able to do all this, if they pleaſed; and the *Moabites* were ſo ill Neighbours, that it is very likely they did this Execution upon them, *ver.* 25.

Ver. 20. *And it came to paſs in the morning, when the meat-offering was offered,*] When the People of God were praying at *Jeruſalem*, at the Time of the Morning Sacrifice, *Eliſha* joined his Prayers with them for this Bleſſing.

That behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.] Whether it came from a ſudden Collection of a vaſt Number of Clouds, which poured down Rain in abundance in the Land of *Edom*; or from ſome Rocks which God cauſed to guſh out Water; it came by a miraculous Power, when there was no natural Cauſe to produce it.

Ver. 21. *And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight againſt them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and ſtood in the border.*] Intending to defend themſelves; but not to march out of their Country, to give the Enemy Battle.

Ver. 22. *And they roſe up early in the morning,*] The next Morning, I ſuppoſe, after the Water filled the Valley.

And the ſun ſhone upon the water, and the Moabites ſaw the water on the other ſide as red as blood:] On the Eaſt-ſide of their Country.

Ver. 23. *And they ſaid, This is blood: the kings are ſurely ſlain, and they have ſmitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the ſpoil.*] They knew there was no Water there, a few Days before, and that there had been no Rain; and therefore (the Sun ſhining directly in their Eyes, which made it look red) they concluded it could be nothing

nothing elſe but Blood. And what Blood could it be, but that of the three Kings Army, who had fallen out, by reaſon, perhaps, of their different Religion; or vexed at the Straits they had brought one another into? And the *Moabites* eaſily believing what they wiſhed, imagined they had nothing to do, but to go and gather Spoil, and not to fight at all.

Ver. 24. *And when they came to the camp of Iſrael, the Iſraelites roſe up and ſmote the Moabites, ſo that they fled before them:*] They entirely routed and diſperſed them.

But they went forward, ſmiting the Moabites, even in their country.] But they did not content themſelves with this Victory; but purſued them ſo cloſe that they got into their Country with them, and there made a greater Havock of them.

Ver. 25. *And they beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land caſt every man his ſtone, and filled it, and they ſtopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees:*] According to the Permiſſion given them by the Prophet (*ver.* 19.) intending, I ſuppoſe, to depopulate the whole Country.

Only in Kir-haroſheth left they the ſtones thereof:] They left no Walls ſtanding, but only theſe of the Royal City; which was exceeding ſtrong. See *Iſaiah* xvi. 7, 11.

Howbeit the ſlingers went about it, and ſmote it.] They raiſed ſuch Batteries againſt it, that they drove them who defended it from the Wall; and made great Breaches in it.

Ver. 26. *And when the king of Moab ſaw the battle was too ſore for him,*] That he was not able to defend the Place any longer.

He took with him ſeven hundred men that drew ſwords, to break through even unto the king of Edom: but they could not.] He made a Sally with ſeven hundred ſtout Men upon the Quarters of the King of *Edom* (which it ſeems were the weakeſt) hoping to break through them, and eſcape. But they were repulſed, and forced to retreat.

Ver. 27. *Then he took his eldeſt ſon that ſhould have reigned in his ſtead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall:*] Hereupon the King of *Moab* took his eldeſt Son and made him a Sacrifice before them all, as the laſt deſperate Remedy; hoping thereby to obtain powerful Help from his God, through ſo precious a Sacrifice of the deareſt thing he had unto him. For it is well known, not only by the Holy Scriptures, but Heathen Writers, that in great Diſtreſs they were wont to offer their own Children upon their Altars. *Euſebius* Lib. 5. *Præpar. Evangel.* and *Lactantius*, Lib. 1. *Div. Inſtit.* Cap. 21. mention ſeveral Nations who uſed theſe Sacrifices. And *Cæſar* Lib. 6. *De Bello Gallico*, ſaith of the *Gauls*, that when they were afflicted with grievous Diſeaſes, or in Time of War, or great Danger, *they either offered Men for Sacrifices, or vowed they would offer them.* For they imagined God would not be appeaſed, *Niſi pro vita hominis reddatur vita hominis*, unleſs the Life of a Man was rendered for the Life of a Man.

Abarbinel indeed thinks that he offered the eldeſt Son of the King of *Edom*, whom he took Priſoner in the late Sally. But it could not be ſaid of him, that this Son was to reign in his ſtead; For the King of *Judah* made whom he pleaſed his Deputy over *Edom*. And this would not have made the three Kings withdraw the Siege, but proſecute it with greater Fury. And *Abarbinel* acknowledges, that their wiſe Men in *Peſikta* and the *Sanhedrin* underſtand it as I do: And that ſome of them think he offered him in Imitation of *Abraham*, to the God of *Iſrael*, hoping to move him to be favourable to him. Which no leſs Man than *Grotius* follows. And indeed it is highly probable, that this Cuſtom of offering humane Sacrifices ſprung from the offering of *Iſaac*, from whence the *Moabites*, who were Neighbours to *Canaan*, learnt it.

And there was great indignation againſt Iſrael:] Or, as it may be tranſlated, *great repentance upon* (or *in*, or *among*) *Iſrael.* That is, they were extream ſorry and troubled at this barbarous Sacrifice, and wiſhed they had not puſhed on the War ſo far; which ended in ſuch an horrid Action, which brought an *Odium* upon them.

And they departed from him, and returned to their own land.] Hereupon they raiſed the Siege, by common Conſent, and returned home, for fear any ſuch thing ſhould be done again.

CHAP. IV.

Verſe 1. *NOW there cried a certain woman of the wives of the ſons of the prophets unto Eliſha, ſaying,*] It is obſerved by St *Hierom*, that *Elijah* and *Eliſha* had no Wives. *Et Virgines multi Filii Prophetarum*; and many of the Sons of the Prophets were Virgins: But it is plain by this Place that they were not all ſo; but had Liberty to marry if they pleaſed.

My husband is dead, and thou knoweſt that thy ſervant did fear the LORD:] Was a Worſhipper of the true God, and not of *Baal* nor the *Calves*: Which was the Reaſon it is likely of his Poverty; ſuch Men being diſcountenanced among the idolatrous *Iſraelites.*

And the creditor is come to take unto him my two ſons, to be his bondſmen.] Becauſe ſhe was not able to pay his Debts: In which Caſe the *Hebrews* had ſuch a Power over their Children, that they might ſell them (being looked upon as their Goods) to pay what they owed; and the Creditor might force them to it. And *Huetius* thinks that from the *Jews* this Cuſtom was propagated to the *Athenians*; and from them to the *Romans*. The *Hebrew* Doctors have a Fancy, that this Prophet was *Obadiah* (mentioned 1 *Kings* xviii. 3.) and that the Creditor was *Jehoram* the Son of *Ahab*. Which is utterly ungrounded.

Ver. 2. *And Eliſha ſaid unto her, What ſhall I do for thee? Tell me, what haſt thou in the houſe?*] Toward the Diſcharge of thy Huſband's Debt.

And ſhe ſaid, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the houſe, ſave a pot of oil.] Which was a thing of great Uſe; both for the Service of God, and of Men.

Ver. 3. *And he ſaid, Go borrow thee veſſels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty veſſels, borrow not a few.*] As many as ſhe could get, and not ſmall Veſſels.

Ver. 4. *And when thou art come in, thou ſhalt ſhut the door upon thee, and upon thy ſons,*] That

none might come in to disturb her in what she was about.

And shalt pour out] Of the Pot of Oil which she had.

Into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.] And call for another that was empty.

Ver. 5. *So she went from him, and shut the door upon her sons, who brought the vessels to her, and she poured out.*] Believing she should by this means be relieved.

Ver. 6. *And it came to pass when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son,*] Who brought her the empty Vessels; for the other Son was employed in setting aside those that were full.

Bring me yet a vessel.] For she was confident the Pot of Oil would still afford more.

And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.] When there was no Vessel to receive it.

Ver. 7. *Then she came and told the man of God: And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children upon the rest.*] We must first do Justice; and then expect God's Blessing upon the Provision we make for our selves and our Family.

Ver. 8. *And it fell out on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem,*] A City in the Tribe of *Issachar*, *Josh.* xix. 18.

Where was a great woman;] Who had a great Estate, and it is likely kept a great House.

And she constrained him to eat bread.] Was very importunate with him to take a Repast at her House, and prevailed with him to accept of her Kindness.

And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread.] She made him so welcome, that he made no Scruple, when he had Occasion to go that Way, to step in there and refresh himself: Which it is likely she invited him to do.

Ver. 9. *And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive*] By her frequent Conversation with him.

That this is an holy man of God,] Not only a Prophet; but a Person of great Sanctity.

Which passeth by us continually.] For *Shunem* was in his Way as he went from *Carmel* (which was not far from hence) to *Beth-el* and *Jericho*, and other Places of the Sons of the Prophets.

Ver. 10. *Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall,*] A private Room remote from the House, where he might retire; and without Noise or Disturbance give himself to Prayer, and Meditation, and follow his sacred Studies.

And let us set up for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick:] Furnish it with all things necessary for a single Person.

And it shall be that when he cometh, he shall turn in thither.] Take up his Lodging there, if he think good.

Ver. 11. *And it fell out on a day that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.*] And it appears by the Story, that he became their constant Guest.

Ver. 12. *And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he called her, she stood before him.*] Waiting to know what he wanted. But he having been so kindly entertained by her for some Time, sent for her to give her Thanks, and to desire to know what he should do for her.

Ver. 13. *And he said unto him, Say now unto her,*] He seems to me to have whispered to *Gehazi*, to ask her the following Question. Whereupon she withdrew, thinking he had some Business with him, before he could speak with her.

Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care;] Been exceeding kind to us, in taking care we should want nothing.

What is to be done for thee?] That is, wherein can I serve thee? For he was very desirous, as all good Men are, to be grateful.

Wouldst thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?] It seems the Prophet had a great Power at Court, since the late Victory over the *Moabites*. And therefore if she had any Suit to make to the King, he doubted not to effect it; or had any Grievance to complain of, which she suffered by the Soldiers, he offered to get it remedied.

And she answered, I dwell among my own people.] Whatsoever Vexation any might suffer by the Soldiers upon the Borders, she tells him she lived safely and quietly among her Friends and good Neighbours; being so free from Want that she needed not petition the King for any thing.

Ver. 14. *And he said, What is then to be done for her?*] This Answer being returned to his Master by *Gehazi*, *Elisha* asked him, what he thought might be most welcome to her. Which he might easily know, going about the House and observing all things there, which *Elisha* did not, who lived retired.

And Gehazi said, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.] He knew Women were desirous above all things to have Children; which she neither had, nor was like to have, by reason of her Husband's Age.

Ver. 15. *And he said, Call her.*] This shews she withdrew presently, when he first sent for her, *ver.* 12, 13.

And when he had called her, she stood in the door.] Either out of Modesty, or Reverence; or being afraid to disturb him.

Ver. 16. *And he said, About this season, according to the time of life,*] The next Year, after thou hast gone the usual Time.

Thou shalt embrace a son.] From the Word *Habeketh*, which we translate *thou shalt embrace*, some of the *Hebrew* Doctors conjecture that this Son proved afterward the Prophet *Habakkuk*: Which is a meer Fancy, rejected by *Abarbinel* and others; who make account *Habakkuk* prophesied in the Time of *Manasseh* or *Josiah*.

And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thy handmaid.] Do not jest with me.

Ver. 17. *And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that time that Elisha said unto her, according to the time of life.*] It is likely he named the very Day when he should be born; and it fell out exactly as he had said.

Ver. 18. *And when the child was grown, it fell out on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers.*] Either for Pleasure; or to enquire of his Health. This shews still the Truth of

of that which I have often obſerved, that great Men in ancient Times (for the Quality of his Wife ſhews this was no mean Perſon, *ver.* 8.) followed their Country Buſineſs themſelves; looking after their Corn and their Cattle, and labouring with their own Hands for their Health, and the Increaſe of their Eſtates, by their Induſtry in their Improvement.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaid unto his father, My head, my head.*] Either walking ſo far, or ſtaying long in the Sun (which ſhone hot in Harveſt Time) put him into a Fever, which grievouſly affected his Head.

And he ſaid to a lad, Carry him home to his mother.] That ſhe might look after him, and do what was proper for his Eaſe.

Ver. 20. *And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he ſat on her knees 'till noon and then died.*] It ſeems he went out in the Morning to his Father, and was ſeized with ſuch a ſudden violent Pain, as in a few Hours killed him.

Ver. 21. *And ſhe went up, and laid him upon the bed of the man of God,*] Hoping for Help by him, whoſe Maſter ſhe had heard (no doubt) had reſtored a Child to Life.

And ſhut the door, and went out.] Kept it as private as ſhe could, that her Huſband might not know the Child was dead; which would have been a great Grief to him.

Ver 22. *And ſhe called to her husband, and ſaid,*] By a Meſſenger which ſhe ſent to him.

Send me now, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the aſſes, that I may run to the man of God, and come again quickly.] So as not hinder his Buſineſs.

Ver. 23. *And he ſaid, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? It is neither new moon, nor ſabbath.*] It appears by this, that the Prophets were the publick Inſtructors of the People; and their Houſes were a kind of School or Synagogue, unto which they reſorted upon the Days here mentioned, to be taught their Duty, out of the Law of God, and to be reſolved in their Doubts. And the Prophets accordingly were conſtantly in ſome certain Place upon theſe Days, to give the People their Inſtruction.

And ſhe ſaid, It ſhall be well.] In the *Hebrew*, *it is Peace.* That is, ſhe prays him to believe that ſhe went for no Hurt; but for his and her Benefit.

Ver. 24. *Then ſhe ſaddled an aſs, and ſaid to her ſervant, Drive, and go forward; ſlack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee.*] She ordered him to make all the Haſte he could, as faſt as the Aſs would go; without any Reſpect to her, unleſs ſhe called to him to drive more ſoftly.

Ver. 25. *So ſhe went and came to the man of God to mount Carmel:*] This is a Place which he, and *Elijah* alſo, much frequented: Which makes it credible there was a School of the Prophets here; it being a Mountain full of Trees, which made it fit for ſacred Exerciſes. As ſoon as *Elijah* was taken from him, *Eliſha* fetched a Circuit by *Jericho* and *Beth-el*, to come hither; and from thence went to *Samaria*. For which no good Reaſon can be given, but that it was to viſit the Places which his Maſter had frequented, and inſtruct thoſe who ſtudied there, as *Elijah* had been wont to do.

And it came to paſs, when the man of God ſaw her afar off, he ſaid to Gehazi his ſervant, Behold, yonder is that Shunamite:] He was ſurprized to ſee her coming at an unuſual Time.

Ver. 26. *Run now, I pray thee, to meet her,*] To ſhew his Reſpect to her.

And ſay unto her, Is it well with thee? Is it well with thine husband? Is it well with the child?] He bids him make particular Enquiry after all that were moſt dear to her.

And ſhe anſwered, It is well.] Some tranſlate it, *It ſhall be well.* But there is no need of that. For they were well in part; that is, ſhe and her Huſband. And ſhe did not think fit to tell *Gehazi* all the Truth; but to deliver it to the Prophet himſelf.

Ver. 27. *And when ſhe came to the man of God to the hill, ſhe caught him by the feet:*] After the manner of a moſt humble Supplicant; reſolving not to let him ſtir 'till he granted her Requeſt.

And Gehazi came near to thruſt her away.] Believing his Maſter did not expect ſuch Abaſement; eſpecially from her, who had been ſo kind and friendly to them.

And the man of God ſaid, Let her alone, her ſoul is vexed in her:] Do not diſturb her; for ſhe is too full of Grief already.

And the LORD hath hid it from me,] God hath not ſhewn him the Cauſe of it; that he might have prevented it.

And hath not told me.] The Prophets did not know all things, but only what God was pleaſed to impart unto them. See 2 *Sam.* vii. 3. For the Spirit was not in them after the manner of a ſupernatural Faculty, or infuſed Habit (as we ſpeak) whereby they might act what, and when they pleaſed; *Moſes* himſelf, the great Prophet, not being able to determine ſome things, 'till he had conſulted the Divine Majeſty, *Numb.* xv. 13, 14.

Ver. 28. *Then ſhe ſaid, Did I deſire a ſon of my lord? did I not ſay, Do not deceive me?*] As much as to ſay, ſhe was well ſatisfied without a Son; and did neither deſire one, nor was forward to believe ſhe ſhould have one when freely promiſed: But to loſe him after he was beſtowed upon her, was an unſpeakable Affliction to her.

Ver. 29. *And he ſaid to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins,*] That he might travel with greater Expedition.

And take my ſtaff in thy hand, and go thy way: If thou meet any man, ſalute him not; and if any man ſalute thee, anſwer him not again:] Leſt they ſhould enter into Diſcourſe, and ſtop his Speed.

And lay my ſtaff upon the face of the child.] He thought it might work a Miracle, as *Moſes*'s Rod, and *Elijah*'s Mantle did: And if the Woman had had a Faith ſtrong enough, it might have been ſufficient. But ſhe diſtruſted it, and would have *Eliſha* go himſelf. *Abarbinel* thinks he had no Thoughts of reviving the Child by this means, but only ordered his Staff to be laid upon it, to preſerve him from Putrefaction. Which is a low Conceit.

Ver. 30. *And the mother of the child ſaid, As the LORD liveth, and as thy ſoul liveth, I will not leave thee.*] This ſeems to me to ſignify, that ſhe did not confide in what he ordered

Gehazi to do; but thought his Preſence neceſſary to touch the Child, and pray to God to reſtore him.

And he aroſe, and followed her.] Being overcome by her Importunity, and his own Kindneſs to ſo great a Friend.

Ver. 31. *And Gehazi paſſed on before them, and laid the ſtaff upon the face of the child, but there was neither voice, nor hearing:*] No Sign of Life appeared, as *Gehazi*, I ſuppoſe, expected.

Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, ſaying, The child is not awaked.] He ſpeaks of Death as a Sleep. In which he continued, notwithſtanding he had done as *Eliſha* commanded. And it is likely that Power was with-held, which might have accompanied the Staff; becauſe the Prophet changed the Method of his proceeding in working this Miracle; when the Woman would have him go himſelf, and did not pray to God, that upon the laying on of the Staff he might revive.

Ver. 32. *And when Eliſha came into the houſe, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed.*] Where his Mother had left him, when ſhe went to *Eliſha*, ver. 21.

Ver. 33. *He went in therefore, and ſhut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD.*] He ſhut the Door, that he might not be diſturbed by any body, in his Prayer to God.

Ver. 34. *And he went up,*] Upon the Bed.

And lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes, upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he ſtretched himſelf upon the child,] This could not be done all together, becauſe his Face and Body was much larger than the Child's; but ſucceſſively: He laid his Mouth upon the Child's Mouth, and his Eyes and Hands upon the Child's Eyes and Hands; as *Elijah* had done in the like Caſe, in token that God inſpired his Soul again into him, at his earneſt Prayer.

And the fleſh of the child waxed warm.] Not from the external Heat of *Eliſha*'s Body; but from an inward Principle of Life, which was reſtored, and began to move in him.

Ver. 35. *And he returned,*] From the Bed.

And walked in the houſe to and fro,] Took a Turn or two in the Houſe to refreſh himſelf, after the Pains he had taken in Prayer, and otherways, for the Child's Recovery.

And went up, and ſtretched himſelf upon him:] As he had done before. For this Miracle was not wrought in an Inſtant, but gradually: By continued vehement Prayer to God.

And the child neeſed ſeven times,] A Sign of Health, whereby his Head was purged, in which his Pain lay, *ver.* 19.

And the child opened his Eyes.] After his neeſing, he looked upon *Eliſha*; and it is likely ſpake to him.

Ver. 36. *And he called Gehazi, and ſaid, Call this Shunamite. So he called her: And when ſhe was come in unto him, he ſaid, Take up thy ſon.*] She came only to the Door of the Room, 'till he bad her take up her Son, and then ſhe came in, as it follows.

Ver. 37. *Then ſhe went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed her ſelf down to the ground,*] Giving Thanks to God, and to him, with a moſt profound Reverence.

And took up her ſon, and went out.] Publiſhing no doubt, this wonderful Work of God to all her Family; who made it known abroad.

Ver. 38. *And Eliſha went again to Gilgal.*] Where he was with *Elijah*, a little before he was taken up into Heaven, ii. 1. For thoſe Places, wherein he had been with his Maſter, he loved to viſit; that he might work Wonders there, and confirm them in a belief that he was a Prophet.

And there was a dearth in the land,] A great Scarcity of Proviſions.

And the ſons of the prophets were ſitting before him:] Which was the Poſture of Diſciples when their Maſters taught them, who ſat above, and their Scholars below, as I obſerved, ii. 3. and ſee *Acts* xxii. 3. whence *Bertram* obſerves their Schools and Academies were called *Iſhiboth*, that is, *Seſſions*.

And he ſaid unto his ſervant, Set on the great pot, and ſeethe pottage for the ſons of the prophets.] This ſhews that they lived together in *Society*, and after their Lectures were wont to eat together with their Maſter: Who ordered his Servants to prepare ſome Food for them; which was very plain and common, ſuch as the Gardens, or Fields would afford; without much Labour, and of ſmall Price.

Ver. 39. *And one went into the field to gather herbs,*] They went into the Fields, I ſuppoſe, to gather what green things they could find; becauſe there were no Pot-herbs in their Garden at home, by reaſon of the Drought.

And found a wild vine and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap-full,] This is thought to have been *Coloquintida*, which hath a Leaf ſomething like that of a Vine, and purges vehemently.

And came and ſhred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not.] Neither he that gathered them, not they that ſhred them knew what they were; but took them to be the Leaves of a wild Vine.

Ver. 40. *So they poured out for the men to eat: and it came to paſs, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and ſaid, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot: And they could not eat thereof.*] It was ſo bitter and diſtaſteful, that they concluded there was ſome venomous Herb in the Pot. Perhaps they might know it by the Taſte to be what it was: An Herb that purges extreamly, and is Poiſon, if not qualified and taken in a moderate Quantity.

Ver. 41. *But he ſaid, Then bring meal: and he caſt it into the pot; and he ſaid, Pour out for the people, that they may eat: And there was no harm in the pot.*] Which Alteration was not from any Virtue in the Meal, but from the Power of God. Therefore the *Jews* juſtly reckon this as the eighth Miracle which *Eliſha* wrought, after he was made a Prophet.

Ver. 42. *And there came a man from Baal-ſhaliſha, and brought the man of God bread of the firſt-fruits,*] This was a ſeaſonable Preſent, it being a Time of Dearth, when Bread was very ſcarce. And it being called *Biccurim*, (which was the Name for the Firſt-fruits belonging to the Prieſts) it is likely this was not ſuch a Preſent as Men were wont to make, when they came to aſk a Prophet any Queſtion, and to be reſolved of their Doubts (like that, 1 *Kings* xiv. 3.)

but a free-will Offering for the better Subsistence of the Prophet. Unto whom it is probable, pious People gave that Portion, which was assigned by God for the Priests, to whom they could not now carry their First-fruits, they being in the Land of *Judah*. And I suppose the Schools of the Prophets might be partly maintained by this Means.

Twenty loaves of barley,] Which were not very large; for then it would not have been a Miracle, that they sufficed for an hundred Men.

And full ears of corn in the husk thereof:] Which being parched, they were wont to eat. See *Ruth* ii. 15. But Dr *Hammond* approves rather of our Marginal Translation, and thinks these Words should be rendred, they brought Ears of Corn *in a Satchel, or Scrip.* See S. *Matthew* x. Annot. *e.*

And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat.] That is, to the Sons of the Prophets, with whom he then was, when this Present was brought to him.

Ver. 43. *And his servitor said, What, shall I set this before an hundred men?*] Just as the Apostles said unto our Blessed Saviour, when he intended to feed a far greater Multitude, with less Food. By this it appears there was a great many Scholars, who lived in this Community; and that they used a frugal Diet.

And he said again, Give the people, that they may eat:] That is, do as I bid you, and make no Objections.

For thus saith the LORD, they shall eat, and shall leave thereof.] As the Multitude left of the Loaves our Saviour caused to be set before them, *John* vi. 11.

Ver. 44. *So he set before them, and they did eat, and left thereof according to the word of the LORD.*] Something like this was done by his Master *Elijah*, for the Woman of *Sarepta*, in Time of Famine; whose Barrel of Meal and Cruse of Oil wasted not for many Days, 'till God sent Rain upon the Earth, 1 *Kings* xvii. 14, 16.

CHAP. V.

Verse 1. NOW *Naaman captain of the host of the king of Syria,*] Commander in chief of his whole Army, whom we call *General.*

Was a great man with his master,] In great Favour with him.

And honourable,] In high Esteem with all the People.

Because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria:] He had been victorious in such Battles as he had fought; which this Divine Writer would have the *Israelites* look upon as the LORD's doing.

He was also a mighty man of valour,] Being the Person (as the *Jews* say in *Midrasch Tehillim*) who drew the Bow at Adventure and killed *Ahab*, 1 *Kings* xxii. 34.

But he was a leper.] Which did not exclude him from the Society of Men, in that Country, where the *Jewish* Law was not in Force. But it was a great Blemish to him, and also like to prove deadly; there being no Cure for this Disease, which was very common in *Syria*, as I have elsewhere noted.

Ver. 2. *And the Syrians had gone out by companies,*] The Word which we translate *Company*, doth not signify an Army; but such Troops (or *Parties* as we call them) as made Excursions and Inrodes into the Enemy's Country, to get Booty.

And had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little young maid,] Young Men and Maids were a desirable Part of the Prey, which they got; whom they sold for Money, or employed them in their own Service.

And she waited on Naamans wife.] Either she was his Part of the Spoil in that Expedition, or they made a Present of her to him (being beautiful, perhaps, and ingenious) or he bought her of the Soldiers.

Ver. 3. *And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord was with the prophet that is in Samaria:*] The History left him last at *Gilgal*; but he used to be in several other Places; and when she was taken Captive, was at *Samaria.*

For he would recover him of his leprosy.] She related, it is likely, the wonderful Things which he had done; and therefore was confident he could work this Cure.

Ver. 4. *And one went in, and told his lord, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel.*] Her Words being related to *Naaman*, he went and told the King his Master what she said, and begged his Leave to go to the Prophet in the Land of *Israel.* The following Words warrant this Sense.

Ver. 5. *And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.*] That he might honourably reward the Prophet, and those that attended him.

Ver. 6. *And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent my servant to thee, that thou mayst cure him of his leprosy.*] The Beginning of the Letter is omitted, as not pertinent to the Matter in Hand. It is likely it contained the usual Compliments; after which he desired him, together with this Letter, to receive his Servant *Naaman*, and to cure him of his Leprosy; that is, to take care he might be cured by the Prophet. But this not being plainly expressed, the King of *Israel* apprehended that the Intention of this Demand was only to pick a Quarrel with him, and seek an Occasion, or rather a Pretence for a War with him.

Ver. 7. *And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive,*] He rent his Clothes either as one in great Affliction and Trouble, or (as some will have it) because he looked upon it as Blasphemy, to ascribe that Power to him, which belonged to God alone. For none but he could cure a Leprosy; which he expresses by killing and making alive. Every body, even Beasts, can kill; but when one is killed to make him alive again (thus these Words must be understood in Conjunction) is the Work only of the Almighty.

That this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?] To cure this Disease was as hard,

hard, as to raiſe a dead Man to Life; for the Skin was dead, and the Leproſy fretted and eat into the Fleſh.

Wherefore conſider, I pray you, and ſee how he ſeeketh a quarrel againſt me.] Though he had ſeen what Miracles *Eliſha* had wrought, yet he either had forgot them, or thought this beyond his power; or was loth to ſee ſtill more Demonſtrations of his power with God; and ſo did not ſend to him upon this occaſion.

Ver. 8. *And it was ſo, when Eliſha the man of God heard that the king of Iſrael had rent his clothes, he ſent to the king, ſaying, Wherefore haſt thou rent thy clothes? Let him come now to me, and he ſhall know that there is a prophet in Iſrael.*] As the Word Prophet commonly ſignifies a Man that declares things which none could know but God, who reveals them by his Spirit; ſo here it ſignifies a man endued with a Divine power, who could do that which no man could effect, unleſs God was with him.

Ver. 9. *So Naaman came with his horſes and chariots, and ſtood at the door of the houſe of Eliſha.*] Expecting, I ſuppoſe, that the Prophet would come out to him; or rather out of Reverence to the Prophet, unto whom he ſent a meſſage, letting him underſtand the Cauſe of his coming; for the Prophet preſently anſwers him, though by his Servant, not by himſelf.

Ver. 10. *And Eliſha ſent a meſſenger unto him, ſaying,*] It is not to be thought that *Eliſha* took State upon him; but it is to be aſcribed to the retired ſort of Life which the Prophets led, that he did not ſhew himſelf to *Naaman*. We ſee an Inſtance of this in the foregoing Chapter, where we read that he did not ſo much as ſpeak with the great Woman, who entertained him at her Houſe, and built an Appartment on purpoſe for him; but let her underſtand what he had to ſay, by his Servant *Gehazi*, ver. 12, 13, *&c.*

Go and waſh in Jordan ſeven times,] Thus Lepers were ſprinkled, by the Law of *Moſes* ſeven times, *Levit.* xiv. 7, *&c.* But it is plain, by the next Verſe, *Naaman* expected the Prophet would have been ſo civil as to come out to him, or invite him to his Houſe, and diſcourſe with him: Neither of which the Prophet thought fit to do; partly for a Trial of his Faith, and partly to let him know that this was not ſo difficult a Thing as the King imagined, but ſo eaſy for him to effect by the Power of God, that he need not come out to talk with him about it: Let him but go to *Jordan* and waſh there ſeven Times, and the Cure ſhould be performed. *Jordan* had no more Virtue in it (as he rightly ſaith afterwards) than other Rivers; nor was the Earth of *Iſrael* better than that of *Syria* (though he begged two Load of it) but God preſided more particularly over this Country, and his Power here appeared: And in this appeared the more, becauſe Water being cold, was very bad for this Diſeaſe: The Root of it being a white watriſh Humour, as *Abarbinel* notes, which would naturally, by this Means, be increaſed.

And thy fleſh ſhall come again to thee,] For the Leproſy had eaten into it, and conſumed it in Part, as it did *Miriam*'s, *Numb.* xii. 12.

And thou ſhalt be clean.] Freed from this filthy Diſeaſe.

Ver. 11. *But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and ſaid, I thought ſurely he will come out to me, and call upon the name of his God, and ſtrike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.*] He was as angry with the Prophet, as if he had ſcorned and mocked him. *Firſt*, he thought himſelf deſpiſed, in that he did not come to him and ſalute him: And then he thought it a thing ridiculous to go and waſh in *Jordan*; for what could that Water do more than any other? Thus Men ſlight common and eaſy Things, and admire thoſe that are rare and difficult; and in their Paſſion reject that which God himſelf propounds to them, if it be not agreeable to their Humours, and their Conceits. In which Paſſion, if he had continued, he had been a Leper to his dying Day.

Ver. 12. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damaſcus, better than all the waters in Iſrael?*] The Valley of *Damaſcus*, which lay between *Libanus* and *Antilibanus*, was waſhed by five Rivers; the two principal of which deſcended from Mount *Hermon*; viz. *Abana* and *Pharpar*; the laſt of which run by the Walls of *Damaſcus*, and the other run through the City, and divided it into two Parts, as *Bochartus* obſerves.

May I not waſh in them and be clean? So he turned, and went away in a rage.] He did not conſider that he was now under the Direction of a Prophet, who was ſuppoſed to ſpeak from God, who might have preſcribed what Method he pleaſed for his Cure; which was to come from his Divine Power alone, and not from the Virtue of any Water whatſoever.

Ver. 13. *And his ſervants came near, and ſpake unto him, and ſaid, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do ſome great thing, wouldſt thou not have done it? How much rather, when he ſaid to thee, Waſh and be clean?*] Happy are they who have ſuch excellent Servants as theſe, who both had the Courage to ſpeak the Truth to their Maſter, and the Prudence to order it with all Submiſſion and Reverence. For, *My Father*, was a Title of Honour in that Country; by which Name they called their Lords: As Kings were called the Fathers of their Country. And theſe Servants, perhaps, had heard the young Maid talk much of the Power of the Prophet, which made them very deſirous their Maſter would not refuſe his Advice; which they urge him to follow with great Reaſon; by repreſenting to him that it was the Advice of a Prophet, who was guided by God to give him theſe Directions. And as it was not fit for Servants to ſay to their Maſters, when they order a Thing, Why ſo? Why not otherways? So much leſs ſhould a Man ſay to God, or his Miniſter, who ſpeaks in his Name; eſpecially when he commands Things that may be done without much Trouble, or any Pain. For if he had bid him cut and burn, as Chirurgions many times do in grievous Sores, he would have ſubmitted to it: And therefore it was unreaſonable not to comply with his Preſcriptions, when he required him only to go and waſh himſelf in the River *Jordan*, which was a Thing very eaſy, in his Way Home, and would put him to no Pain.

Ver. 14. *Then went he down, and dipped himſelf ſeven times in Jordan, according to the ſaying of the man of God:*] He ſhewed himſelf a Per-

ſon of great Probity and Diſcretion; who was not in ſuch a Rage, but he could hear Reaſon: And did not refuſe good Counſel from his Servants; but ſuffered himſelf to be convinced, and over-ruled, to yield unto it.

And his fleſh came again like the fleſh of a little child, and he was clean.] God was not ſo angry with him, as *he* was with *Eliſha*; but upon his Repentance, and Obedience to his Directions, vouchſafed him a perfect Cure; there being no Mark left of his Leproſy, but his Skin as clear and ſmooth, as that of a little Child. This was the only Cure of a Leproſy, that we read of, 'till Chriſt the great Prophet came into the World.

Ver. 15. *And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came and ſtood before him:*] Now *Eliſha* ſeems to have admitted him into his Preſence.

And ſaid, Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Iſrael:] He turned to give Thanks to God, as the good *Samaritan* did to our Saviour; acknowledging the God that *Eliſha* worſhipped to be the true God, and that there was no other.

Now therefore, I pray they, take a bleſſing of thy ſervant.] A Reward, or rather a Token of his Gratitude to him; for the *Hebrews* call all Gifts a *Bleſſing:* The *Hebrew* Word *Barac* ſignifying not only *benedicere*, but *benefacere.*

Ver. 16. *And he ſaid, As the LORD liveth, before whom I ſtand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it, but he refuſed.*] He did not think it unlawful to take it, for he received Gifts from others. But he would have Strangers to their Religion know how good the God of *Iſrael* was; who made his Servants ſo good, that they did the greateſt good to Mankind for nothing. Which generous Piety was apt to invite others to the Worſhip and Service of this great and good God. For it gives great Authority to a Teacher of Virtue, not to be covetous. See *Lactantius*, Lib. 1. *Div. Inſtit.* Cap. 4.

Ver. 17. *And Naaman ſaid, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy ſervant two mules burden of earth?*] As much as two Mules could carry or draw.

For thy ſervant will henceforth offer neither burnt-offering, nor ſacrifice to any other God, but unto the LORD.] Though he refuſed to accept his Preſent, yet he doubted not he would preſent him with two Burdens of Earth, which he intended to employ in erecting an Altar, whereon he would ſacrifice to no other God, but the LORD. He judged it reaſonable to have an Altar out of God's Land, becauſe he ſaw he peculiarly dwelt in *Iſrael.* And though he might have taken enough as he went along in his Way Home, yet he deſired it as a Gift from the Prophet; fancying, perhaps, that he would put a greater Virtue into it, by his Bleſſing; as he had done into the Waters of *Jordan:* Therefore *Ralbag* thinks he deſired to have this Earth out of *Eliſha*'s Houſe where he dwelt; and *Abarbinel* thinks, from under his very Feet in the Place where he ſtood; of which there is no Certainty. But it is plain he deſired to receive it from the Prophet, who had convinced him that there was no God like to his; who had ſuch Power, and made Men ſo virtuous, as to be above the Love of Money.

Ver. 18. *In this thing the LORD pardon thy ſervant, that when my maſter goes into the houſe of Rimmon, to worſhip there,*] This was the God of the *Syrians*, but no Author informs us what God this was, nor whence ſo called. Only many conjecture, becauſe *Rimmon* in *Hebrew* ſignifies a Pomegranate, that *Venus* is hereby meant, to whom ſuch Fruit was ſacred. But *Scaliger* underſtands this to be *Jupiter* the Thunderer, as they called him. And our *Selden* thinks it is derived from *Rum*, which ſignifies *high.* Whence *Heſychius* ſaith, ὁ Ραμὰς ſignifies ὕψιστος θεὸς, the moſt High God.

And he leaneth on my hand,] Or Shoulder: Which he does out of State; or perhaps out of Weakneſs, for his Support. In the Additions to the Book of *Eſther*, mention is made of two young Women that waited on that Quen, upon one of which ſhe leaned, and the other held up her Train, xv. 4. And it was not only the Cuſtom among the *Perſians* and *Syrians*, but the *Iſraelites* alſo, as we read in this Book, vii. 2, 17.

And I bow down my ſelf in the houſe of Rimmon:] Together with his Maſter; who could not well bow, if *Naaman* ſtood upright, and did not bow his Body with him

When I bow down my ſelf in the houſe of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy ſervant in this thing.] He hoped he might, without Offence to the Divine Majeſty, whom alone he reſolved to worſhip, keep the great Office he had under the King his Maſter, and conſequently bow himſelf when he went with him into the Temple of *Rimmon:* He who ſees into the Hearts of Men, knowing it was no Act of Worſhip to that God; but only a neceſſary Reſpect to his Maſter. And ſo the Word is uſed for Civil Honour, as well as Religious Adoration. Thus *Lud. de Dieu* hath clearly rendred this whole Verſe, *In this thing the LORD pardon thy ſervant; when my maſter enters into the temple of Rimmon to worſhip there, he leans upon my hand, and ſo I bow my ſelf (that is, together with him) in the houſe of Rimmon: When I bow my ſelf in the houſe of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy ſervant in this thing.*] Let him not take Offence, ſince I intend not to worſhip *Rimmon*; as appeared by his ſacrificing only to the God of *Iſrael.* An *Iſraelite* indeed was forbidden to bow before an Idol, whatſoever his Mind or Intention was in that Act: But a Stranger was not bound by this Law, as Mr *Selden* ſhews the Opinion of the *Jews* is, *Lib.* 2. *de Jure Nat. & Gent. Cap.* 11. Therefore when *Naaman* went into the Temple, not of his own Accord, but meerly to wait upon his Maſter, and perform the Duty of his Office; ſince he profeſſed himſelf a Worſhipper of the moſt High God alone, and brought Earth out of his Land, and ſacrificed only upon the Altar made of it: All he thought might underſtand he did not worſhip *Rimmon*, but only payed his Reſpects to the King, when he bowed with him.

Ver. 19. *And he ſaid unto him, Go in peace.*] The prophet did not condemn this; but bad him not trouble himſelf about this Matter; for he did not offend againſt God's Law, which was not intended for ſuch as he was: Though there are ſome of the *Jews* who think that theſe Words, *go in Peace*, relate to the Verſe fore-

foregoing; that he need not to trouble himſelf about carrying Earth with him out of the Land of *Iſrael* to make an Altar (for it doth not appear he gave him any) and ſo left this Matter of bowing in the Houſe of *Rimmon* undetermined. And no leſs a Perſon than *Bochartus* hath a large Diſſertation about this whole Matter; wherein he endeavours to defend their Opinion, who think *Naaman* begs Pardon for what he had done in Times paſt, not for what he ſhould continue to do; and renders theſe Words (as Dr *Lightfoot* alſo doth) *when I have bowed*, &c. But this ſeems to me altogether improbable; for then he would not have mentioned what he did as the King's Servant; but ſimply the Idolatry he had committed in worſhipping *Rimmon*. Beſides, the Oriental Verſions, as well as the *Greek* and the Vulgar, and the *Hebrew* Doctors generally, as well as Chriſtian Interpreters, underſtand it as we do, that he ſpeaks of the future Act of Bowing; which being only a civil Action, and he declaring himſelf publickly to be a Worſhipper only of the God of *Iſrael*, he hoped would not be imputed to him as a Sin. And ſo the famous *Buxtorfius* in a Letter to *Theod. Hackſpan* ſaith, *Omnes quotquot vidi Interpretes referunt ad futurum*, &c. "All Interpreters, as many as I have ſeen, refer "this to the future, and not to the Time paſt: "And ſo doth the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt himſelf: "And I am very much of the ſame Opinion.

So he departed from him a little way.] About a Mile from the City, as the *Jewiſh* Doctors underſtand it.

Ver. 20. *But Gehazi the ſervant of the man of God ſaid, Behold, my maſter hath ſpared Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but as the* LORD *liveth I will run after him, and take ſomewhat of him.*] He ſeems to be angry that his Maſter had been ſo kind to one that needed not his Charity, and was alſo one of another Nation, and therefore in his Paſſion ſwore, he would take ſomething of him. Which Covetouſneſs plunged him into a great many other Sins, as the Apoſtle obſerves it uſually doth, 1 *Tim.* vi. 9, 10. Dr *Lightfoot* thinks the *Hebrew* Text hath divinely omitted a Letter in one Word, that it might the more brand him for this Villany. *I will run*, ſaith he, *after Naaman*, and take מומה *a Blot*, inſtead of מאומה *ſomewhat*.

Ver. 21. *And Gehazi followed Naaman: and when Naaman ſaw him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and ſaid, Is all well?*] Behold the Honour he gave to the Prophet, in doing ſuch Honour to his Servant; which teſtified he had a great Senſe of God, and of his Goodneſs to him, in his Heart.

Ver. 22. *And he ſaid, All is well: My maſter hath ſent me, ſaying, Behold, even now there is come to me from mount Ephraim two of the ſons of the prophets:*] It ſeems there was a School there, as well as at *Jericho*, *Beth-el*, *Carmel*, and other Places.

Give them, I pray thee, a talent of ſilver, and two changes of raiment.] To relieve their Poverty. This was the firſt Fruit of his Covetouſneſs, which put him upon inventing ſuch a wicked Slander of his Maſter. For why ſhould *Eliſha* deſire ſo much Silver for two young Scholars? Which might tempt *Naaman* to think, that though he publickly declined to take a Gift from him, yet he ſecretly deſired it. See Dr *Hammond* on S. *Matth.* vi. Annot. *k*.

Ver. 23. *And Naaman ſaid, Be content, take two talents, and he urged him.*] It is likely *Gehazi* pretended to keep ſtrictly to his Maſter's Orders, and would have but one, 'till *Naaman*'s Generoſity preſſed and overcame him to take more.

And he bound two talents of ſilver in two bags, with two changes of raiment, and laid them upon two of his ſervants, and they bare them before him.] As Servants do before Perſons of Honour.

Ver. 24. *And when he came to the tower,*] To the Place where *Eliſha* lodged. Or, as ſome will have it, to a *ſecret Place* where he laid up what he had got.

He took them from the men, and beſtowed them in the houſe; and let the men go, and they departed.] For he was afraid his Maſter ſhould ſee them.

Ver. 25. *And he came in, and ſtood before his maſter:*] As Servants were wont to do, to ſee if their Maſter wanted any thing.

And Eliſha ſaid unto him, Whence comeſt thou Gehazi? And he ſaid, Thy ſervant went no whither.] This was another impudent Lie, wherein he thought to deceive his Maſter, though he was a Prophet. Which was an impious Endeavour to deceive the Spirit of God, whoſe Miniſter *Eliſha* was: Like that Lie of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, *Acts* v. 3, &c.

Ver. 26. *And he ſaid, Went not my heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?*] Did not God repreſent to my Mind, as if I had been preſent, how *Naaman* came to meet thee, and what thou ſaidſt to him, and what he gave thee? For no doubt, he recited all that had paſſed between them; to convince him of his Folly (in thinking to cheat him) and put him to Shame and Confuſion.

Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and vine-yards, and olive-yards, and ſheep and oxen, and men-ſervants, and maid-ſervants?] Which *Gehazi* deſigned to purchaſe with the two Talents: At a very unſeaſonable Time, when the Nation, for their Sins, were in Danger to be carried Captive out of their Land. Which though it did not fall out 'till above 150 Years after this, yet great Devaſtations followed the Death of *Eliſha*.

Ver. 27. *The leproſy therefore of Naaman ſhall cleave unto thee, and unto thy ſeed, for ever.*] Unto many Generations, as the Word *for ever* frequently ſignifies. But the *Hebrew* Doctors ſay this relates only unto his Children that were then born; who were conſcious to his Crime, and approved of it. See more of this, viii. 4, 5.

And he went out from his preſence, a leper as white as ſnow.] He puniſhed him with the worſt ſort of Leproſy, which was incurable. For his Sin was exceeding great, or rather he was guilty of many Sins, beſides thoſe already mentioned; being a Thief, and taking that to himſelf, which was given to others. Nay, he was a ſacrilegious Perſon, in robbing the Sons of the Prophets, who were Men belonging to God, in a ſpecial manner. The *Hebrew* Doctors

reckon ſeven Sins, for which God puniſhed Men with the Plague of Leproſy, and endeavour to prove it out of Scripture; and *Gehazi* was guilty of more than one of them, and therefore juſtly puniſhed in an extraordinary manner. They are, an evil Tongue, ſhedding of Blood, a falſe Oath, uncovering of any forbidden Nakedneſs, Inflation of Spirit, Rapine, and Envy.

CHAP. VI.

Verſe 1. *AND the ſons of the prophets*] That were at *Gilgal*; for that is the Place laſt mentioned where the Prophet was, iv. 38. and was alſo near to *Jordan* mentioned in the next Verſe.

Said unto Eliſha, Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee] They had their Colleges ſometimes in Cities (as in *Beth-el*) and ſometimes in the Fields, and ſometimes upon Mountains. It is probable this was in the Fields; where *Eliſha*, for the preſent, was reſident among them.

Is too ſtrait for us.] Their Number of Scholars was ſo much increaſed under ſo eminent a Maſter as he was, that there was not Room enough for them.

Ver. 2. *Let us go, we pray thee,*] They were ſo much under his Government, that they did not take the Liberty to go any whither without his Leave.

Unto Jordan,] Near to which many Trees grew.

And take from thence every man a beam,] A piece of Timber.

And let us make us a place there where we may dwell.] A Tabernacle large enough to contain them all. From whence we may gather that the Sons of the Prophets did not ſpend all their Time in ſtudying the Law, Meditation and Prayer, and ſuch holy Exerciſes; but alſo employed themſelves in ſome Manufactures, as the Apoſtles did in after-times: Some of which were Tent-makers (*Acts* xviii. 3.) like to theſe here mentioned.

And he anſwered, Go ye.] He conſented to their Deſign, the Place which they choſe being very commodious for Students. As St *Hierom* obſerves, who in more Places than one (ſee his Epiſtles to *Ruſticus* and to *Paulina*) compares the Monks of his Time with theſe Sons of the Prophets, *Qui habitabant in agris, & ſolitudinibus, & faciebant ſibi tabernacula propè fluenta Jordanis.*

Ver. 3. *And one ſaid, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy ſervants. And he anſwered, I will go.*] They thought their Deſign would proſper the better under his Conduct; and that if any one queſtioned what they did, his Authority would over-awe them.

Ver. 4. *So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood.*] They began to go about their Work.

Ver. 5. *But as one was felling a beam, the ax-head fell into the water:*] Being not well faſtned to the Helve; or rather the Helve breaking.

And he cried, and ſaid, Alas maſter, for it was borrowed.] Good Men are religiouſly careful that none ſuffer by their Kindneſs to them. This ſhews that as theſe Sons of the Prophets wrought with their own Hands, going themſelves to cut down Wood to build withal, ſo (ſome of them at leaſt) they were but poor, being not furniſhed with Tools for their Work, but forced to borrow.

Ver. 6. *And the man of God ſaid, Where fell it? And he ſhewed him the place. And he cut down a ſtick,*] To ſerve, I ſuppoſe, inſtead of a Helve.

And caſt it into the water, and the iron did ſwim.] A double Miracle, as the *Jews* underſtand it, that Iron which was ſunk down to the Bottom, roſe up; and then went to the Stick, and was joined to it, at its Helve. For to what End ſhould he throw a Stick into the Water, but that it ſhould ſerve this Purpoſe?

Ver. 7. *Therefore ſaid he, Take it to thee. And he put out his hand and took it.*] It fell near the River Side, or was brought thither when it roſe up.

Ver. 8. *Then the king of Syria warred againſt Iſrael, and took counſel with his ſervants, ſaying, In ſuch and ſuch a place ſhall be my camp.*] He did not rely meerly on the Number of his Forces, but ſecretly reſolved, by the Advice of his Council, to place them in ſuch Poſts where he might hope to ſurpriſe the *Iſraelites*. It may ſeem ſtrange, that after ſuch a great Benefit lately received in the Cure of *Naaman*, the King ſhould ſend him, who was Captain of his Hoſt, to fight againſt *Iſrael*. But who can tell how long this was after that Time, when *Naaman* might be dead? Or, perhaps, *Naaman* might have loſt his Place; becauſe he refuſed to worſhip *Rimmon*; and no Benefit will reconcile inveterate Enemies.

Ver. 9. *And the man of God ſent to the king of Iſrael, ſaying, Beware that thou paſs not ſuch a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.*] And had laid an Ambuſh for him there.

Ver. 10. *And the king of Iſrael ſent to the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of,*] He ſent ſome Spies to ſee whether *Eliſha* gave him true Information.

And ſaved himſelf there, not once or twice.] By this means he frequently ſaved his Soldiers from falling into the Hands of the *Syrians*; who lay in wait for them in ſuch Places, where they would certainly have gone, if they had not been told of the Danger.

Ver. 11. *Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was ſorely troubled for this thing, and he called his ſervants,*] With whom he had conſulted how to carry on this War, *ver.* 8.

And ſaid unto them, Will ye not ſhew me which of us is for the king of Iſrael?] Betrays my Counſels to him: For he could not think he ſhould meet with ſuch conſtant Diſappointments, unleſs it were by Treachery.

Ver. 12. *And one of his ſervants ſaid, None, my lord O king: but Eliſha the prophet, that is in Iſrael, telleth the king of Iſrael the words thou ſpeakeſt in thy bed-chamber.*] It is likely *Naaman* had ſpread the Fame of the Prophet ſo much in this Court, that ſome of them made further Enquiry after him; and heard more of his miraculous Works; and thence concluded he could tell the greateſt Secrets, as well as to do ſuch Wonders, as were reported of him.

Ver. 13. *And he ſaid, Go, and ſpy where he is, that I may ſend and fetch him.*] A very fooliſh

Design. As if the Prophet could not as well know this, as he did the reſt of his other Counſels.

And it was told him, ſaying, He is in Dothan.] A City in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*; not far from *Shechem* and *Samaria*.

Ver. 14. *Therefore ſent he thither horſes, and chariots, and a great hoſt:*] That the People of *Dothan*, being affrighted at the Sight of ſuch a Number of Soldiers, might not dare to defend the Prophet.

And they came by night, and compaſſed the city about.] That no Intelligence might be carried to *Samaria*.

Ver. 15. *And when the ſervant of the man of God was riſen early,*] As Students were wont to do.

And was gone forth,] Out of the Door of the Houſe, which ſtood high; the City being built upon a Hill.

Behold, an hoſt compaſſed the city, both with horſes and chariots: and his ſervant ſaid unto him, Alas, my Maſter, how ſhall we do?] Perhaps the *Syrians* had aſſured the Inhabitants they intended no Harm to them; but only came to take *Eliſha*. Which the young Man hearing, it put him in great Fear; for being but newly come to his Maſter in the Room of *Gehazi*, and having perhaps ſeen none of his wonderful Works, he gave himſelf and his Maſter for loſt Men.

Ver. 16. *And he anſwered, Fear not: for they that be with us, are mo than they that be with them.*] Faith drives away Fear; but it was hard for the young Man to believe this, 'till he had more Experience of God's Providence over his Prophet: And therefore *Eliſha* prays he might have a Demonſtration of it.

Ver. 17. *And Eliſha prayed, and ſaid, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may ſee. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he ſaw: And the mountain was full of horſes and chariots of fire*] He beheld the Camp of God there (as the Angels are called, *Gen.* xxxii. 2.) ready at Hand to defend his Maſter. Legions of Angels (*Matth.* xxvi. 35.) which were far more numerous and powerful than the Hoſt of the *Syrians* which he ſaw compaſs the City; but did not ſee this Heavenly Hoſt 'till God opened his Eyes, and repreſented them to him. The Ancients think that the Angels, when preſent with us, appear where they pleaſe, and are inviſible where they pleaſe, though preſent. Now this Appearance of theirs in this Place is called the opening of his Eyes; becauſe it had the ſame Effect. For he beheld the Mountain (on which, I ſuppoſe, the City ſtood) where he ſaw none but *Syrians* before, was now full of fiery Chariots and Horſes, which, as it here follows, had incircled *Eliſha*.

Round about Eliſha.] That is, he ſaw in this Viſion, as if *Eliſha* was in the midſt of this glorious Camp of Angels; who defended him ſo that none could penetrate and break through unto him.

Ver. 18. *And when they came down to him,*] He ſeems to have gone out of the City to them, under the Divine Protection; intending to go to *Samaria*. And they ſeeing him, aſked him the Way to the Man of God.

Eliſha prayed unto the LORD, and ſaid, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindneſs. And he ſmote them with blindneſs, according to the word of Eliſha.] So that they might not be able perfectly to diſtinguiſh one thing from another.

Ver. 19. *And Eliſha ſaid unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city:*] Some think we are not bound to ſpeak Truth to an Enemy; but there is no need that this ſhould be aſſerted here. For it was true that they were not in the Way to find *Eliſha*; whom they ſhould not ſee 'till they came to another City.

Follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye ſeek.] As he really did. But their Minds were ſtruck with Blindneſs, as well as their Eyes; or elſe, they would not have committed themſelves to the Conduct of a Stranger, to follow him in an Enemy's Country, they knew not whither.

But he led them to Samaria.] This ſhews they were not wholly blind, for then they could not have been led by him: But were dark, as we ſpeak, and could not clearly diſcern who it was that led them, nor whither they were going. Here the *Jews* cry, Behold a double Miracle! *Eliſha*'s Servant ſaw that which appeared to no body elſe; and the *Syrians* could not diſcern that which every body elſe ſaw.

Ver. 20. *And it came to paſs, when they were come into Samaria, that Eliſha ſaid, LORD open the eyes of theſe men, that they may ſee. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they ſaw, that behold, they were in the midſt of Samaria.*] To their great Aſtoniſhment, no doubt, when they found that he had made them all Captives, whom they came to carry away to *Syria*.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Iſrael ſaid to Eliſha, when he ſaw them, My father,*] This Miracle touched him with great Reverence to the Prophet.

Shall I ſmite them, ſhall I ſmite them?] This Repetition of the Queſtion, expreſſes his eager Deſire to fall upon them, and kill them; if the Prophet would have permitted.

Ver. 22. *And he anſwered, Thou ſhalt not ſmite them:*] There was a Command to deſtroy the People of the ſeven Nations; yet not, if they yielded to them. But as for other Perſons, who were taken in the War, they were not bound to deſtroy them; but it was Humanity rather to ſpare them. Whence it is that the Prophet here forbids the King to ſmite theſe, who were not under the Curſe of the People of *Canaan*.

Wouldſt thou ſmite thoſe whom thou haſt taken captive with thy ſword, and with thy bow?] As much as to ſay, thou wouldſt not be ſo cruel, as in cold Blood to kill thoſe whom thou thy ſelf hadſt taken Priſoners in a Battle. Much more then are thoſe to be ſpared, who are not thy Captives, but God's. Thou haſt not taken them with thy Sword, or with thy Bow; but he hath brought them to thee, and delivered them into thy Hand: Not that thou mayeſt kill them, but uſe them kindly. To this Purpoſe *Ralbag*; ſee *Selden de Jure Nat. & Gent.* pag. 745.

Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their maſter.] And tell him what Civility and Kindneſs there is among the People of God. This is a rare Example of that which St *Paul* recommends to us, *Rom.* xii. 20. *If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink*, &c.

Ver. 23.

Ver. 23. *And he prepared great proviſion for them: and when they had eat and drunk, he ſent them away, and they went to their maſter.*] This is a new Wonder, that the Hearts of the *Iſraelites* ſhould ſo yield unto the Command of the Prophet, as not only to ſpare, but to entertain bountifully their old Enemies.

And the bands of the Syrians came no more into the land of Iſrael.] Great Hatreds are ſometimes overcome by unexpected and undeſerved Benefits; as many of the Heathens have obſerved, that this is the nobleſt Way to conquer them, particularly *Valerius Maximus*. *Speciosius injuriæ beneficiis vincuntur, quàm mutui odii pertinacia penſantur*; Injuries are more glorioufly overcome by Benefits, than requited by pertinacious mutual Hatred. But the Senſe of Benefits in bad Natures doth not laſt long; for in the very Verſe we read, how the King of *Syria* beſieged *Samaria*. Which ſeems to contradict what is ſaid here, that the *Syrians* came no more into the Land of *Iſrael*. But the Meaning of that is, (for no Man can think that any Author whatſoever would contradict himſelf in the ſame Breath) either that for this Time they retreated quite, and laid aſide all Thoughts of War, though afterwards they broke out again into Hoſtility: Or (which is the plaineſt) that their Bands made no more Incurſions and Inrodes; but they reſolved to come and fall upon them, not in ſmall Parties, and by Ambuſhes, (as they did before, *ver.* 8.) but with a formed Army, wherewith they laid Siege to *Samaria*.

Ver. 24. *And it came to paſs after this, that Benhadad king of Syria*] The Name of *Benhadad* was common to all the Kings of *Syria*, as *Pharaoh* was to thoſe of *Egypt*.

Gathered all his hoſt, and went up, and beſieged Samaria:] It ſeems the *Iſraelites* had not Forces to appear againſt him in the Field: So that he marched directly to *Samaria*, and laid Siege to it.

Ver. 25. *And there was a great famine in Samaria: and behold, they beſieged it, 'till an aſſes head was ſold for fourſcore pieces of ſilver,*] The Siege laſted ſo long, or they were ſo ill provided for it, that there was a great Scarcity of Food in this City: Inſomuch that an Aſs's Head was ſold for ſo many Shekels as make five Pound of our Money. A great Sum for the Head, when the whole Body was little worth; and it being an unclean Creature, it was not lawful for the *Iſraelites* to eat (yea, was accounted unclean by the *Arabians*) unleſs in caſe of extream Neceſſity. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 13. where he obſerves out of *Plutarch*, that there was ſuch a Scarcity in *Artaxerxes* his Army, when he was among the *Caduſii*, that an Aſs's Head was ſold for threeſcore *Drachms*.

And the fourth part of a cab] A *Cab* was a very ſmall Meaſure of Corn; containing, as the *Jews* ſay, as much as twenty-four Eggs would hold. It is never mentioned in the Scripture but only here; though very often in the *Talmud* in the Title *Kidduſhim*. See *Imbonacius* in the *Biblioth. Mag. Rabbin.* Tom. 5. p. 349. All agree it was ſuch a Meaſure as I have mentioned; ſo that the fourth Part of it was no more than ſix Eggs would contain, called a *Log*, as *Bochartus* thinks.

Of doves dung] So the *Chaldee*, *Syriack*, *Arabick*, and LXX tranſlate the *Hebrew* Word *Hirjonim*: And ſo a great many of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, *Jarchi*, *Kimchi*, *Ralbag*, underſtand it. Though it be very hard to believe, that *Doves Dung* ſhould be ſo plentiful in a City, as to be ſold in any Quanity; or that Men ſhould eat it; when every one knows there is no Nouriſhment in ſuch Excrements, and leſs in that of Doves than in others, as is obſerved by *Bochartus*; who after he hath confuted many other Opinions, hath made it very probable, that *Fitches*, or *Lentiles* are here meant; which were the vileſt of all Food, and yet ſold at this dear Rate. For that ſome ſort of Food is here meant, is plain from what goes before. See his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 7.

For five pieces of ſilver.] Which the ſame Author computes to be as much as Nine *French* Livres.

Ver. 26. *And as the king of Iſrael was paſſing by upon the wall,*] To ſee if they kept their Guards well; or, to obſerve how the Enemy lay.

There cried unto him a woman, ſaying, Help, my lord O king.

Ver. 27. *And he ſaid, If the LORD do not help thee, whence ſhall I help thee? out of the barn-floor, or out of the wine-preſs?*] Some take the firſt Words to be a Curſe, and tranſlate them as we do in the Margin, *Let not the LORD ſave*, or help *thee*. Like that among the *Gentiles*, *Dii Deæque te perdant*. May thou periſh. Thus *Joſephus* underſtands them to be the Words of a Man in a great Paſſion, and full of Fury, that ſhe ſhould implore Relief from him, who could do nothing for himſelf, For he thought ſhe had cried to him for Victuals, as appears by the laſt Words.

Ver. 28. *And the king ſaid unto her, What aileth thee?*] When ſhe had pacified his Anger, or it cooled of it ſelf, he aſked her the Cauſe of her Cry.

And ſhe anſwered, This woman] Who ſtood by her.

Said unto me, Give thy ſon that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my ſon to morrow.] Thus began the Prophecy of *Moſes* to be fulfilled, *Deut.* xxxviii. 54, 55, &c.

Ver. 29. *So we boiled my ſon, and did eat him: that I ſaid unto her on the next day, Give thy ſon, that we may eat him: and ſhe hath hid her ſon.*] Either that ſhe might ſave him, or that ſhe might eat him alone, and thereby preſerve her Life the longer.

Ver. 30. *And it came to paſs when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes,*] Out of great Grief at what the Woman had ſaid; or, perhaps out of Indignation at the Prophet, with whom the next Verſe ſhews he was very angry.

And he paſſed by upon the wall, and the people looked, and behold, he had ſackcloth within upon his fleſh.] His Royal Robes, which were uppermoſt, being torn, they ſaw Sackcloth (in token of great Humiliation) next to his Skin. For theſe Idolatrous Kings were not ſo profane, but they obſerved ſome of the ancient Rites of

Religion: Among which this was one; to abaſe and afflict themſelves, in Times of great Calamity, by putting Sackcloth upon their naked Body.

Ver. 31. *Then he ſaid, God do ſo to me, and more alſo, if the head of Eliſha the ſon of Shaphat ſhall ſtand on him this day.*] Such was the Arbitrary Power which theſe Kings exerciſe; which took away Mens Lives, without any formal Proceſs againſt them; and the Reaſon of this furious Reſolution ſeems to be, either becauſe *Eliſha* had hindred him from ſmiting the great Hoſt of the *Syrians*, when he had them cooped up in *Samaria* (*ver.* 20, 21, 22.) which might have diſabled them from bringing him into theſe Straits: Or, becauſe *Eliſha* did not imploy his Intereſt in God, as he expected, to give them Deliverance. Therefore he ſwore he ſhould not live 'till Night.

Ver. 32. *And Eliſha ſat in his houſe,*] In the School, where the Sons of the Prophets came to be inſtructed by him.

(*And the elders ſat with him*)] We often read in *Ezekiel*, of the Elders of *Iſrael* ſitting before the Prophet to hear him, viii. 1. xxii. 24: And ſo ſome underſtand it here, of the chief Perſons in *Samaria*, who were come to conſult him. But it rather ſignifies his chief Scholars, ſome grave Perſons, who applied themſelves to the Study of divine things, and were now with him.

And the king ſent a man from before him:] Commanded one that attended him, to go, and execute the Sentence he had pronounced againſt *Eliſha*.

But e'er the meſſenger came to him, he ſaid to the elders, See how this ſon of a murderer hath ſent to take away mine head?] He underſtood, by the Spirit of Prophecy, the wicked Intentions of the King; who was like his Father *Ahab* that had murdered many of the Prophets of the LORD.

Look when the meſſenger cometh, ſhut the door, and hold him faſt at the door: is not the ſound of his maſters feet behind him?] He charged them to lay hold of him before he came into the Room, and not ſuffer him to enter; for the King would immediately follow him, to revoke his Order. So he foreſaw by the ſame Spirit of Prophecy, that the King repented of what he had decreed, and was coming to revoke it; and therefore he only required the Elders to do that which he knew the King would do himſelf, *viz.* Stop the Meſſenger at the Door, and let him proceed no further. This will not warrant private Men to apprehend publick Officers; nor to uſe ſuch Words to Princes as the Prophet here doth to *Joram*, whom he calls *the ſon of a murderer*, by a Divine Motion. Which authorized him to repreſent him, as the impious Son of a very impious Father.

Ver. 33. *And while he yet talked with them, behold, the meſſenger came down unto him: and he ſaid, Behold, this evil is of the LORD, what ſhould I wait for the LORD any longer?*] Some imagine that the Meſſenger being come, ſpake theſe Words in the King's Name. But it ſeems more reaſonable to think the King, who was alſo come, ſpake them himſelf, in a Fit of raging Deſpair. He could not but acknowledge, that the LORD had brought them into this Diſtreſs. Upon whom *Eliſha* exhorted him to wait 'till he would pleaſe (who only could do it) to deliver them. But he impatiently anſwered, he had waited ſo long in vain, that he had no Hope left, ſince they were driven to ſuch Extremity, that Women eat their own Children. Or, theſe Words may be thus interpreted (taking the former Part of them to be ſpoken by the Prophet, and the latter by the King) *And he ſaid*, that is, the Prophet ſaid, acknowledge the Hand of God in this Evil, which comes from him. To which the King replied, and what elſe can I expect from the LORD, unleſs it be ſuch Plagues? No, ſaith *Eliſha* in the very next Words, ye ſhall have Plenty here to-morrow.

CHAP. VII.

Verſe 1. *AND Eliſha ſaid,*] Unto the King, who followed the Meſſenger (ſee the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 32, 33.) and ſpake ſuch Words as *Eliſha* here ſatisfies him were very unreaſonable.

Hear ye the word of the LORD, Thus ſaith the LORD, to morrow about this time ſhall a meaſure of fine flour be ſold for ſhekel, and two meaſures of barley for a ſhekel,] The *Hebrew* Word *Seah* ſignifies a certain Meaſure, containing the thirtieth Part of an *Omer:* Which is about a Peck of our Meaſure.

In the gate of Samaria.] Which was the Market-place, as well as a Place for other publick Meetings. See 2 *Sam.* xix. 8.

Ver. 2. *Then a lord on whoſe hand the king leaned,*] Some think this was the Meſſenger which the King ſent to ſee Execution done upon *Eliſha*. Whoſoever he was, he was greatly beloved by the King; for when he went abroad he leaned on him, which was a Sign he was dear to him. For this State Kings in thoſe Countries took upon them, to lean upon ſome Favourite. As Queen *Eſther*, the *Jews* ſay, had a young Lady on whom ſhe reſted her right Hand, after the manner of the *Eaſtern* Kings. See upon ver. 18.

Anſwered the man of God, and ſaid, Behold, if the LORD ſhould make windows in heaven, might this thing be?] He was incredulous, and ſeems to have laughed at what the Prophet ſaid: Looking upon it as unlikely, as that God would rain Corn from Heaven, as once he did *Manna*.

And he ſaid, Behold, thou ſhalt ſee it with thine eyes, but thou ſhalt not eat thereof.] A juſt Puniſhment of his Unbelief. And ſuch will be the Portion of thoſe that believe not the Promiſe of Eternal Life..

Ver. 3. *And there were four leprous men*] The *Jews* will have theſe to have been *Gehazi*, and his three Sons; as they ſay in *Gemara Sanhedrin*, p. 416. Edit. *J. Coch.*

At the entring of the gate:] Of the City *Samaria*. From whence Lepers were thruſt out, as anciently out of the Camp, *Levit.* xiii. 46. xiv. 3. *Numb.* v. 23. But they got as near the Gate of the City as they could, for fear of the Enemy. It appears by this that the *Iſraelites* obſerved the Ceremonial Law; though they were groſs Idolaters.

And they ſaid one to another, Why ſit we here until we die?] For the City could no longer ſupply their Wants, having not ſufficient for themſelves.

Ver. 4. *If we ſay we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we ſhall die there:*] Lepers might ſometimes come into their Cities, if there was a great Occaſion, keeping their due Diſtance from every one; as appears, ſome think, from *Gehazi*'s talking with the King himſelf, in the next Chapter, viii. 4. but more plainly from this Place. See *Grotius* upon St *Luke* vii. 12.

And if we ſit ſtill here, we die alſo.] The Beſiegers having carried away all the Food thereabouts.

Now therefore come, and let us fall into the hoſt of the Syrians:] Who poſſibly might take Compaſſion upon miſerable People, though Enemies to them.

If they ſave us alive, we ſhall live;] They will not let us ſtarve, but give us Food.

And if they kill us, we ſhall but die.] They knew the worſt that could happen to them, was to loſe their Lives; which they ſhould certainly do where they were; and therefore they choſe an uncertain Evil, before a certain.

Ver. 5. *And they roſe up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians:*] In the cloſe of the Evening, as appears from *ver.* 9, and 12.

And when they were come to the uttermoſt part of the camp of Syria,] Unto their Trenches.

Behold, there was no man there.] Not a Man to guard them, nor ſo much as a Centinel to watch them.

Ver. 6. *For the* LORD *had made the hoſt of Syria to hear a noiſe of chariots, and a noiſe of horſes; even the noiſe of a great hoſt:*] By the Miniſtry of Angels he made ſuch a rattling like that of Chariots, and pranſing of Horſes, that the *Syrians* imagined a great Army was not only marching towards them, but ready to fall upon them.

And they ſaid one to another, Lo, the king of Iſrael hath hired againſt us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of Egypt, to come upon us.] Thoſe People of the Land of *Canaan* called *Hittites*, who dwelt about *Hebron* and *Beerſheba*, were rooted out by the *Iſraelites*. But either ſome of them fled, and ſettled themſelves in ſome Neighbouring Country, and there grew very populous; or elſe, we are to underſtand by the Kings of the *Hittites* (as *Joſephus* doth) the Kings τῶν νήσων, *of the Iſles*, *Lib.* ix. *Antiq. Cap.* 2. As if *Chittim* was the ſame with *Cetim*, as all *Iſles* he ſaith are called. Every one of which had a King; as *Egypt* it ſelf was then divided into ſeveral Kingdoms: Whoſe Help the *Syrians* thought the King of *Iſrael* had procured.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore they aroſe and fled in the twilight,*] Being but newly gone, when the Lepers came thither.

And they left their tents, and their horſes, and their aſſes,] Aſſes were employed in War as well as Horſes; at leaſt for carrying of their Baggage. So *Bochartus* obſerves out of *Pollux*, χρεια δ' εἰς πολέμους σκευοφόρωνμεν ὄνων, Aſſes are of uſe in War to carry Burdens. There were ſeveral People alſo, that fought upon Aſſes, as others did upon Horſes: Which he proves out of *Ælian*, and other Authors. See *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 2. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 13.

Even the camp as it was, and fled for their life.] They thought of ſaving nothing but themſelves; their Fear being ſo great, that they left all they had behind them.

Ver. 8. *And when theſe lepers came into the uttermoſt part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence ſilver and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it; and came again, and entred into another tent, and carried from thence alſo, and went and hid it.*] They had ſatisfied their Hunger in the firſt Tent, ſo that they had nothing now to do, but to get what Treaſure they could find, and ſecure it.

Ver. 9. *Then they ſaid one to another, We do not well:*] When they had both well refreſhed, and inriched themſelves, and alſo ſecured their Booty, they began to reflect upon the Diſtreſs of their Brethren; and condemned themſelves for making no more Haſte to impart unto them the Diſcovery they had made of the Enemies Flight, and the Plenty of all things they found in their Camp.

This is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace:] Do not publiſh the Goodneſs of God to us all.

If we tarry till the morning light, ſome miſchief will come upon us:] The *Syrians* might poſſibly recover out of their Fright, and return when they ſaw none purſue them: Or, ſome of them might be lurking thereabout, and come and kill them.

Now therefore come, that we may go and tell the kings houſhold.] Impart this joyful News to the City. For every good Citizen is in Duty bound to diſcover every thing that is for the publick Safety.

Ver. 10. *So they came, and called to the porter of the city:*] To him that was the chief Commander at the Gate of *Samaria*.

And they told them,] Him and the Guard that was with him.

Saying, We came into the camp of the Syrians, and behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horſes tied, and aſſes tied, and the tents as they were.] Standing without any body in them: But full of Proviſion, and Riches.

Ver. 11. *And he called the porters,*] Of the King's Houſe.

And they told it to the kings houſe within.] Reported it in the Court, 'till it came to the King's Ears.

Ver. 12. *And the king aroſe in the night, and ſaid unto his ſervants, I will now ſhew you what the Syrians have done to us:*] What their Stratagem is.

They know that we be hungry, therefore are they gone out of the camp, to hide themſelves in the field, ſaying, When they ſhall come out of the city, we ſhall catch them alive, and get into the city.] His long Sufferings had made him ſuſpicious and cautious; and this was no improbable Conjecture.

Ver. 13. *And one of his ſervants anſwered, and ſaid, Let ſome take, I pray thee, five of the horſes that remain, which are left in the city, (Behold, they are as all the multitude of Iſrael that are left in it: Behold, I ſay, they are even as all the multi-*

multitude of the Iſraelites that are conſumed) and let us ſend and ſee.] He repeats his Advice twice, that it might make the greater Impreſſion on the King. The Senſe of which is this: That they were almoſt conſumed with Hunger, and muſt ſhortly die, as all the Horſes and the *Iſraelites* had done, whom the Famine had killed. Therefore if theſe Horſes and Men were taken by the *Syrians*, there would be no great Loſs of them; for they would be loſt if they remained in *Samaria*.

Ver. 14. *They took therefore two chariot-horſes, and the king ſent after the hoſt of the Syrians, ſaying, Go and ſee.*] Whether they were gone or no. Some underſtand the Horſes of two Chariots, which might in all be five: But it is more probable, the King would venture no more than two Horſemen, which he thought enough; who took two of the Horſes of his own Chariots to make Diſcovery.

Ver. 15. *And they went after them unto Jordan,*] Finding the Camp empty, as the Lepers had related; they purſued them as far as this River.

And lo, all the way was full of garments, which the Syrians had caſt away in their haſte: and the meſſengers returned and told the king.] The Certainty of their Flight to their own Country.

Ver. 16. *And the people went out, and ſpoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a meaſure of fine flour was ſold for a ſhekel, and two meaſures of barley for a ſhekel, according to the word of the LORD.*] They found ſuch ſtore of Proviſion, in the Tents of the *Syrians*, that it made this ſudden Change in the Price of Corn; according to *Eliſha*'s Prediction.

Ver. 17. *And the king appointed the lord on whom his hand leaned, to have the charge of the gate:*] To take care the People did not run out tumultuouſly, and leave the City empty; nor commit any Diſorder in the Gate; being very eager to get Victuals.

And the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died,] They came out in ſuch Crouds, and preſſed upon him ſo hard, that they threw him down, and trod him to Death.

As the man of God had ſaid, who ſpake when the king came down to him.] ver. 2.

Ver. 18. *And it came to paſs as the man of God had ſpoken to the king, ſaying, Two meaſures of barley for a ſhekel, and a meaſure of fine flour for a ſhekel, ſhall be to morrow at this time in the gate of Samaria:*] By this it ſhould ſeem there was a Market kept in the Gate of *Samaria*, where Proviſions were ſold: And this Lord was ſet to ſee good Order kept, that they might neither take them by Force, nor make any Diſturbance.

Ver. 19. *And the lord anſwered the man of God, ſaying, Now behold, if the LORD ſhould make windows in heaven, might ſuch a thing be? And he ſaid, Thou ſhalt ſee it with thine eyes, but ſhalt not eat thereof.*] This part of the Hiſtory is repeated, becauſe it is a moſt remarkable fulfilling of a Divine Prediction; whereby their Belief of God's Providence, ordering all things in a wonderful manner, was confirmed.

Ver. 20. *And ſo it fell out unto him: for the people trod upon him in the gate, and he died.*] Before he could enjoy the Benefit of that Plenty which God had beſtowed upon them. Which did not at all alter their Hearts, but they continued ſo obſtinately deaf to all the Prophet's Admonitions, and miraculous Works, that in the next Chapter we read of another long Famine coming upon them.

CHAP. VIII.

Verſe 1. *THEN ſpake Eliſha unto the woman, (whoſe ſon he reſtored to life)*] iv. 35, 36.

Saying, Ariſe, and go thou and thy houſhold, and ſojourn where thou canſt ſojourn:] In ſome Country out of the Land of *Iſrael*.

For the LORD hath called for a famine,] He had already ordered, and decreed it.

And it ſhall come upon the land ſeven years.] Continue as long again as that in the Days of *Ahab*, which laſted three Years and an half. For as their Iniquities increaſed, ſo did their Puniſhments. Some of the *Jews* will have this to be the terrible Famine ſpoken of by *Joel* the Prophet; who they fancy lived in theſe Days. And four Years of it, they ſay, was cauſed by noxious Creatures, which eat up all the Fruits of the Earth; and the other three by a Drought, for want of Rain.

Ver. 2. *And the woman aroſe, and did after the ſaying of the man of God:*] Who by this Monition hath left us an Example of a grateful Mind, which never thinks it can ſufficiently requite Benefits received; and ſhe was abundantly ſatisfied, that what he predicted would certainly come to paſs.

And ſhe went with her houſhold, and ſojourned in the land of the Philiſtines ſeven years.] This Country was ſo near, that ſhe might eaſily remove her Family thither, and likewiſe hear ſometimes from her own Country. They were Idolaters indeed, but they ſuffered thoſe that were not, to live quietly among them, as their Fore-fathers had done; who entertained *Abraham* and *Iſaac* with much Friendſhip, and did not trouble themſelves about their Religion; as *Jacob* in like manner ſojourned a long Time among Idolaters in *Meſopotamia*. This ſhews the Severity of God's Anger againſt *Iſrael*, that he accounted them worſe than the *Philiſtines*: Who had Plenty among them, when the *Iſraelites* were almoſt ſtarved.

Ver. 3. *And it came to paſs at the ſeven years end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philiſtines: and ſhe went forth to cry unto the king for her houſe, and for her land.*] Which ſome think her Kindred had ſeized, as if ſhe had been dead. But it is more likely that ſhe carried her Relations along with her into the Land of the *Philiſtines*: And it was the Cuſtom here, as in other Places, that they who left their Country had their Goods confiſcated. See *Grotius*.

Ver. 4. *And the king talked with Gehazi the ſervant of the man of God, ſaying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Eliſha hath done.*] Some of the *Jews* think, that the King ſeeing *Gehazi*, aſked him how he came to be leprous; and thereupon he related to him the Hiſtory of *Naaman* the *Syrian*. Which moved the King, either to ſatisfie his Curioſity, or paſs away

the Time pleaſantly, to deſire to hear all the other Miracles *Eliſha* had wrought; but he had no Intention to be convinced by them, and turn to God. But then here ariſes a Queſtion, how *Gehazi* came to be admitted to ſpeak with him; being a Leper, who was not to come into any Company, much leſs into the King's Preſence. This Difficulty, ſome think, cannot be ſolved without affirming, that this fell out before *Gehazi* left *Eliſha*'s Service; ſuch ὑστερολογία, as the *Greeks* call it, being frequent in Scripture; and the *Jews*, in *Seder Olam Rabba*, place this Famine before the Story of *Naaman*: Which ſpoils what they ſay of the Occaſion of this Diſcourſe. But there is no need to aſſert this; for either *Gehazi* upon his Repentance might be reſtored to Health; or, he might ſpeak with the King at a due Diſtance, as he walked in the Field for his Recreation; and deſired to be entertained with a Relation of *Eliſha*'s Miracles. Thus *Naaman* converſed with *Eliſha*'s Family at a Diſtance; and the Lepers called to our Saviour, as he went along the High-way, St *Luke* xvii. 12.

Ver. 5. *And it came to paſs, as he was telling the king how he reſtored a dead body to life, that behold, the woman whoſe ſon he reſtored to life, cried to the king for her houſe, and for her land. And Gehazi ſaid, My lord O king, this is the woman, and this is her ſon, whom Eliſha reſtored to life.*] By a wonderful Providence ſhe came to preſent her Petition, and brought her Son with her, in that very Nick of Time when *Gehazi* was telling the Story of his Reſtauration to Life; that the King might be the more fully ſatisfied of the Truth of what he related, from her own Mouth.

Ver. 6. *And when the king asked the woman, ſhe told him.*] That is, confirmed what *Gehazi* had ſaid.

So the king appointed unto her a certain officer,] In the Margin, *an Eunuch*; that is, one of his Bed-chamber.

Saying, Reſtore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field,] Not only her Houſe, and Land; but all the Profits that had been made of them, and brought into his Exchequer.

Since the day that ſhe left the land, even 'till now.] This was an high Act of Juſtice, and an Argument of ſome Goodneſs left in a bad Man, that he would not gain any thing by her Calamity.

Ver. 7. *And Eliſha went to Damaſcus;*] In the Time of the Famine, I ſuppoſe he went thither, as the Woman did to the *Philiſtines*.

And Benhadad king of Syria was ſick, and it was told him, ſaying, The man of God is come hither.] Who having cured *Naaman*, had raiſed a great Opinion of his Power, with God, in that Country.

Ver. 8. *And the king ſaid unto Hazael,*] Who was the Captain of his Hoſt.

Take a preſent in thy hand, and go meet the man of God, and enquire of the LORD by him, ſaying, Shall I recover of this diſeaſe?] They who conſulted Prophets, were wont always to carry a Preſent with them, in token of the Honour they paid them; as appears by many Inſtances, particularly of *Jeroboam*'s Wife in this Book. It is probable alſo, he begged his Prayers for his Recovery; acknowledging him to be a *Man of God*.

Ver. 9. *And Hazael went to meet him,*] As he was coming into *Damaſcus*.

And took a preſent with him, of every good thing of Damaſcus, forty camels burden, and came and ſtood before him.] This was a very noble Preſent; which whether he accepted or refuſed, is not mentioned in the Holy Scripture. *Abarbinel* thinks he accepted it, becauſe nothing is ſaid to the contrary, as there is in the Caſe of *Naaman*, who preſented him with Silver, and Gold, and Raiment, and ſuch like things of Value. Whereas this was only a Proviſion of Food, ſuch as Bread and Wine, and Fruit, and Fowl; which was a fit Preſent for him to make to the Prophet, who might be preſumed to be weary with his Journey, and as fit for him to accept for his Refreſhment.

Ver. 10. *And Eliſha ſaid unto him, Go, ſay unto him, thou mayeſt certainly recover: Howbeit, the LORD hath ſhewed me that he ſhall certainly die.*] His Diſeaſe was not of ſuch a Nature as would endanger his Life, if he did not loſe it by ſome other Means; as the prophet foreſaw he would. For *Joſephus* ſaith, his Diſeaſe was only a deep Melancholy, into which he fell upon the ſhameful Flight of his Army, when no Enemy was near them. This affected his Body, and took away his Appetite; but might have been cured.

Ver. 11. *And he ſettled his countenance ſtedfaſtly 'till he was aſhamed: and the man of God wept.*] The moſt ſimple Senſe is, He looked upon *Hazael* ſo long, with a ſettled Countenance, that *Hazael* was aſhamed, and he himſelf fell a weeping. Perhaps he faſtned his Eyes upon him as a Man aſtoniſhed, and that in an Ecſtaſy ſaw ſome dreadful thing repreſented to him. Others interpret it, he turned away his Face on one Side, 'till he was aſhamed, becauſe he wept; which he would not have had *Hazael* ſeen. Others, he ſettled his Countenance, not to weep; but he could not refrain from Tears.

Ver. 12. *And Hazael ſaid, Why weepeth my lord? And he anſwered, Becauſe I know the evil thou wilt do unto the children of Iſrael: their ſtrong holds wilt thou ſet on fire, their young men wilt thou ſlay with the ſword, and wilt daſh their children, and rip up their women with child.*] This laſt expreſſes the higheſt Degree of barbarous Cruelty; for which there was no Occaſion, if he did but kill the Women with Child, for the Child in the Womb would die with them, without ripping them up. Therefore a late learned Man looking on this as a thing unheard-of, will have the Word *Haroth* not to ſignify Women with Child, but Caſtles or fortified Places which he ſhould demoliſh. Though he cannot but acknowledge, that the cutting up Women very naturally follows *ſlaying their young men, and daſhing their children*, which goes juſt before. And he ſhould have taken Notice, that the very firſt Evil he mentions that *Hazael* ſhould do to them, is *ſetting their ſtrong holds on fire. Gouſſet Comment. Linguæ Hebraicæ*, p. 216.

Ver. 13. *And Hazael ſaid, But what, is thy ſervant a dog, that he ſhould do this great thing?*] This is commonly underſtood, as a diſclaiming of ſuch Barbarity, which he abhorred as a beaſtly

thing. But the Words in the *Hebrew* ſound otherways, being a ſubmiſſive Form of Speech, wherein the Speaker undervalues, and debaſes himſelf, as appears from 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 15. 2 *Sam.* ix. 8. and runs thus; *but what is thy Servant? a Dog.* As much as to ſay, a mean and contemptible Creature, who can never have Power to do ſuch great Things; which none but a Prince can do.

And Eliſha anſwered, The LORD *hath ſhewed me that thou ſhalt be king over Syria.*] This was as much as declaring and appointing him King of *Syria*: Which *Elijah* ordered him to do; and was as much as if he had anointed him. See 1 *Kings* xix. 15.

Ver. 14. *So he departed from Eliſha, and came to his maſter, who ſaid to him, What ſaith Eliſha to thee? and he anſwered, He told me that thou ſhouldſt ſurely recover.*] He told him only the firſt Part of his Anſwer, and that not ſincerely, as he intended. For he did not ſay he *ſhould* ſurely recover, but that he *might* recover; his Diſeaſe being, in it ſelf, not mortal.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs on the morrow,*] His eager Deſire to reign would not ſuffer him to expect his Maſter's Death, but he made Haſte to diſpatch him, the very next Morning after he came from *Eliſha.*

That he took a thick cloth, and dipt it in water,] The Covering of his Bed, which (as many think) was made of Goats Hair; or, ſome other thick Cloth, that would ſuck up a great deal of Water.

And ſpread it upon his face, ſo that he died:] He being Feveriſh (as *Joſephus* thinks) and complaining of Heat, *Hazael* pretended to cool him by this means; but indeed choaked him; by thruſting the Cloth, perhaps, into his Mouth: So that he could make no Noiſe, nor did any Sign of Violence remain upon his Body; but the Murder committed ſo ſecretly, that it was thought he died a natural Death. But nothing can be concealed from God, who took Care to have the Villany recorded to Poſterity, by revealing it to his Prophet.

And Hazael reigned in his ſtead.] Being in great Favour with the People, eſpecially with the Soldiery; and *Ben-hadad*, it is likely, leaving no Son.

Ver. 16. *And in the fifth year of Joram the ſon of Ahab king of Iſrael, Jehoſhaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram the ſon of Jehoſhaphat king of Judah began to reign.*] All the ſeeming Contradictions between this Verſe and Chap. i. 17. and Chap. iii. 1. are thus briefly reconciled by *Huetius*. *Jehoram* beginning to reign with his Father *Jehoſhaphat*, in his ſeventeenth Year, and *Joram* King of *Iſrael* in his eighteenth, the firſt Year of *Joram* King of *Iſrael* will fall out in the ſecond Year of *Jehoram* King of *Judah*: Whoſe Father dying in the twenty-ſecond Year of his Reign, *Jehoram* King of *Judah* began to reign alone in the fifth Year of *Joram* King of *Iſrael*. See *Demonſtr. Evang.* Propoſ. 4. pag. 204.

Ver. 17. *Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned eight years in Jeruſalem.*] Part of which was with his Father, as I now obſerved, and the reſt by himſelf. Dr *Lightfoot* obſerving three Dates of the Beginning of his Reign, gives this Account of it. The *firſt* was when he was made Viceroy with his Father, at the Time he went out of the Land, for the Recovery of *Ramoth-Gilead*. The *ſecond* was when his Father went upon his Expedition with *Jehoram* King of *Iſrael* againſt *Moab*. (Chap. iii. of this Book) From which Time he thinks the Beginning of his Reign is fixed here, and in 2 *Chron.* xxi. 20. For after this Time *Jehoſhaphat* was little at *Jeruſalem*, but abroad either in his own Land (which he perambulated that he might reduce the People to the true Religion) or in *Moab*, to bring them into Subjection, 2 *Chron.* xix. 20. And *laſtly*, at his Father's Death he was compleatly King of *Judah*, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 1. See *Harm. of the Evang. Prolegom. Sect.* 6. So that the cleareſt Solution of the Difficulty mentioned in the foregoing Verſe, is this, (as Dr *Alix*, a great Man in this Learning, and all others, hath obſerved to me) that *Joram* had three Beginnings of his Reign. One in the Seventeenth Year of *Jehoſhaphat*, when his Father deſigned him to be King. The ſecond in the twenty-third Year of his Father, when he was crowned; and the laſt when his Father (after he had reigned five and twenty Years) died; and he reigned alone a little more than four Years. Thus *Solomon* was made King before his Father died, and again after his Death, as *Abarbinel* obſerves. See Chap. ii. of the firſt Book of the *Kings*, *ver.* 12.

Ver. 18. *And he walked in the way of the kings of Iſrael, as did the houſe of Ahab: for the daughter of Ahab was his wife;*] Viz. *Athaliah*, ver. 26.

And he did evil in the ſight of the LORD.] Being ſeduced by his Wife, to forſake the Religion of his pious Father and Grandfather. Thus *Ahab* himſelf was led to the Worſhip of *Baal* by his Wife *Jezabel*. So dangerous it is to marry with Idolaters: For this Wife of *Jehoram*, in all likelihood, was the Author of that cruel Policy of murdering all his Brethren, for fear they ſhould diſturb him in his Kingdom, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 2, 3, 4.

Ver. 19. *Yet the* LORD *would not deſtroy Judah, for David his ſervants ſake,*] Though he puniſhed them ſeverely (See 2 *Chron.* xxi. 14, 15, 16, 17, &c.) yet he would not cut them all off; but had Patience with them a long Time: Upon the Account of that excellent Servant of his, King *David*; unto whom he had made a Promiſe, as it here follows, and to his Seed after him, of a perpetual Kingdom.

As he promiſed him to give him always a light, and to his children.] A Succeſſion in this Dignity (as I have expounded it before) which was compleated in the MESSIAH, whoſe Kingdom ſhall have no End.

Ver. 20. *In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themſelves.*] After they had been ſubject to *Judah* an hundred and fifty Years; ever ſince the Time of *David*, who ſubdued that Country. This was a great Diſhonour to him; but by this means the Prophecy of *Iſaac* was fulfilled, *Gen.* xxvii. 40.

Ver. 21. *So Joram went over to Zair,*] This Word *Zair* is written differently from *Seir*; and therefore doth not ſignify any Part of the Country of *Edom*; but ſome City near to it.

And

And all the chariots with him,] With as great a Force as he could raiſe, to reduce them to Obedience.

And he roſe by night, and ſmote the Edomites which compaſſed him about:] The *Edomites* were not wanting in their own Defence, but had ſurrounded him with an Army; through which he broke in the Night, and routed them.

And the captains of the chariots, and the people fled into their tents.] To their own Camp; where, it is likely, they were intrenched.

Ver. 22. *Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah*] Notwithſtanding this Victory, they could not recover their Dominion over this Country; but *Edom* continued a Kingdom under its own King.

Unto this day.] When this Book was written, which was not long after this Revolt. And they were not brought again under the Power of the *Jews* 'till after the Captivity of *Babylon:* When *Hyrcanus* the Son of *Simon* conquered them, and they received Circumciſion; and came to have a free Commerce with the *Jews*. Inſomuch that *Herod* the Son of *Antipater*, who was an *Edomite*, obtained the Kingdom of *Judea*; and endeavoured to paſs for a *Jew*, becauſe they had received Circumciſion under *Hyrcanus*.

Then Libnah revolted at the ſame time.] Which was the Reaſon, perhaps, why he could not purſue his Victory over the *Edomites*, and regain their Country; becauſe he had enough to do at Home, there being a Defection of his own Subjects from him. For this was a conſiderable City in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 42. and belonged to the Prieſts, *Joſh.* xxi. 13. Which Example, it is likely, other neighbouring Cities followed. For the Reaſon why they revolted, was becauſe he attempted to ſet up his idolatrous Worſhip among them; contrary to the Law of God, and of the Kingdom. See 2 *Chron.* xxi. 10, 11.

Ver. 23. *And the reſt of the acts of Joram, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See 1 *Kings* xi. 41.

Ver. 24. *And Joram ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David:*] But not in the Sepulchre of the Kings, as we read, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 20.

And Ahaziah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.

Ver. 25. *In the twelfth year of Joram the ſon of Ahab, did Ahaziah ſon of Jehoram king of Judah begin to reign.*] In the Concluſion of the *Eleventh*, and Beginning of the *Twelfth:* As appears from ix. 29.

Ver. 26. *Twenty and two years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one year in Jeruſalem;*] But in 2 *Chron.* xxii. 2. it is ſaid, he was *forty-two* Years old when he began to reign: Which ſeeming Contradiction was anciently ſolved in this manner (by the Author of *Seder Olam Rabba*, whom a great many Jewiſh and Chriſtian Writers follow) that the forty-two Years mentioned in the Book of *Chronicles* are not to be computed from the Birth of *Ahaziah*, but from the Time of the Decree of cutting off the Houſe of *Omri*: Which was in the thirty-firſt Year of *Aſa*, when *Omri* began to reign, who reigned ſix Years, and after him *Ahab* twenty and two; and *Ahaziah* his Son two Years, and *Joram* twelve: All which put together, make forty-two Years. This Dr *Lightfoot* hath expreſſed more plainly thus; "The forty-two Years have not Relation to the Age of *Ahaziah*, but to the Kingdom of the Houſe of *Omri*. And therefore the Words of the Original are not to be tranſlated, *Ahaziah was forty-two Years old*; but *Ahaziah was the Son of forty-two Years*, as *Seder Olam* tranſlates it. And the Reaſon why his Reign is thus differently ſet down from all other Kings of *Judah* is, becauſe he was a Branch of the Houſe of *Omri* by his Mother's Side, *ver.* 18. and therefore was fit to be reckoned not by the Line of the Kings of *Judah*, but by the Houſe of *Omri* and *Ahab*." But there is an eaſier and more likely Reconciliation of theſe two Places, by *Kimchi*, *Abarbinel*, and others, which is, that *Joram* being invaded by the *Arabians*, and alſo diſeaſed, made his Son *Ahaziah* King, together with himſelf, when he was forty-two Years old. In this Condition things remained twenty Years, and then his Father dying, they made him King alone, when he was forty-two Years old. Thus a great Number of Chriſtian Interpreters alſo underſtand it. But then they ſuppoſe that *Jehoram* being thirty-two Years old when he began to reign, reigned eight Years (as it is ſaid *ver.* 17.) after his Father's Death, that is, happily and proſperouſly; but after that, falling into the Hands of the *Arabians*, and growing ſickly, he reigned ingloriouſly twenty Years, 'till he was ſixty Years old, his Son adminiſtring Affairs all this Time for him: But ſince the LXX in the Book of *Chronicles* read not *forty-two*, but *twenty*, many learned and good Men think, the ancient *Hebrew* Copies agreed thereunto; but by the Careleſſneſs of Tranſcribers, *forty* came in inſtead of *twenty*. Which it is better they think to acknowledge plainly, than to uſe forced and conſtrained Interpretations, as the preceding ſeem to them to be. *Perizonius* hath lately cenſured them all, in theſe Words, *Si quid ego video aut intelligo, multo rectius divinitati & auctoritati Scripturæ S. conſulant, qui vitium iſtic librariorum in re per ſe levi agnoſcunt, quam qui difficultatem volunt tollere, contortis, violentis & abſonis Interpretationibus: quæ ab ipſa Scripturæ locutione, & clariſſima Syntaxi longiſſimè recedunt*, &c. And then inſtances in this very Place, and the foregoing Expreſſions of it. *Præfat. in Ælian. Var. Hiſtor.* **** 2.

And his mothers name was Athaliah, the daughter of Omri, king of Iſrael.] So ſhe is called alſo in 2 *Chron.* xxii. 2. that is, *Omri*'s Grand daughter; who are often called Daughters, as I have before obſerved. For it is certain *Athaliah* was the Daughter of *Ahab*; but perhaps educated by *Omri* his Father, and upon that Account may be called his Daughter. He was the youngeſt Son of *Jehoram*, all whoſe other Children and his Wives were carried away by the *Philiſtines* and *Arabians*, when they made an Inrode upon *Judah*, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 16, 17. where he is called *Jehoahaz*.

Ver. 27. *And he walked in the way of the houſe of Ahab, and did evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *as did the houſe of Ahab;*] Not only worſhipped the Calves, but alſo *Baal*.

For he was the ſon in law of the houſe of Ahab.] And ſo corrupted in his Religion, by the Affinity he made with that wicked Family. Into which *Jehoſhaphat* married his Son, hoping, perhaps, to unite thereby the two Kingdoms again: But it proved the Ruin of his Family; as appears by the Book of *Chronicles*.

Ver. 28. *And he went with Joram the ſon of Ahab, to the war againſt Hazael king of Syria in Ramoth-Gilead,*] Juſt as *Jehoſhaphat* went with *Ahab* to the ſame Place: Which *Joram* it ſeems endeavoured to recover to *Iſrael*, as his Father had done.

And the Syrians wounded Joram.] Not mortally, as they did *Ahab:* But ſo, that he was fain to leave the Field, to be cured of his Wounds in *Jezreel*.

Ver. 29. *And king Joram went back to be healed in Jezreel, of the wounds the Syrians had given him in Ramah, when he fought againſt Hazael king of Syria:*] Leaving his Army at *Ramoth-Gilead*.

And Ahaziah the ſon of Jehoram king of Judah, went down to ſee Joram the ſon of Ahab in Jezreel, becauſe he was ſick.] By this means the ſecret Providence of God ſo ordered it, that they were both killed by *Jehu*, as a Puniſhment of their Idolatry.

CHAP. IX.

Verſe 1. *AND Eliſha the prophet called one of the ſons of the prophets,*] The Prophet *Elijah* was commanded to do this which *Eliſha* was now about to do; but *Ahab*'s Humiliation had moved God to defer the Judgment pronounced upon him and his Family; and ſo the Execution of it was left to *Eliſha*, who did not go himſelf, becauſe he was better known, and his Buſineſs required Secrecy; or, being old, he was unfit for ſuch a Journey: For the laſt time we read of him, he was at *Damaſcus*. This young Man, who was now attending him, the *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba* ſay, was *Jonah* the Son of *Amittai:* Which is the Opinion alſo of *Abarbinel*, and other *Hebrew* Doctors.

And ſaid, Gird up thy loins,] Which implies he was to make Expedition, and diſpatch his Buſineſs before it could be diſcovered.

And take this box of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-Gilead.] Where *Joram* had left his Army; and, as ſome think, they had now poſſeſſed themſelves of it.

Ver. 2. *And when thou comeſt thither, look out there Jehu the ſon of Jehoſhaphat, the ſon of Nimſhi,*] Who ſome think was left Commander in Chief of the King's Army.

And make him riſe up from among his brethren,] From the other Officers of the Army, *ver.* 5.

And carry him to an inner chamber.] Leſt the reſt of the Captains ſhould make any Oppoſition, and apprehend him.

Ver. 3. *Then take the box of oil, and pour it on his head, and ſay, Thus ſaith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Iſrael:*] The *Jews* think none of the Kings of *Iſrael* were anointed, but only thoſe of the Houſe of *David:* Nor all they neither, but only when there was a Queſtion about the Succeſſion. For had it not been for the Faction of *Adonijah*, there had been no need of *Solomon*'s Unction. For which reaſon *Jehu* was anointed, becauſe the Succeſſion to the Kingdom of *Iſrael* was to be tranſlated out of the right Line of the Family of *Ahab*, unto another Family, which had no Right to the Kingdom, but meerly by this Appointment of God: Who not only by his Word, but by this ſolemn Rite, conſtituted him King of *Iſrael*.

Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not.] Leſt by any means what he had done ſhould be diſcovered, and they might lay hold on him, as a Traitor.

Ver. 4. *So the young man, even the young man the prophet, went to Ramoth-Gilead.*] This argued a great Faith in this young Prophet, that he undertook ſo readily the Execution of this Command. For there was no ſmall Danger to anoint a new King; as *Eliſha* himſelf plainly ſuggeſts; when he bad him flee away, as faſt as he could, as ſoon as he had done.

Ver. 5. *And when he came, the captains of the hoſt were ſitting;*] In Council, I ſuppoſe, how to carry on the War, or about ſome other Buſineſs. Though ſome fancy they were at Dinner.

And he ſaid, I have an errand to thee, O captain.] Looking upon *Jehu*.

And Jehu ſaid, Unto which of all us? and he ſaid, Unto thee, O captain.] This ſhews that *Jehu* was the Head of them, who aſked the Queſtion in the Name of the reſt.

Ver. 6. *And he aroſe, and went into the houſe,*] Into a private Room, *ver.* 2.

And he poured the oil on his head, and ſaid unto him,] The Oil being poured on his Head, the *Jews* ſay he anointed him with it (as the manner was) in the form of a Crown: In token that he was the Head of the People, and had the ſupream Power over them committed to him.

Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Iſrael.] They were ſtill the People of the LORD by Right and by Profeſſion, though they worſhipped other Gods with him. And it belonged to him to appoint what Ruler he pleaſed over them; which he did by his Prophet. Without which Authority if *Jehu* had taken the Government upon him, he had been an Uſurper.

Ver. 7. *And thou ſhalt ſmite the houſe of Ahab thy maſter,*] Now he acquaints him what God required of him, upon this Promotion.

That I may avenge the blood of my ſervants the prophets, and the blood of all the ſervants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel.] To execute God's Judgment on the Houſe of *Ahab*, which he pronounced long ago, for their cruel Murders of his Prophets, and other good Men in *Iſrael*; particularly *Naboth*. In this *Jehu* acted not out of a Spirit of private Revenge, for he had no Quarrel with the Houſe of *Ahab*; but as God's Miniſter, who by his Prophet authorized him to do what follows.

Ver. 8. *For the whole houſe of Ahab ſhall periſh; and I will cut off from Ahab him that piſſeth againſt the wall, and him that is ſhut up and left in Iſrael.*] See upon 1 *Kings* xxi. 21.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *And I will make the houſe of Ahab like the houſe of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, and like the houſe of Baaſha the ſon of Ahijah.*] See 1 *Kings* xiv. 10. xvi. 3.

Ver. 10. *And the dogs ſhall eat Jezabel in the portion of Jezreel, and there ſhall be none to bury her.*] See 1 *Kings* xxi 23.

And he opened the door, and fled.] See *ver.* 3.

Ver. 11. *Then Jehu came forth to the ſervants of his lord,*] Returned to the Council-Chamber, where they continued ſitting, *ver.* 5.

And one ſaid unto him, Is all well?] They ſeeing the Prophet look like a Man in a Fright, thought he brought ſome bad News.

Wherefore came this mad fellow unto thee?] So they call him, becauſe he came in ſo abruptly upon them, when they were ſitting in Council; and becauſe he fled away ſo haſtily; and becauſe they obſerved ſome Motions in him which argued great Diſturbance. Though ſome think, they being profane Idolaters, ſpake theſe Words in Scorn and Contempt.

Aad he ſaid unto them, Ye know the man, and his communication.] They might know him to be a Prophet by his Habit, and by his way of ſpeaking, as one that had Authority. And Prophets they knew commonly came to ſpeak ſomething concerning Religion. By which general Anſwer he thought to have ſatisfied them, and put by their further Enquiry; that he might take Time to deliberate of the moſt opportune Seaſon to declare this Meſſage of God to him.

Ver. 12. *And they ſaid, It is falſe, tell us now.*] They were confident he came about ſome Matter of great Importance, which he ſeeming unwilling to diſcover, they preſſed him the harder to tell Truth.

And he ſaid, Thus and thus ſpake he unto me, ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, *I have anointed thee king over Iſrael.*] It is likely the Spirit of Courage, as well as of Prudence, entred into *Jehu*, when he was anointed, ſo that he took Heart to tell them boldly what the Prophet had ſaid. And the Oil perhaps was ſtill freſh upon his Head, wherewith he anointed him, which he ſhewed to them.

Ver. 13. *And they haſted,*] God alſo moved the Hearts of all the Captains, immediately, without any Conſultation, to acknowledge him for their King.

And took every man his garment, and put it under him] They made a kind of Throne of their very Garments, and raiſed him up above the reſt of the Company.

Upon the top of the ſtairs,] They did not ſtay 'till they came down into the Street, but forthwith, upon the very top of the Stairs of the Place where they were ſitting, acknowledged him for their Sovereign; by ſpreading their Garments under his Feet, to tread upon. So *de Dieu* underſtands the Words. There is a late Author who gueſſes theſe were winding Stairs in a Turret, on the top of which Tower they placed *Jehu*, that all the People might ſee him, and hear him proclaimed their King. *Gouſſet* in his *Comment. Linguæ Hebraicæ*, p. 173.

And blew with the trumpet, ſaying, Jehu is king.] They proclaimed him to be appointed by God to be King of *Iſrael:* Which uſed to be done with the Sound of the Trumpet, 1 *Kings* i. 32.

Ver. 14. *So Jehu the ſon of Jehoſhaphat, the ſon of Nimſhi, conſpired againſt Joram:*] Contrived, with the reſt of the Captains that commanded the Army, how to deſtroy *Joram*. For which they had the fairer Opportunity, becauſe he was gone from the Army to *Jezreel*, as it here follows.

(*Now Joram had kept Ramoth-Gilead, he and all Iſrael, becauſe of Hazael king of Syria:*] That is, kept a ſtrong Garriſon there, upon the Frontiers of his Kingdom; and left his Army alſo thereabout (for they are meant by *all Iſrael*) for fear *Hazael* ſhould make any new Attempt to recover it.

Ver. 15. *But king Joram was returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.*)] This was ſaid before, but here repeated, to ſhew how *Jehu* came to effect his Deſign ſo eaſily. Which was becauſe *Joram* was abſent from his Army: Among whom if he had continued, it is likely ſome of them, if not all, would have adhered to him, and fought for him.

And Jehu ſaid, If it be your minds,] If they were all agreed, that he ſhould be their King.

Then let none go forth, nor eſcape out of the city,] This ſhews that *Ramoth-Gilead* was in the Poſſeſſion of the *Iſraelites*. From whence he would have none to be ſent, nor ſuffered to go forth, but the Gates be narrowly watched.

To go to tell it in Jezreel.] For he knew that Secrecy and Speed were neceſſary to the Execution of ſuch great Deſigns as he had in Hand.

Ver. 16. *And Jehu rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel (for Joram lay there) and Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to ſee Joram.*] This is repeated, to ſhew that *Joram* continued at *Jezreel*, whither he went from *Ramoth:* And that *Ahaziah*, who came to viſit him, continued alſo with him.

Ver. 17. *And there ſtood a watchman on the tower of Jezreel,*] Theſe Watchmen ſeem to have been ſet on high Places, in Time of Peace, as well as War, whereſoever the King was, that he might not be ſurprized. For *David* at *Jeruſalem* was admoniſhed by the Watchman that his Sons were ſafe, when he feared they had been loſt, 2 *Sam.* xiii. 34. as afterward, that News was coming from the Army that fought againſt *Abſalom*, xviii. 24, 25.

And he ſpied the company of Jehu as they came, and ſaid, I ſee a company.] A Troop, or Squadron of Horſe, as we now ſpeak.

And Joram ſaid, Take an horſeman, and ſend to meet them, and ſay, Is it peace?] He was afraid the *Syrians* had got the better of his Army; or ſome more of his Subjects had revolted, as *Libnah* had done.

Ver. 18. *So there went one on horſeback to meet him, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the king, Is it peace? and Jehu ſaid, What haſt thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.*] The Meſſenger ſpake in the King's Name; but he ſpake to a greater King, who bad him not to trouble himſelf about Peace, or War, but follow him. Which he durſt not refuſe, ſeeing ſuch a Company of Soldiers with *Jehu*.

And the watchman ſaid, The meſſenger came to them, but he cometh not again.] Which put them in doubt what to think.

Ver. 19. *And he ſent out a ſecond on horſeback, which came unto them, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the king, is it peace? And Jehu ſaid, What haſt thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.*] To the ſame Queſtion the ſame Anſwer was returned; that it did not concern him, whether they were Friends or Enemies; but his ſafeſt Way was to follow *Jehu*.

Ver. 20. *And the watchman told, ſaying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the ſon of Nimſhi;*] Who was his Grandfather, but a more eminent Perſon, it is likely, than *Jehoſhaphat* his Father; and ſo he was commonly called his Son.

For he driveth furiouſly.] He was noted, it ſeems, for Fierceneſs, and Eagerneſs in purſuing his Deſigns. But the *Chaldee Paraphraſt* takes it quite otherwiſe, that *he drove ſlowly*; as if he would intice *Joram* to come out of the City, and meet him; having no mind to engage in an Aſſault, or Siege of *Jezreel*.

Ver. 21. *And Joram ſaid, Make ready. And his chariot was made ready. And Joram king of Iſrael, and Ahaziah king of Judah went out each in his chariot, and they went out againſt Jehu,*] Not to fight him, but to meet him before he came to the City, that if there was any Sedition he might compoſe it by his Authority; or, perhaps, in Honour of *Jehu*; who he ſaw would deliver his News himſelf, and not intruſt a Meſſenger with it.

And met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.] By a ſpecial Providence of God, which brought them together in that Place.

Ver. 22. *And it came to paſs when Joram ſaw Jehu, that he ſaid, Is it peace, Jehu?*] Seeing him look ſternly, I ſuppoſe, he began to ſuſpect ſome Danger.

And he anſwered, What peace, ſo long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezabel, and her witchcrafts are ſo many?] He means her Idolatries, wherewith ſhe bewitched the People, ſtill continued, and were multiplied. Some think indeed that ſhe added Corporal Fornication to her Spiritual, and uſed evil Arts to provoke Men to filthy Luſts. And indeed all manner of Lewdneſs was wont to accompany Idolatry; and in *Revel.* ii. 20. they who are compared to *Jezabel*, are ſaid to intice Chriſtians to Fornication, and to eat things ſacrificed to Idols; unleſs by *Fornication* we there underſtand Idolatry, and by *eating things ſacrified to idols*, having Communion with Idolaters.

Ver. 23. *Joram turned his hands,*] The Hand of him that drove the Chariot.

And fled,] Towards *Jezreel*; where if he had kept, and enquired what *Jehu* came for, he might have defended himſelf for ſome Time againſt him.

And ſaid to Ahaziah, There is treachery, O Ahaziah.] Which he diſcovered too late, having no Forces to reſiſt thoſe of *Jehu*.

Ver. 24. *And Jehu drew a bow with his full ſtrength, and ſmote Jehoram between his arms,*] Or, Shoulders; it being, I ſuppoſe, a Chariot open behind.

And the arrow went out at his heart, and he ſunk down in his chariot.] God ſo ordered it, that he ſhot him quite through the Heart; ſo that he died immediately.

Ver. 25. *Then ſaid Jehu to Bidkar his captain, Take him, and caſt him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite:*] Part of which *Ahab* had made a Garden; but the reſt remained a Field.

For remember, how that when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father,] With the reſt of his Guard, when he went to take Poſſeſſion of *Naboth*'s Vineyard. In the *Hebrew* the Words are exactly thus, *Remember, thou and I were among thoſe who rode two and two together after Ahab*, &c. That is, he was attended by his Guard, who were wont to ride in Pairs, two and two, and *Jehu* and *Bidkar* rode at that Time together, and heard *Elijah*'s Words.

The LORD laid this burden upon him.] This Puniſhment, which is frequently by the Prophets called *a Burden* (*Iſaiah* xiii. 1, &c.) was denounced againſt *Ahab*, and extended to his Son, 1 *Kings* xxi. 19. Where theſe very Words are not recorded; but *Elijah* ſaid more than is there ſet down, which *Jehu* well remembred.

Ver. 26. *Surely, I have ſeen yeſterday the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his ſons, ſaid the LORD,*] Some think that *Jezabel* contrived the Death of *Naboth*'s Sons, together with their Father; that they might lay no Claim to the Poſſeſſion of their Father. But theſe Words may ſignify no more (as *Grotius* and others have obſerved) than the Poverty to which they were reduced. For all Puniſhments and Miſeries are called *Blood* among the *Hebrews* (*Levit.* xvii. 4.) and to take away their Eſtate, upon which they ſhould have lived, was in Effect to take away their Blood, in which is the Life of every Creature; as we ſay now of grievous Oppreſſors, that they ſuck the Blood of others; and commonly call them *Blood-ſuckers*.

And I will requite it in this place, ſaith the LORD. Now therefore take and caſt him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the LORD.] Without any Burial; that, according the Prophecy, he might be eaten by the Fowls of the Air, 1 *Kings* xxi. 24.

Ver. 27. *But when Ahaziah king of Judah ſaw this, he fled by the way of the garden-houſe:*] Which was built upon Part of *Naboth*'s Vineyard.

And Jehu followed after him, and ſaid, Smite him alſo in the chariot: and they did ſo, at the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam: and he fled to Megiddo,] He could not get to his own Country, and ſo ſheltred himſelf at *Megiddo*; which was not far from *Samaria*, whither his Servants carried him, as a ſafer Place (for he was not mortally wounded) and there he hid himſelf for fear of *Jehu*, as we read 2 *Chron.* xxii. 9.

And he died there.] Not at *Megiddo*; but being ſearched for and taken in *Samaria*, he was brought to *Jehu* at *Jezreel*, where he commanded him to be ſlain. Which ſeems to be beyond his Commiſſion: But as he was an Idolater, ſo he was of the bloody Houſe of *Ahab* by his Mother's Side, who was *Ahab*'s Daughter,

ter, viii. 18. And his Deſtruction was of God (as the Author of the ſecond Book of *Chronicles* obſerves, xxii. 7.) who prompted *Jehu* thus to underſtand his Command. Thus *Abarbinel* underſtands thoſe Words, *he died there.* Not in *Megiddo*, mentioned before, but in that Execution of God's Judgments on the Houſe of *Ahab*.

Ver. 28. *And his ſervants carried him in a chariot to Jeruſalem, and buried him in his ſepulchre with his fathers, in the city of David.*] Which Honour *Jehu* permitted to be done him, becauſe he was deſcended from the good Prince *Jehoſhaphat*. See 2 *Chron.* xxii. 9.

Ver. 29. *And in the eleventh year of Joram the ſon of Ahab, began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.*] See the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 25.

Ver. 30. *And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezabel heard of it, and ſhe painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window.*] In the *Hebrew* it is, *ſhe put her eyes in paint*; that is, in *Stibium*, which made the Eyes look black, and was accounted beautiful; and alſo dilated the Eye-brows, and made the Eyes appear big; which, in ſome Countries, was alſo thought very amiable. See *Grotius*. This was not intended to tempt *Jehu* with her Beauty; but to keep up her Dignity and State to the very laſt: For ſhe was extreamly proud.

Ver. 31. *And as Jehu entred in at the gate, ſhe ſaid, Had Zimri peace, who ſlew his maſter?*] She thought perhaps he would not meddle with a Woman; and therefore took upon her to rebuke, and upbraid him with what he had done againſt her Son; bidding him remember what became of *Zimri*, who was cut off by *Omri* his Father-in-law, the Founder of *Ahab*'s Family.

Ver. 32. *And he lift up his face to the window, and ſaid, Who is on my ſide, who? And there looked out to him two or three Eunuchs.*] Who, according to the Cuſtom of the Eaſtern Countries, were wont to attend upon Queens in their Chambers.

Ver. 33. *And he ſaid, Throw her down. So they threw her down,*] See how ſuddenly Courtiers change with the Fortune of their Maſter.

And ſome of her blood was ſprinkled on the wall, and on the horſes: and he trod her under foot.] With his Horſes. This ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, particularly *Ralbag* and *Kimchi*, look upon as a Puniſhment, according to the *Lex talionis*, like for like. As ſhe had done, ſo ſhe ſuffered. For ſhe cauſed *Naboth* to be ſtoned; and now ſhe was condemned to be ſtoned her ſelf; for there were two Ways of ſtoning; either by throwing Stones at Malefactors, 'till they had knocked them down, and killed them; or by throwing them down upon the Stones from an high Place, and breaking them to Pieces. As *Amaziah* did with the Captives he took of Mount *Seir*, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 12. See *Selden*, Lib. i. *De Synedriis*, Cap. 5. p. 76, &c.

Ver. 34. *And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and ſaid, Go ſee now this curſed woman, and bury her:*] That is, go and take Care of her Body, to ſee it decently buried.

For ſhe is a kings daughter.] And was alſo the Wife, and the Mother of a King, which moved him to have this Regard to her, as all Men naturally have to Royal Dignity; forgetting, in the mean Time, what *Elijah* had propheſied againſt her in his Hearing. Which he might eaſily do when he was merry, it is like, with eating and drinking liberally.

Ver. 35. *And they went out to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands.*] All the reſt being eaten by the Dogs. For it is probable, when the Horſemen were gone, who trod her under Foot, the Footmen ſtripped her, and left her naked in her own Blood; expoſed to the hungry Dogs, that came out of the City and devoured her.

Ver. 36. *Wherefore they came again, and told him: and he ſaid, This is the word of the* LORD, *which he ſpake by his ſervant Elijah the prophet,*] Which he now called to Mind, as he did his Prophecy concerning *Ahab* and his Sons.

Saying, In the portion of Jezreel ſhall dogs eat the fleſh of Jezabel:] 1 *Kings* xxi. 23.

Ver. 37. *And the carcaſe of Jezabel ſhall be as dung upon the face of the field, in the portion of Jezreel, ſo that they ſhall not ſay, This is Jezabel.*] No Memory of her; nothing whereby to know there had been ſuch a Woman as *Jezabel*, ſhould remain of her; ſuppoſe a Picture, or Effigies, to which Men might point, and ſay, this is *Jezabel*. In our Language, perhaps we ſhould have ſaid, *they ſhall not ſay, Here lies Jezabel:* For no Monument was made for her, ſhe having no Sepulchre but in the Belly of Dogs. Theſe Words are not mentioned in 1 *Kings* xxi. being ſufficiently included in what is there recorded: But perfectly remembred by *Jehu*; who now more largely recites the Words of *Elijah*,

CHAP. X.

Verſe 1. *AND Ahab had ſeventy ſons*] It is likely that Grandſons are comprehended under the Name of *Sons*, as is uſual in Scripture; though by ſeveral Wives, he might have as many Sons as *Gideon* had.

In Samaria:] Unto which Place the Ruler of *Jezreel* had carried them, when they heard how *Jehu* had killed *Joram*; for fear they ſhould fall into his Hands. Or, perhaps, during the War with *Syria*, their Father had ſent them thither, as a Place of Security (it being a ſtrong City) in caſe of any ill Accident that might happen.

And Jehu wrote letters to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel,] The chief Noblemen of the Kingdom, who, I ſuppoſe, were fled thither with the King's Sons; and perhaps were met to deliberate what to do in this Juncture, whether or no to ſet up one of *Ahab*'s Sons to be their King.

And to the elders,] The principal Perſons in *Samaria*.

And to thoſe who brought up Ahabs children, ſaying,] Theſe are called *Omanim (Nouriſhers)* becauſe they had the Care of his Children from their Infancy, and were now their *Governours*, as we call them; who were of his Kindred, *ver.* 11.

Ver. 2. *Now as ſoon as this letter cometh to you, ſeeing your maſters ſons are with you, and there*

there are with you chariots and horſes, a fenced city alſo, and armour:

Ver. 3. *Look even out the beſt and meeteſt of your maſters ſons, and ſet him on his fathers throne, and fight for your maſters houſe.*] This he ſaid, becauſe, perhaps, he heard they were conſulting about a Succeſſor to *Ahab*. Or rather he inſults over them, and denounces War againſt them with Scorn and Deriſion, being ſecure of the Event, that they were not able to oppoſe him.

Ver. 4. *But they were exceeding afraid, and ſaid, Behold, two kings ſtood not before him: how then ſhall we ſtand?*] They were timorous Perſons, bred up it is likely in Eaſe and Delicacy. For this Argument had little in it; thoſe two Kings being unarmed, without any Forces; which they were furniſhed withal to defend themſelves, and their Maſter's Sons.

Ver. 5. *And he that was over the houſe,*] The High Steward, as we call him, of the King's Houſhold.

And he that was over the city,] The Governour of the City, who had all the Soldiers under his Command.

And the elders, and the bringers up of the kings children,] All the Senators, and the great Men that were intruſted with the Care of the King's Children.

Sent to Jehu, ſaying, We are thy ſervants, and will do all that thou ſhalt bid us; we will not make any king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes.] They baſely ſubmit to his Pleaſure, without making any Compoſition: Which it is likely they thought it to no Purpoſe to endeavour, and did not expect ſuch rigorous Uſage from him.

Ver. 6. *Then he wrote a letter the ſecond time to them, ſaying, If ye be mine, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take the heads of your maſters ſons, and come to me to Jezreel by to morrow this time: (now the kings ſons being ſeventy perſons, were with the great men of the city, which brought them up.)*] This is repeated, to ſhew the vile Spirit of theſe great Men; that could deſtroy ſo many Royal Perſons, of whom they had the Care, and who had offended no body.

Ver. 7. *And it came to paſs when the letter came to them, that they took the kings ſons, and ſlew ſeventy perſons, and put their heads in baskets,*] They ſeem not to have deliberated about the Matter, though in it ſelf ſo horrid; but inſtantly obeyed him.

And ſent him them to Jezreel.] Following after themſelves, as appears from *ver.* 11. expecting perhaps to be thanked for what they had ſo readily done; but quite contrary, came to the ſame miſerable End.

Ver. 8. *And there came a meſſenger, and told him, ſaying, They have brought the heads of the kings ſons. And he ſaid, Lay ye them in two heaps, at the entring of the gate, until the morning.*] The Gate was the Place of publick Concourſe for Judgment, and other Buſineſs; ſo that the laying them there, was to expoſe them to publick View, that every one might know there was none of *Ahab*'s Poſterity left to reign over them.

Ver. 9. *And it came to paſs in the morning, that he went out, and ſtood, and ſaid to all the people,*] Who were there gathered together, gazing upon this amazing Sight.

Ye be righteous:] Be not troubled; for none of you are to blame in all this.

Behold, I conſpired againſt my maſter, and ſlew him: but who ſlew all theſe?] If any were guilty, he acknowledges it was himſelf. But ſince they had ſlain ſo many, why ſhould he be to blame for ſlaying one? ſince he had Authority from God for what he did.

Ver. 10. *Know now, that there ſhall fall unto the earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD ſpake concerning the houſe of Ahab:*] In theſe Words he throws all the Guiit from off himſelf; being only God's Inſtrument to puniſh the Houſe of *Ahab*, as he had foretold by *Elijah*. And therefore he reſolved to proceed, 'till he had utterly extirpated all that depended on him.

For the LORD hath done] As if he had ſaid, This is not my doing, but the LORD's: Whoſe Command I obey.

That which he ſpake by his ſervant Eliſha.] He mentions what he denounced, rather than what *Elijah* commanded (x. 8.) becauſe the Words of *Elijah* were publickly known; whereas *Eliſha*'s were ſpoken in private, and not by himſelf, but by one of the Sons of the Prophets, ix. 7, 8, 9.

Ver. 11. *So Jehu ſlew all that remained of the houſe of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men,*] Whom he had advanced to great Offices, or Dignities.

And his kinfolks,] All that had any relation to him.

And his prieſts,] Who had ſerved him in his idolatrous Worſhip, and confirmed him in it.

Until he left him none remaining.] In that Place: But there were ſtill ſome left in *Samaria*, ver. 17.

Ver. 12. *And he aroſe and departed, and came to Samaria.*] Having finiſhed his Work in *Jezreel*, he went to proſecute it, in the chief City of the Kingdom; which moſt needed Reformation.

And as he was at the ſheering-houſe in the way,] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *in the houſe of the ſhepherds binding*. For they bound the Feet of their Sheep, when they ſheered them; and this was the Place where the Shepherds of *Samaria* were wont to do it.

Ver. 13. *Jehu met with the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and ſaid, Who are ye? And they anſwered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah, and we are going to ſalute the children of the king, and the children of the queen.*] That is, the Children of *Joram*, and the Children of *Jezabel*. But the *Brethren of Ahaziah* were carried Captive before this, as we read 2 *Chron.* xxi. 17. therefore by *Brethren* we muſt underſtand his Brother's Sons, as it is explained in 2 *Chron.* xxii. 8.

Ver. 14. *And he ſaid, Take them alive. And they took them, and he ſlew them at the pit of the ſheering-houſe, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.*] They were allied to the Family of *Ahab* by the Mother's Side (viii. 18.) and therefore he thought his Commiſſion (ix. 8, 9.) extended thus far; being afraid alſo, it is likely, that they might, if they lived, be avenged

of him for the Death of *Joram*, *Ahaziah*, *Jezabel*, and their Children, whom they were going to ſee.

Ver. 15. *And when he was departed thence, he lighted upon Jonadab the ſon of Rechab, coming to meet him,*] A very pious and prudent Perſon, as appears by his Precepts to his Son in the xxxvth of *Jeremiah*. Who hearing what *Jehu* had done, came, I ſuppoſe, to congratulate with him his Happineſs in fulfilling God's Commands; and to incourage him in his Proceedings to deſtroy Idolatry. *Scaliger* indeed in his *Elench. Trihæreſ.* c. 24. againſt *Serrarius*, endeavours to prove that this *Jonadab* was not he that gave thoſe Precepts to his Sons; but another in the Days of *Jeremiah*: For it is not likely, he thinks, that a Man addicted to ſuch a quiet Life as he inſtituted, would come to meet *Jehu*; and therefore this was ſome Military Perſon of great Note, who *Jehu* thought might be ſerviceable to him. But this is a weak Argument; for why might not *Jonadab*, though he loved Retirement, come to congratulate *Jehu*'s Zeal againſt Idolatry, and *Jehu* be glad of ſuch a Man's Company, whoſe known Piety would gain him greater Reſpect than the Attendance of any great Captain could procure him.

And he ſaluted him,] Some think, that *Jonadab* ſaluted *Jehu*, and ſpake the Words following. But it ſeems plain to me that they are the Words of *Jehu*, who ſaluted him, as ſoon as he ſaw him, and enquired of his Welfare.

And ſaid, Is thy heart right, as my heart is with thy heart?] The King profeſſed great Love to him, and aſked him if he loved him as ſincerely, and approved his Actions, as he did *Jonadab*'s Inſtitutions.

And Jonadab anſwered, It is.] The Expreſſion is double in the Hebrew, *Yes, Yes*, to ſignify a vehement Affection. Or, as a late Learned Writer (*Gouſſet* in his *Comment. Hebr. Linguæ*) will have it, the former is ſpoken by *Jonadab*, who ſaid *it is*; and the other by *Jehu*, who anſwered, *is it?* Then give me thy hand, *&c.*

If it be, give me thine hand:] In token of Friendſhip (*Gal.* ii. 9.) and of Fidelity: As it was among the *Romans*, it appears by many Places in *Virgil*: For inſtance, *Æneid.* 3.

Ipſe pater dextram Anchiſes, haud multa moratus,
Dat juveni atque animum præſenti pignore firmat.

And he gave him his hand, and he took him up to him into his chariot.] Which was a great Honour, and a Token of high Eſteem, to ride with the King in the ſame Chariot.

Ver. 16. *And he ſaid, Come with me, and ſee my zeal for the* LORD*:*] To vindicate his Honour, and fulfil his Commands.

So they made him ride in his chariot.] He ſpeaks in the Plural Number (*they made him*) becauſe the Servants, I ſuppoſe, opened the Door, and helped him up into the Chariot, when *Jehu* gave him his Hand.

Ver. 17. *And when he came to Samaria, he ſlew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, 'till he had deſtroyed him,*] Utterly rooted out his Family.

According to the ſaying of the LORD*, which he ſpake by Elijah.*] This is mentioned again, both to ſhew his Warrant for what he did; and his Exactneſs in fulfilling God's Command.

Ver. 18. *And Jehu gathered all the people together,*] That is, all the Heads of them, who repreſented the reſt.

And ſaid unto them, Ahab ſerved Baal a little, but Jehu ſhall ſerve him much.] His Zeal for the LORD exceeded its Bounds; for he ought not to have taken any indirect Courſe to fulfil his Will: As he did in counterfeiting as much Zeal for *Baal*, as he profeſſed to *Jonadab* he had for the LORD. God doth not ſtand in need of any Man's Sin, to compaſs his Ends: But *Jehu* made bold to diſſemble deeply for the Service of God; in which he cannot be excuſed.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his ſervants, and all his prieſts, let none be wanting:*] By *Servants* he doth not here mean his Worſhippers; but being joined with *Prophets* and *Prieſts*, they ſignified ſome that *miniſtred* with the Prieſts, in the Worſhip of *Baal*: Like the *Levites* among the People of God.

For I have a great ſacrifice to do to Baal;] He might poſſibly mean a Sacrifice not of Beaſts, but of Men; even of all the Worſhippers of *Baal*; but he intended they ſhould underſtand him otherwiſe, and therefore theſe Words were ſpoken to deceive.

Whoſoever ſhall be wanting, he ſhall not live.] He thought that ſome, who conſidered what Slaughter he had made of the Family of *Ahab* (who introduced the Worſhip of *Baal*, whom he pretended more highly to honour than *Ahab* had done) might ſuſpect his Deſign; and therefore he terrifies them with the Fear of Death, if they did not come to this great Sacrifice.

But Jehu did it in ſubtilty, that he might deſtroy the worſhippers of Baal.] By deſtroying his Prophets, and Miniſters, and Prieſts; who being all cut off, his Worſhip would fall to the Ground. But the next Verſes extend this further, to all the Worſhippers of *Baal* in the whole Country.

Ver. 20. *And Jehu ſaid, Proclaim a ſolemn aſſembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it.*] The laſt Day of the Feaſt of Tabernacles, the great Day of the Feaſt, is called by this Name of *Atzarah*; which we tranſlate a *ſolemn Aſſembly*: When it was not lawful to do any ſervile Work, but wholly attend to the Service of God, *Levit.* xxiii. 36. Such a Day he now cauſed to be *ſanctified* (as the Word is in the *Hebrew*) for the Service of *Baal*.

Ver. 21. *And Jehu ſent through all Iſrael,*] To give notice of this great Feaſt; and to require every one, upon pain of Death, to be preſent at it.

And all the worſhippers of Baal came, and there was not a man left, that came not: and they came into the houſe of Baal; and the houſe of Baal was full, from one end to another.] If this be meant of the whole Number of *Baalites* throughout the Kingdom, it ſeems ſcarce credible that the Temple of *Baal* ſhould be ſo large as to hold them all. But two Things are to be conſidered, *Firſt*, that this Houſe or Temple comprehended all the outward Courts of it (as it did at the Temple of *Jeruſalem*) which were very ſpacious. And

Secondly, the Number of his Worſhippers was much diminiſhed ſince the Death of *Ahab*: For *Jehoram* his Succeſſor had no great Kindneſs for the Worſhip of *Baal* (iii. 2.) and Men are apt to follow the Example of their King. Beſides, it is likely, *Hazael* King of *Syria* had deſtroyed many of them, in his Wars with *Iſrael*.

Ver. 22. *And he ſaid to him that was over the veſtry, Bring forth veſtments for all the worſhippers of Baal. And he brought thom forth veſtments.*] By *all the worſhippers of Baal*, are meant all the People that came to worſhip him: But his Miniſters and Prieſts, who alone wore Veſtments of a different kind from the reſt of the People; and ſo it was among the *Jews*, and all other Nations.

Ver. 23. *And Jehu went, and Jonadab the ſon of Rechab into the houſe of Baal, and ſaid unto the worſhippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here with you none of the ſervants of the LORD, but the worſhippers of Baal only.*] He calls thoſe that worſhipped the Golden Calves, the *Servants of the LORD*: Becauſe they worſhipped the LORD by them, and abhorred the Worſhip of *Baal*: Whoſe Sacrifice he pretended to fear might be profaned, if any Strangers ſhould be preſent at it. According to the common Saying among the Heathen, *Procul, o procul eſte profani*.

Ver. 24. *And when they went in to offer ſacrifices, and burnt-offerings,*] When they had begun their ſacred Offices.

He appointed fourſcore men without, and ſaid, If any of the men whom I have brought into your hands eſcape, he that lets him go, his life ſhall be for the life of him.] This was but a ſmall Number for ſuch an Execution. But, it is likely, though no more appeared, yet there were others ready at hand to ſupport them, if need were, in the Undertaking. Or rather, theſe were ſet at the ſeveral Gates of the outward Courts; that if any endeavoured to make their Eſcape, they might kill them. But the next Verſe ſeems to ſignify there was a greater Body of Men, that went for that Purpoſe into the Temple.

Ver. 25. *And it came to paſs as ſoon as they had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, that Jehu ſaid to the guard, and to the captains,*] Of thoſe Troops that he had ſet to keep the Peace, as he pretended, and prevent all Diſturbance.

Go in, and ſlay them, let none come forth. And they ſmote them with edge of the ſword, and the guard and the captains caſt them out,] There is nothing in the *Hebrew* that anſwers to the Word *them*: Nor is it likely, that the Captains and Soldiers troubled themſelves to caſt their Bodies out of the Temple; where they were rather buried in its Ruins. But the Meaning is, having done this Execution, the Guard and Captains ruſhed out of the Temple in great Haſte, and immediately ran to the City of the Houſe of *Baal*, as it here follows.

And went to the city of the houſe of Baal.] That is, a Place near to *Samaria*, where *Baal* had another Temple; which gave Name to the Place. Or rather there were great Buildings adjoining to the Temple of *Baal* in *Samaria*, where the Prophets, and Prieſts, and their Servants lived; called a *City*, becauſe they were ſo large.

Ver. 26. *And they brought forth the images out of the houſe of Baal, and burnt them.*] They worſhipped ſeveral other leſſer Gods (whoſe Images they had in this Temple) together with the Supreme God, whom they called *Baal*; as the others were called *Baalim*. So *Servius* writes upon the firſt of the *Georgicks*, that *veteri ritu*, according to ancient Cuſtom, after the Prieſts had invoked the ſpecial Gods to whom the Sacrifice was intended, *generaliter omnia Numina invocabantur*, all the Gods were invoked, leſt any of them ſhould think themſelves neglected.

Ver. 27. *And they brake down the image of Baal, and brake down the houſe of Baal,*] Demoliſhed his Temple, and the Image of *Baal* in it: Which was either the *Sun*, or *Belus*.

And made it a draught-houſe unto this day.] It was turned into a Jakes, as we now ſpeak, a Place where Men went to eaſe Nature; which was the higheſt Contempt that could be put upon it.

Ver. 28. *Thus Jehu deſtroyed Baal out of Iſreal.*] So that he was never worſhipped more in this Country; but they were perfectly freed from this ſort of Idolatry. Which muſt be acknowledged to have been a very great Work: All the Eaſtern People, and particularly the *Syrians* and *Zidonians*, and other neighbouring Nations, being addicted to this Worſhip, and had been ſo from ancient Time; as what I obſerved before ſhews (1 *Kings* xvi. 31.) from the many Cities, Woods, Mountains, and Fountains, which before *Joſhua*'s Time were known by the Name of *Baal*: And there is mention of *Baal-Shaliſha* in this Book, iv. 42.

Ver. 29. *Howbeit, from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin, Jehu departed not from them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Beth-el, and in Dan.*] Which he ſtill worſhipped; being afraid, as his Predeceſſors were, that if he took them away, as he had done *Baal*, the People would return to the Houſe of *David*. For which Reaſon all the following Kings of *Iſrael* continued this falſe Worſhip 'till their Captivity; when theſe Calves were carried away with them. So they ſay in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. xxii. *In the twentieth Year of Pekah came Tiglath-pileſer, and took away the golden Calf that was in Dan, and departed*; which they endeavour to prove out of 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 20, 21. And a little after, *in the twelfth year of Ahaz, the LORD ſtirred up the ſpirit of the king of Aſſyria, and he carried away the golden calf in Beth-el, and departed: fulfilling what is written, Hoſ.* x. 6.

Ver. 30. *And the LORD ſaid unto Jehu,*] By ſome Prophet; either *Eliſha*, or the young Man that was ſent to anoint *Jehu*; or ſome other.

Becauſe thou haſt done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and haſt done unto the houſe of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation ſhall ſit on the throne of Iſrael.] His partial Obedience was not without its Reward: Which had been greater if he had been as zealous in all things as he was in this one Inſtance: The following Hiſtory ſhews the Truth of this Prediction:

The Kingdom continuing in his Poſterity, 'till the Days of *Zechariah*, who was the fourth from *Jehu* (xv. 8.) and reigned only ſo long, as to make good this Prophecy.

Ver. 31. *But Jehu took no care to walk in the law of the* LORD *God of Iſrael, with all his heart: For he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam, which made Iſrael to ſin.*] This Admonition from God (which ſufficiently ſhewed he was not well pleaſed with him) did him no good; but Policy prevailed againſt Religion, and perſwaded him to continue the old Idolatry, when he had deſtroyed the new.

Ver. 32. *In thoſe days the* LORD *began to cut Iſrael ſhort: and Hazael ſmote them in all the coaſts of Iſrael*;] He took ſeveral of their Frontier Towns, I ſuppoſe, and thereby opened a Way to make great Ravages in their Country. For though *Jehu* was a valiant Man, yet God did not proſper him, becauſe he was not a ſincere Servant of his.

Ver. 33. *From Jordan eaſtward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the Manaſſites, from Aroer (which is by the river Arnon) even Gilead and Baſhan.*] This fully explains what was ſaid in the foregoing Verſe, that God *cut them ſhort*. For *Hazael* took all their Country beyond *Jordan*: The whole Kingdom, which the *Iſraelites* took from *Sihon* and *Og*. Thus theſe Countries which the *Iſraelites* firſt conquered, were the firſt that they loſt.

Ver. 34. *Now the reſt of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] Which was extant in thoſe Days when this was written; and related his Hiſtory more at large: Of which this is a brief Abridgment.

Ver. 35. *And Jehu ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Jehoahaz his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*

Ver. 36. *And the time that Jehu reigned over Iſrael, was twenty and eight years.*] Longer than any of the Kings of *Iſrael* his Predeceſſors.

CHAP. XI.

Verſe 1. *AND when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah ſaw that her ſon was dead, ſhe aroſe, and deſtroyed all the ſeed royal.*] There was many of them cut off by *Jehu*, as we read in the foregoing Chapter; and not a few by others, 2 *Chron.* xxi. 4. xxii. 1. but now their Deſtruction was compleated by *Athaliah*. Who, as ſhe was ambitious of Government, ſo ſhe was enraged to ſee *Ahab*'s Family cut off; and therefore reſolved to do as much by the Houſe of *David*. And perhaps ſhe was afraid *Jehu* ſhould come and kill her becauſe ſhe was of the Houſe of *Ahab*; and therefore endeavoured to ſtrengthen her ſelf, by getting into the Throne; which ſhe could not compaſs, without the Deſtruction of the Royal Family. For ſhe was *a wicked woman*, as ſhe is elſewhere called; and had played the Harlot with another Man, by whom ſhe had Children; as the *Jewiſh* Doctors gather from 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 7.

Ver. 2. *But Jehoſheba the daughter of king Joram,*] Not by *Athaliah*, but by another Wife. For *Athaliah* would not have ſuffered her Daughter to be married to the High-Prieſt, nor would he (in all likelihood) have married the Daughter of ſuch a Woman.

Siſter of Ahaziah,] By the Father's Side.

Took Joaſh the ſon of Ahaziah, and ſtole him away from the kings ſons that were ſlain;] Some think that he was thrown among them, and thought to be dead; but ſhe ſnatched him away, and brought him to Life. Or, as *P. Martyr* underſtands it, his Nurſe threw him among the ſlain on purpoſe to ſave his Life, and came afterwards and ſtole him away. But the plain Meaning ſeems to be, that they being all ordered to be ſlain, ſhe ſecretly ſtole him away and preſerved him.

And they hid him,] That is, ſhe and her Huſband *Jehoiada* the High-Prieſt, to whom ſhe was married, 2 *Chron.* xxii. 11.

And his nurſe in the bed-chamber, from Athaliah, ſo that he was not ſlain.] It appears by the next Verſe, that this *Bed-chamber* was in the Houſe of the LORD; that is, the Temple. Which doth not in the Scripture always ſignify the Sanctuary; but in a larger Senſe comprehends all the Courts belonging to it. So *Kimchi* obſerves, that *the whole mountain of the houſe is called the houſe of the* LORD. And this Chamber here ſpoken of was in the outward Court of all, called by *Joſephus* πρῶτον ἱερὸν, *the firſt holy place*. For in the inner Court no body lay, nor might any Woman come into it. See *l'Empereur* upon *Codex Middoth*. Cap. 2. Sect. 3.

Ver. 3. *And he was with her in the houſe of the* LORD, *ſix years:*] The Miniſters of God were ſo true to *Jehoiada*, that he lay thus long undiſcovered.

And Athaliah did reign over the land.] Not *de Jure* (as the Lawyers ſpake) but *de Facto*. For if we may believe the *Jews*, it was not lawful for a Woman to reign over them. So *Maimonides* in the Treatiſe *Melachim*, *they do not place a woman on the throne, becauſe it is ſaid*, Deut. xvii. 15. *If thou wilt ſet a king over thee, and not a queen. And ſo in all the prefectures in Iſrael, they place none but men.* She being therefore an Uſurper, it may ſeem ſtrange ſhe held the Throne ſo long as ſix Years, againſt the Conſtitution of the Kingdom. But in after Ages there is an Example of one that held it longer. For *Alexandra* the Widow of *Jannæus*, after the Death of her Huſband, poſſeſſed her ſelf of the Throne, and reigned nine Years, as *Joſephus* relates, *L.* xiii. *Antiq. Cap.* 24. See *Schickard* in his *Miſhpat Hamelech*. Cap. 2. Theorem 3.

Ver. 4. *And the ſeventh year Jehoiada ſent and fet*] *Jehoiada* was not a meer private Man, but a Perſon of great Authority in the Kingdom, who knowing *Athaliah* was an Uſurper, and that he had the right Heir to the Kingdom in his Poſſeſſion, (which if he had not, his own Wife had a better Right than *Athaliah*) thought he had ſufficient Warrant to dethrone her, and ſet up him that had the undoubted Title to the Crown. Which he did when he was ſeven Years old; becauſe then he grew ſo big, that he could not well be longer concealed;

cealed; and it was fit alſo he ſhould be educated in a Royal manner; which he could not be while he lay hid.

The rulers over hundreds,] The Names of five of them are ſet down in 2 *Chron.* xxiii. 1. who were all, ſome think, of the Tribe of *Levi*. For they of that Tribe were the Perſons principally employed in this Undertaking, as appears by the Sequel. But we learn from that Place in the *Chronicles*, *ver.* 2. that whoſoever they were, they went about all *Judah*, and gathered not only the *Levites*, but *the chief of the fathers of Iſrael.*

With the captains of the guard,] The chief Commanders of the Soldiery, and thoſe that had been the former King's Guard: For it is not likely he durſt call thoſe who were the Guard of the preſent Queen.

And brought them to him into the houſe of the LORD,] Into that Part of it where *Joaſh* was kept, where *Jehoiada* diſcourſed with them.

And made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the houſe of the LORD, *and ſhewed them the kings ſon.*] He diſcovered to them the true Heir of the Crown, and they entred into a Covenant to reſtore him: Which they bound with an Oath of Secrecy.

Ver. 5. *And he commanded them, ſaying, This is the thing that ye ſhould do*;] Theſe Words and thoſe that follow, are certainly ſpoken to the Prieſts, and Levites (with whom thoſe Captains before-mentioned were to join) as Men whom *Jehoiada* had perfectly under his Command, and whom he could truſt: To whom he gives the following Orders.

A third part of you that enter in on the ſabbath, ſhall even be keepers of the watch of the kings houſe:] The Prieſts and Levites took their Turns in their Attendance at the Temple; and their Courſe was finiſhed in the ſpace of a Week. Every Week a Courſe went out, and another came in. Now they who now entred upon their Week of Attendance (which was on the Eve of every Sabbath) were divided by *Jehoiada* into three Parts; one of which he here orders to guard the King's Houſe. That is, that Part of the Temple on the North, where he lodged, and was now educated.

Ver. 6. *And a third part ſhall be at the gate of Sur:*] That is, the Eaſt Gate of the Temple, towards the City; which was the principal (and at the firſt, the only) Entrance into the Houſe of the LORD. This is called *the gate of the foundation*, 2 *Chron.* xxiii. 5. and by five other Names (if we may believe the *Talmudiſts*) where another Part were ordered to guard it. *Abarbinel* thinks this Eaſtern Gate was called *Sur*, being as much as to ſay, *go back:* Becauſe no unclean Perſon durſt enter into this Gate. And the *Gate of the Foundation*, becauſe it was as he ſpeaks, the *Gate of the firſt Sanctity.*

And a third part at the gate behind the guard:] The other third Part he ſet at the South Gate, which looketh towards the Royal Palace; and through which *Athaliah* was wont to come, and therefore had a Guard near this Place. Behind which theſe *Levites* were placed by *Jehoiada*, to obſerve their Motions.

So ſhall ye keep the watch of the houſe, that it be not broken down.] They were to take ſpecial Care, that the Houſe of the LORD were not any Way profaned; ſuffering none to come nearer to it than they ought. And particularly watching thoſe out of the Palace, that they did not defile it. So *de Dieu* thinks the Word *Maſſach* (which we tranſlate *be not broken down*) ought to be underſtood, being as much as *be Maſſach*, by pulling away thoſe that ſhall dare to pollute the holy Place, and would come in to hurt the King. Or, as other learned Men have interpreted it, they were to keep *the Watch of the Houſe at the Breach:* Which the wicked Sons of *Athaliah* (which ſhe had by another Man) had made, as we read 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 7. Dr *Lightfoot* thinks that beſides theſe three Parts for the Deſign which *Jehoiada* intended, there were three more (ſix in all) for the ordinary Service of the Temple. For he would not have that neglected, while he took care of the Affairs of the Kingdom. See his Book of the *Temple*, Chap. xx.

Ver. 7. *And two parts of all you that go forth on the ſabbath,*] It is well known, that *David* divided the Prieſts into twenty-four Courſes, to attend the Service of the Temple in their Turns: Every one of which Courſes miniſtred their Week from Sabbath to Sabbath. So *Joſephus* ſaith expreſsly, he ordained each ſhould miniſter eight Days, ἀπὸ Σαββάτου ἐπὶ Σαββάτου, *from one Sabbath to another*, Lib. 8. Antiq. Cap. 2. For that Courſe which went out, did not depart 'till the Sabbath was over; and that which came in, entred when it began; as the Learned Mr *Whiſton* in his late *Chronology* expounds the Words of *Joſephus*, pag. 156.

Even they ſhall keep the watch of the houſe of the LORD *about the king.*] He adds two Parts of thoſe who had finiſhed their Courſe, and went off, to go home into the Country; whom he would have to ſtay at *Jeruſalem*, and aſſiſt the reſt before-named; eſpecially in ſtrengthning that Part of the Temple that lay towards the Palace; or rather to be the King's Guard, when he came out of his Lodgings (where he was at preſent) into the Court of the LORD's Houſe.

Ver. 8. *And ye ſhall compaſs the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand: and he that cometh within the ranges, he ſhall be ſlain*;] By *the ranges* is to be underſtood, if not the Ranks of Men, that ſtood about the Mountain of the Houſe of the LORD, the Ranks of Trees that grew on either Side of the Cauſey, or the Rails that were ſet on either Side of it, for the Stay and Safety of thoſe that paſſed upon it. See Dr *Lightfoot* in the ſame Place.

And be ye with the king as he goeth out, and as he cometh in.] When he went out to walk, or do any other thing; and when he returned to his Apartment.

Ver. 9. *And the captains of the hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the ſabbath, and with thoſe that ſhould go out on the ſabbath, and came to Jehoiada the prieſt.*] To ſhew they were all diſpoſed according to his Order.

Ver. 10. *And to the captains of the hundreds did the prieſt give king Davids ſpears and ſhields that were in the houſe of the* LORD.] They did

did not come armed into the Temple, leſt they ſhould give any Suſpicion; but *Jehoiada* furniſhed them with ſuch Weapons as the Temple afforded; particularly with the Spears and Shields which King *David* had uſed, and dedicated after all his Wars, as Monuments of God's *Goodneſs* to him; and perhaps ſeveral Spears and Shields of great Men, which he had taken as Spoils in his Wars.

Ver. 11. *And the guard ſtood, every man with his weapons in his hand, round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple.*] The Guard within the Court mentioned *ver.* 7. ſtood from the South Part of the Temple towards the Palace, to the North Part of it, where the King lay hid; about the great Altar of Burnt-offering (which was at the Eaſt-gate) and the Sanctuary; and then the King was brought forth, and placed below the Altar, that all might ſee him.

Ver. 12. *And he brought out the kings ſon, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the teſtimony, and they made him king, and anointed him,*] Having produced *Joaſh*, he put the Crown on his Head (which I ſuppoſe was kept in the Sanctuary) and then put the Book of the Law into his Hand, according to *Deut.* xvii. 18, 19. which is called the *Teſtimony*, becauſe God therein teſtified what he would have the King and them all do. And thereupon he declared him to be King of *Judah*; and then anointed him: Which it was not neceſſary to do (and therefore he is ſaid to be *made King* before it was done) being the Son of a King; had not *Athaliah* diſturbed the Succeſſion, and pretended to the Kingdom. Therefore to ſettle all things, he was anointed as *Solomon* and *Jehu* were. But there is a Doubt what is meant by *Eduth*, which we tranſlate *Teſtimony*; ſuppoſing it comes from the Root, which ſignifies to *teſtify*. But there are thoſe, particularly *Forſterius*, *Avenarius*, and others of greater note, who derive it from the *Hebrew* Word *Adah*, which ſignifies to *cloath*, *put on*, and *adorn*; and ſo take *Eduth* for ſome Royal Ornament, which was a Mark of Kingly Dignity, and that, it is probable, might be a *Bracelet* which *Jehoiada* put upon the young King, together with the Crown. This Conjecture is countenanced by what we read of the *Amalekite*, who brought the Bracelet on *Saul*'s Arm to *David*, as well as the Crown that was on his Head. See *Fortunatus Scacchus Myrothec.* iii. Cap. 41.

And they clapt their hands, and ſaid, God ſave the king.] The Guards and the People (as the next Verſe explains it) teſtified their Joy, by clapping their Hands and ſhouting, as they did at King *Solomon*'s Coronation, 1 *Kings* i. 34, 39. For *clapping of hands* was a Token of Joy, as appears by many Places, *Pſal.* xlvii. 1. *Iſa.* lv. 12.

Ver. 13. *And when Athaliah heard the noiſe of the guards, and of the people,*] Who were now aſſembled to ſee their King.

She came to the people, into the temple of the LORD.] Into the outward Court where they were met together. And ſhe ſeems in a great Fright to have come alone, or but few Attendants with her.

Ver. 14. *And when ſhe looked, behold, the king ſtood by a pillar, as the manner was,*] Some of the *Jews*, and many great Men among Chriſtian Writers, underſtand by this Pillar the brazen Scaffold, which *Solomon* erected at the Dedication of the Temple, 2 *Chron.* vi. 13. But the plaineſt Meaning ſeems to me, that he ſtood by the Poſt of the Eaſte-gate in the inner Court, where the Station of the King was. Which *Vitringa* hath made probable (in his *Synagoga Vet.* p. 31, &c.) where he obſerves, that the King alone entred at the Eaſt-gate on the Sabbath, and the new Moons; But on the other Days at the South or North-gate, where the People entred; which he gathers from *Ezek.* xlvi. 1, 2. He *ſtood*, I ſuppoſe, only to be better ſeen by the People; otherwiſe *ſitting* was a Poſture of Authority.

And the princes, and the trumpeters by the king and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets:] This made her ſoon apprehend the danger ſhe was in, as it here follows. For the People when they ſaw their young King expreſſed their Joy, it is likely, in ſome ſuch Acclamations as the People of *Rome* made at the Inauguration of *Claudius*, *Claudi Auguſte, Principem te, aut qualis tu es ſemper Octavianus, te reſpublica requirebat, tu Frater, tu Pater, tu Amicus, tu bonus Senator, tu vere Princeps*, as *Trebel. Pollio* relates in his Life. For though *Joaſh* had done nothing praiſe-worthy, being but a Child; yet they rejoiced in the Felicity which they promiſed themſelves in his Reign, under the Government of ſuch a Man as *Jehoiada*.

And Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treaſon, treaſon.] Adding, as *Joſephus* relates, Take that Boy and kill him; meaning *Joaſh*, in whoſe Behalf this Conſpiracy, as ſhe called it, was made againſt her. But ſhe ſpake like a diſtracted Woman, there being no body on her Side, to execute any of her Commands.

Ver. 15. *And Jehoiada the prieſt commanded the captains of hundreds, and the officers of the hoſt, and ſaid unto them, Have her without the ranges;*] Through which they had ſuffered her to come, being a Queen, contrary to the Order, *ver.* 8.

And him that followeth her, kill with the ſword.] If any body appeared to abet and reſcue her, he commanded him to be ſlain.

For the prieſt had ſaid, Let her not be ſlain in the houſe of the LORD.] From whence they dragged her, 'till they had brought her down to the Bottom of the Cauſey, and there they ſlew her.

Ver. 16. *And they laid hands on her, and ſhe went by the way which the horſes came into the kings houſe, and there ſhe was ſlain.*] That is, ſaith the ſame Author (Chap. 5. Sect. 2. of *the Temple*) they got her out of the Mountain of the Houſe, and brought her down the Cauſey; and when ſhe came near the Horſe-gate, through which the Horſes went up out of the Stables of *Millo*, when the King had occaſion for them, there they ſlew her.

By which the horſes came into the kings houſe.] There was another Horſe-gate in the main Wall of the City, *Jerem.* xxxi. 39. But that was diſtinct from this; which was peculiar to the

King's Horſes: And therefore a diſtinctive Character is ſet upon it, that it was the Horſe-gate *towards the king's houſe*, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 15. So it ſhould be rendred, rather than *by the king's houſe*: For neither of theſe Gates were near his Houſe, but at a Diſtance from it; and we may call this Gate here ſpoken of, the back-way to the King's Houſe at the Stable-gate.

Ver. 17. *And Jehoiada made a covenant between the* LORD, *and the king and the people, that they ſhould be the* LORDs *people*;] He firſt takes Care about Religion, and engaged them in a ſolemn Covenant to root out Idolatry, and to reſtore the true Worſhip of God, and continue in it.

Between the king alſo and the people.] That they ſhould be his obedient Subjects, and he ſhould govern them by the Law. This was directly agreeable to the Apoſtolick Precept, *Fear God, and honour the King.*

Ver. 18. *And all the people of the land went to the houſe of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces throughly,*] Accordingly they began immediately to make good their Covenant, in deſtroying the Worſhip of *Baal*: Which had been introduced among the People of *Judah* by *Jehoram*, viii. 8. and was continued by *Ahaziah*, ver. 27.

And ſlew Mattan the prieſt of Baal before the altar:] To which it is poſſible he fled, as a Place of Refuge; or they dragged him hither to make him a Victim to his God.

And the prieſt appointed officers over the houſe of the LORD.] Levites to keep the Door; leſt any one who was unclean ſhould enter into it. See more, 2 *Chron.* xxiii. 18, 19.

Ver. 19. *And he took the rulers over hundreds, and the captains, and the guards, and the people of the land,*] Brought them out of the Temple, that they might conduct the King to his Palace, as it here follows.

And they brought down the king from the houſe of the LORD, *and came by the way of the gate of the guard to the kings houſe,*] By that Gate of the King's Palace, where a Guard was to be kept for his Safety.

And he ſat on the throne of the kings.] Which was the Accompliſhment of his Inauguration.

Ver. 20. *And all the people of the land rejoiced,*] Applauding what *Jehoiada* had done.

And the city was in quiet;] No body appeared in Defence of *Athaliah*.

And they ſlew Athaliah with the ſword beſide the kings houſe.] Not far from it: The People having ſo little Kindneſs for her, that they ſuffered her to be ſlain without any Oppoſition. In the *Chronicles* indeed the Words are, *the city was in quiet after that they had ſlain Athaliah*, 1 *Chron.* xxii. 21. Which may import there was ſome Buſtle before, when ſhe was apprehended; but after her Death there was no ſtir: Nor do we read they were ſo much concerned for her, as to bury her.

Ver. 21. *Seven years old was Jehoaſh when he began to reign.*] Being ſo very young he was very unfit for ſo weighty a Charge; but he was under the Direction of ſo excellent a Counſellor, that while *Jehoiada* lived, all things went well, and the Nation was very happy, as we read in the next Chapter. But that good Man being dead, he was ſeduced by ſome great Men about him to Idolatry, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 17, &c. Which ſhews him to have been a weak Prince, who wanted Judgment in things of greateſt Moment.

CHAP. XII.

Verſe 1. *IN the ſeventh year of Jehu, Jehoaſh began to reign; and forty years he reigned in Jeruſalem: And his mothers name was Zibiah of Beer-ſheba.*

Ver. 2. *And Jehoaſh did that which was right in the ſight of the* LORD *all his days, wherein Jehoiada the prieſt inſtructed him.*] This Hiſtory ſhews of what Advantage it is to have good Inſtructors and Counſellors about a King. For *Jehoiada* preſerved *Joaſh* in good Ways while he lived: But when he was dead, *Joaſh* changed his Manners, and was perſwaded by the Flatteries of ſome of his Courtiers to fall into Idolatry; and he killed the Son of this pious *Jehoiada*, who reprieved him for it, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 17, 21.

Ver. 3. *But the high places were not taken away: the people ſtill ſacrificed, and burnt incenſe in the high places.*] Theſe private Altars (on which they ſacrificed to the true God) I obſerved before, were not removed by the beſt of their Kings, 'till the Reign of *Hezekiah*. And this King was too young, and his Authority too weak (though he had *Jehoiada* to aſſiſt him) to attempt to break ſuch a long continued Cuſtom; eſpecially when ſome of the Princes in their Hearts were Idolaters.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoaſh ſaid unto the prieſts,*] The Houſe of God being ſuffered to run to Decay, in the Time of *Athaliah*, and her Son; *Joaſh*, in Gratitude to God who had preſerved him there reſolved to have it repaired; and, in order to it, commanded what Money ſhould be ſet apart for that Purpoſe.

All the money of the dedicated things that are brought into the houſe of the LORD,] That had been, or ſhould hereafter be brought and dedicated to the Service of God, and of the Temple.

Even the money of every one that paſſeth the account,] This and the following Money he commanded the Prieſts and Levites to go through the Kingdom, and gather it for the Repair of the Temple, as we are told, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 5. They were not to expect 'till the People ſhould bring it in, but go and gather it, every Man of his Acquaintance, where he knew it to be due. And ſo the foregoing Words are to be tranſlated, not *that is brought*, but *to be brought* into the Houſe of the LORD. Which Money aroſe *three* Ways; the firſt is here mentioned, *the Money of every one that paſſeth* (for the Words *the account* are not in the *Hebrew*) which ſome underſtand of the Offering which pious People of other Nations made, who came to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*, 1 *Kings* viii. 41. Or rather, of thoſe who were come to twenty Years of Age, and being paſt that, were to pay half a Shekel. This had been much neglected in the Time of *Athaliah* (as the *Jewiſh* Doctors think) but now being carefully gathered, there was enough to maintain the daily Sacrifice (which was ſupported

ported out of this Money) and to carry on alſo the Reparation of the Temple. Though *Abarbinel* thinks it was wholly applied to the Reparation; and the People voluntarily offered for the maintaining of the daily Morning and Evening Sacrifice.

The money that every man is ſet at,] This was the ſecond Way: By the Money that every Man who had vowed himſelf to God, was to pay, by the Eſtimation that the Prieſt ſhould make for his Redemption; according to that Law, *Levit.* xxviii. 2, 3. For ſo the Words are here in the *Hebrew*, *the money, of a man whoſe taxation is the money of his ſoul.* That is, who is taxed ſuch a Sum of Money, whereby his Soul might be freed from the Vow wherewith he had bound himſelf. For 'till this Money was paid, his Life was not his own, but God's.

And all the money that cometh into any mans heart to bring into the houſe of the LORD,] This was the third ſort of Money for the Reparation of the Temple; that which any Man would give freely for that Service which they were to receive of them.

Ver. 5. *Let the prieſt take it to them, every man of his acquaintance, and let them repair the breaches of the houſe, whereſoever any breach ſhall be found.*] This Money, thus collected, he intruſted with the Prieſts, and commanded them to ſee it employed to the Uſe for which it was given.

Ver. 6. *And it was ſo, that in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoaſh, the prieſts had not repaired the breaches of the houſe.*] They were both dilatory and careleſs in gathering the Money (2 *Chron.* xxiv. 5.) and did not bring in what they had gathered to begin the Work. Whereupon the King revoked his former Order, and intruſted other Men (as it here follows) with this Work. Thus are Things ſeldom done well, that are committed to the Care of many.

Ver. 7. *Then king Jehoaſh called Jehoiada the prieſt, and the other prieſts, and ſaid unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the houſe? Now therefore receive no more money of your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the houſe.*] He ordered two Things; *Firſt*, that they ſhould gather no more Money of the People; and *Secondly*, that they ſhould not have the Care of ſeeing the Temple repaired; but pay what had been gathered into other Hands.

Ver. 8. *And the prieſts conſented to receive no more money of the people, neither to repair the breaches of the houſe.*] They ſubmitted to the King's new Orders, and wholly committed the Buſineſs to thoſe whom he thought fit to employ.

Ver. 9. *And Jehoiada the prieſt took a cheſt,*] By the King's Order, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 8.

And bored a hole in the lid of it, and ſet it beſide the altar, on the right ſide, as one cometh into the houſe of the LORD:] On the right Side of the Gate that went into the Court of the Prieſts: Not far from the Altar which was within the Court, appears from 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 8. Dr *Lightfoot* thinks theſe two Texts do not relate to the ſame Time. For at the firſt the Cheſt was ſet in the very Court of the Prieſts near to the Altar, as it is here ſaid in this Place: So that the Money ſtill paſſed through the Prieſt's Fingers; who took it of the People and put it into the Cheſt which was in their Court, where the People could not come at it. But the Money not coming in ſo faſt as was expected this Way; he removed the Cheſt, or made another, and ſet it without the Court, at the Entrance of it, where every one might have Acceſs unto it. And he proclaimed through all the Country they ſhould bring in their Money thither: Which came in ſo plentifully, that there was enough for the Repair of the Houſe, and for other Uſes alſo.

And the prieſts that kept the door, put therein all the money brought into the houſe of the LORD.] There was a Proclamation made, that all the People ſhould bring in their half Shekel, which *Moſes* commanded every one of ſuch an Age to pay: And they brought it to the Prieſts who ſtood at the Door, that let into their Court, and ſaw them put it into the Cheſt, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 9.

Ver. 10. *And it was ſo, when they ſaw there was much money in the cheſt, that the kings ſcribe, and the high prieſt came up, and they put up in bags, and told the money that that was found in the houſe of the LORD.*] The High-Prieſt would have a Witneſs of his Actions, leſt he ſhould be ſuſpected of any Fraud, as perhaps others had been; and would not open the Cheſt without the Aſſiſtance of the King's Secretary of State; nor would he open it in the Temple, but had it brought by the *Levites* into the King's Office; and there the Secretary and the high Prieſt, or any Officer of his, emptied the Cheſt, and told the Money, and then put it up in Bags which it is likely they ſealed; and then they ſent the Cheſt into its Place again. This they did every Day, as we read 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 11.

Ver. 11. *And they gave the money, being told, into the hands of them that did the work, and had the overſight of the houſe of the LORD:*] Theſe Bags of Money were delivered (by the King and *Jehoiada*, 2 *Chron.* xxiv 12.) not to the Prieſts, whom the King had found tardy, and perhaps faulty in converting the Money to their own Uſes; but to ſome ſelect Perſons who had this peculiar Buſineſs committed to them, to ſee the Reparation, and to employ good Workmen, and to pay them their Wages.

And they laid it out to the carpenters and builders that wrought upon the houſe of the LORD,] To buy Materials for the Work, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 12. *And to maſons, and hewers of ſtone, and to buy timber, and hewed ſtone to repair the breaches of the houſe of the LORD, and for all that was laid out for the houſe to repair it.*] For all other Things, of what kind ſoever they were, which they found neceſſary for the Reparation.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit, there were not made for the houſe of the LORD, bowls of ſilver, ſnuffers, baſons, trumpets, any veſſels of gold, or veſſels of ſilver, of the money that was brought into the houſe of the LORD.*] Though theſe were wanting, yet the Money was limited to the Reparations of the Houſe; and the King ordered that no Veſſel of any ſort ſhould be bought for the Temple, 'till the Temple it ſelf was put into a good Condition. So the LXX render it, *there ſhall none be made for the*

the houſe any veſſels, &c. (that is, he commanded there ſhould be none made) but all given to the fore-named Workmen, as long as there needed any Reparations. So it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 14. *But they gave that to the workmen, and repaired therewith the houſe of the LORD.*] The Maſons and Carpenters, and ſuch like Workmen, had all the Money, to be laid out according to their Diſcretion, upon the Reparation of the Temple alone, 'till the Work was finiſhed. And then they gave an Account of what Money remained in their Hands, and that was laid out to purchaſe ſuch Veſſels as are before mentioned, for the Service of the Temple, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 14.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, they reckoned not with the men, into whoſe hands they delivered the money to be beſtowed on workmen: for they dealt faithfully.*] They were ſo confident of the Honeſty of the Overſeers, that they took no Account of the Money they had paid the Workmen; who were alſo Men of ſuch clear Reputation, that what they laid out was not queſtioned. This was a rare Example of Fidelity in managing the publick Money; and there was one Man in *Greece*, *Ariſtides*, who was ſo truſty in the Opinion of all the People.

Ver. 16. *The treſpaſs-money and the ſin-money was not brought into the houſe of the LORD: it was the prieſts.*] This Money was not applied to the foreſaid Uſe; but put into the Hands of the Prieſts, that Sacrifices for Treſpaſſes and Sins might be offered for thoſe that gave it.

Ver. 17. *Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought againſt Gath, and took it:*] This was a City of the *Philiſtines*, but taken by King *David*, and added to the Dominions of *Iſrael* (1 *Chron.* xviii. 1. 2 *Sam.* viii. 1.) and now taken from them by *Hazael*.

And Hazael ſet his face to go up to Jeruſalem.] Having made himſelf Maſter of this Place, he plainly declared, by the Diſpoſition of his Affairs, that he intended to make an Attempt upon *Jeruſalem*. This fell out after *Jehoaſh* had forſaken God, and fallen to Idolatry; as appears by the Book of the *Chronicles*: Where a much different Relation is made of the Expedition of the *Syrians*. Inſomuch that *Abarbinel* thinks (which is approved by ſeveral Chriſtian Writers) there were two Expeditions. In the firſt of which *Hazael* came up in Perſon againſt them, as is here related; but they purchaſed Peace of him. And then in the End of the Year, after they had killed *Zechariah*, the War was renewed; though *Hazael* did not come himſelf, but ſent a ſmall Army, which they were not able to oppoſe, which deſtroyed a great many of the People, and ſent great Spoils to *Damaſcus*, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 23, 25.

Ver. 18. *And Jehoaſh king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoſhaphat, and Ahaziah, his father, kings of Judah had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the houſe of the LORD, and in the kings houſe, and ſent it to Hazael king of Syria, and he went away from Jeruſalem.*] The Preſervation of his Kingdom he thought warranted this; but he had brought theſe Dangers upon himſelf, by his Apoſtacy from God.

Ver. 19. *And the reſt of the acts of Joaſh, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 20. *And his ſervants aroſe, and made a conſpiracy, and ſlew Joaſh in the houſe of Millo, which goeth down to Silla.*] The *Syrians* had left him labouring under great Diſeaſes at this Place, called *Millo*: Where his Servants ſlew him in his Bed, as we read 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 25. There was another Place called *Millo*, hard by the King's Palace at *Jeruſalem*: Therefore to diſtinguiſh this from that, this is called *Millo that goeth down to Silla*; as *Abarbinel* thinks.

Ver. 21. *For Jozachar the ſon of Shimeath,*] He was called by another Name alſo, *viz. Zabad*.

And Jehozabad the ſon of Shomer,] This was his Father's Name, it is likely, and his Mother was called *Shimrith*, who was a *Moabiteſs*; as *Shimeath* was an *Ammoniteſs*, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 26.

His ſervants, ſmote him and he died;] They were Friends of *Jehoiada* (as *Joſephus* thinks) who took this Revenge upon *Joaſh*, for the Death of *Zechariah* the Son of *Jehoiada*, as is expreſly noted, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 25.

And they buried him with his fathers in the city of David,] But not in the Sepulchre of the Kings, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 25. For though they did him ſo much Honour as to bury him in the Royal City; yet not all the Honour that was uſual; becauſe he had forſaken God, and ſlain one of his Prophets.

And Amaziah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.] His Servants did not kill him, with an Intention to uſurp the Kingdom; but only to revenge the Blood of *Zechariah*. For they ſuffered his Son to ſucceed *Joaſh* peaceably, who ſlew thoſe that had ſlain his Father, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 3.

CHAP. XIII.

Verſe 1. *IN the three and twentieth year of Joaſh the ſon of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz the ſon of Jehu began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, and reigned ſeventeen years.*] Some have raiſed a Doubt about this Account, becauſe *Joaſh* began to reign in the ſeventh Year of *Jehu* (xii. 2.) who reigned but twenty-eight Years (x. 36.) from whence if ſeven Years be deducted, there remains no more than one and twenty, not three and twenty Years; as is here ſaid. To which *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel* anſwer; there were two incomplete Years; for when it is ſaid *Joaſh* reigned in the ſeventh Year of *Jehu*, it muſt be underſtood of the Beginning of his ſeventh Year; and in like manner, when he ſpeaks here of the three and twentieth Year of *Joaſh*, it muſt be underſtood of the Beginning of the ſame Year. And ſo they are called three and twenty, when they were but one and twenty perfect Years; but it is better to ſay (as my worthy Friend Dr *Alix* thinks) that there was an *Interregnum* of a Year between the Death of *Jehu* and the firſt of *Jehoahaz*.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the LORD, and followed the ſins of Jeroboam, who made Iſrael to ſin, he departed not there-*

therefrom.] Was not reclaimed by the ſevere Puniſhments God inflicted on him.

Ver. 5. *And the anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Iſrael, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and Ben-hadad the ſon of Hazael, all their days.*] The Word *their*, is not in the *Hebrew*; ſo that it may be tranſlated all *his* Days, as it is explained *ver.* 22.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoahaz beſought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him:*] Not for his ſake, but for the ſake of the pious Anceſtors of this People; with whom he had made a Covenant of great Mercy to be ſhewed to their Poſterity; which in their great Diſtreſs he now afforded them. See *ver.* 23.

For he ſaw the oppreſſion of Iſrael, becauſe the king of Syria oppreſſed them.] Intending their utter Ruin, which God would not yet permit; but bear longer with them.

Ver. 5. (*And God gave Iſrael a ſaviour, ſo that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians:*] Some underſtand by this *Saviour*, an extraordinary Captain, whom God raiſed up to fight their Battles, with great Succeſs. But it being ſaid, that while *Hazael* lived he oppreſſed them, *ver.* 22. it is more reaſonable to underſtand by this *Saviour*, the Son of *Jehoahaz:* Who, when *Hazael* was dead, delivered them from their Bondage, *ver.* 25. And perhaps he did this in his Father's Life-time; who made him joint Sovereign with himſelf.

And the children of Iſrael dwelt in their tents, as aforetime.] They lived quietly and ſecurely, not only in their fortified Towns, but in the Villages and the Fields.

Ver. 6. *Nevertheleſs, they departed not from the ſins of the houſe of Jeroboam, who made Iſrael to ſin, but walked therein:*] Neither their Miſeries, nor God's Mercies to them, made any Alteration in them; but they continued in thoſe Sins; which had ruined the Houſe of *Jeroboam*, and many of his Succeſſors.

And there remained the grove alſo in Samaria.)] We read of a Grove which *Ahab* planted in Honour of *Baal*, 1 *Kings* xvi. 33. But his Worſhip being utterly deſtroyed by *Jehu*, I cannot but think thāt he cut down that Grove. And therefore the Grove here mentioned had in it the Image of ſome other God.

Ver. 7. *Neither did he leave of the people to Jehoahaz, but fifty horſemen, and ten chariots,*] With the Men belonging to them.

And ten thouſand footmen;] This explains what he means by *the People* in the foregoing Words; not all the People of *Iſrael*, but the Soldiers, or Men of War; of which there were no more left, than this ſmall Number.

For the king of Syria had deſtroyed them,] God left them in his Hand, to make this Deſtruction among them, killing ſome, and carrying others captive.

And had made them like the duſt by threſhing.] By perpetual Wars and Captivities; which made very great Depopulations.

Ver. 8. *Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?*] The Judgments of God upon him were the moſt remarkable, becauſe he was a *Man of might:* And was ſo far from being able to ſtand before the *Syrians*, that they beat him to Duſt.

Ver. 9. *And Jehoahaz ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria, and Joaſh his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] Called in the next Verſe *Jehoaſh.*

Ver. 10. *In the thirty-ſeventh year of Joaſh king of Judah, began Jehoaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, and he reigned ſixteen years.*] A Difficulty ſeems to ariſe, by comparing this Verſe with the firſt: Where it is ſaid, *Jehoahaz* King of *Iſrael* began to reign in the twenty-third Year of *Joaſh* King of *Judah*, and reigned ſeventeen Years: From whence it follows, that *Jehoaſh* began to reign not in the thirty-ſeventh, but in the thirty-ninth, or fortieth Year of *Joaſh* King of *Judah*. But this only ſhews the Truth of what I ſaid upon *ver.* 5. that he reigned with his Father three Years: After God was ſo gracious as to raiſe up a Deliverer to them; who was this Son of his, by whom Peace was reſtored to them. This we note in the *Margin*, he reigned *in Conſort with his Father*, xiv. 1.

Ver. 11. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the LORD; he departed not from all the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin: but he walked therein.*

Ver. 12. *And the reſt of the acts of Joaſh, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought againſt Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?*] They were all recorded in the Book ſo often mentioned (See 1 *Kings* xi. 41.) and his Fight with *Amaziah* is particularly related, and ſet down at large in 2 *Chron.* xxv. 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 13. *And Joaſh ſlept with his fathers, and Jeroboam ſat upon his throne:*] From whence ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors gather, that he reigned with his Father, at leaſt one Year; though *Abarbinel* denies it, but without Reaſon.

And Joaſh was buried with his fathers in Samaria, with the kings of Iſrael.] He doth not here conclude this Hiſtory of *Joaſh*; for he afterwards relates great things done by him. But being to ſpeak of the Death of *Eliſha*, upon which thoſe things depended, he interpoſes that, before he proceeds further to relate his Acts.

Ver. 14. *Now Eliſha was fallen ſick of his ſickneſs whereof he died,*] This was in the tenth Year of *Joaſh*, as they ſay in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 19. And from thence gather how long *Eliſha* continued a Prophet in *Iſrael*, *viz.* from the nineteenth Year of *Jehoſhaphat* 'till this Time; which was ſixty-five Years.

And Joaſh the king of Iſrael came down unto him, and wept over his face,] This was no Sign of his hearty Affection to him (for he would not hearken to his Word) but he bewailed himſelf, and his People, who were in Danger ſhortly to loſe ſo great a Defender.

And ſaid, My father, my father, the chariot of Iſrael, and the horſemen thereof.] They are the Words of *Eliſha* concerning *Elijah*, when he was taken up to Heaven (ii. 12.) ſignifying the great Authority he had maintained among them (which is included in the Word *Father*) and that by his Counſel and Prayers they had obtained Glorious Victories over their Enemies.

Ver. 15. *And Eliſha ſaid unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows.*] This was to repreſent the Wars he was to have with the *Syrians*.

Ver. 16. *And he ſaid to the king of Iſrael, Put thy hand upon the bow: and he put his hand upon it: and Eliſha put his hands upon the kings hands.*] This was to repreſent that they were not to truſt in their Arms, and their Valour; but in God alone, who would give them the Victory.

Ver. 17. *And he ſaid, Open the window eaſtward. And they opened it.*] Part of *Syria* lay Eaſt or North-Eaſt from *Judæa:* And the *Syrians* alſo had poſſeſſed themſelves of all the Land of *Iſrael* eaſtward (x. 33.) from whence he ſignified, by what follows, *Joaſh* ſhould expel them.

Then Eliſha ſaid, Shoot: and he ſhot. And he ſaid, the arrow of the LORD *s deliverance, the arrow of deliverance from Syria:*] A Sign the LORD would wound the *Syrians* by the Arms of the *Iſraelites*, and give them a glorious Deliverance from their Tyranny.

For thou ſhalt ſmite the Syrians in Aphek,] In the Territories belonging to it, of which ſee 1 *Sam.* iv. 1. xxix. 1. The *Syrians* had taken *Gath*; and *Aphek*, I take it, was not far from it; ſo that it was as much as to ſay, they ſhould drive them out of the Country; as it follows.

'Till thou haſt deſtroyed them.] Not all the People of *Syria*, but all their Forces wherewith they infeſted *Iſrael*.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid, Take the arrows: and he took them: and he ſaid unto the king of Iſrael, Smite upon the ground: and he ſmote thrice, and ſtayed.*] That which he repreſented before by the ſhooting of an Arrow, he repreſents again by ſmiting upon the Ground with the Arrows, *viz.* Victory over the *Syrians*, whom he ſhould overthrow and caſt down to the Ground in Battle.

Ver. 19. *And the man of God was wroth with him, and ſaid, Thou ſhouldeſt have ſmitten five or ſix times, then ſhouldeſt thou have ſmitten Syria 'till thou hadſt conſumed them: whereas now thou ſhalt ſmite Syria but thrice.*] By the former Sign the King of *Iſrael* might have underſtood, that this was intended to ſignify the ſame thing; and I ſuppoſe the Prophet ſpake ſo, as to give him to underſtand he would have him ſmite a good many times. And he was angry at his Sloth and Unbelief, which made him ſtop at the third Stroke; for if he had done it oftner, he ſhould have utterly diſabled them. He had before repreſented great Victories which he ſhould obtain; but not 'till now, how often he ſhould overcome; which he was admoniſhed by God to let him know by this Sign. And it is probable, the Prophet himſelf did not know, 'till he ſaw how often he ſmote on the Ground.

Ver. 20. *And Eliſha died, and they buried him: and the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.*] Which was the uſual Time when People went out to War, as I have ſhewn upon 2 *Sam.* xi. 1. See there; but whether it was the next Spring after his Death, or ſome Years after, is doubted. But the Words ſeem plainly to import it was the next Spring.

Ver. 21. *And it came to paſs as they were burying a man,*] Carrying him to his Grave.

They ſpied a band of men,] A Part of the *Moabites*, who were coming towards the Place where they were to lay the Corps.

And they caſt him into the ſepulchre of Eliſha:] Which being near to the Place where they then were, they rolled away the Stone, and laid the Body by *Eliſha*'s; for fear, if they proceeded to the Sepulchre prepared for this Man, they ſhould fall into the Hand of the *Moabites*.

And when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Eliſha,] From hence ſome conclude, that this Invaſion of the *Moabites* was ſome Years after *Eliſha*'s Death; when his Fleſh was conſumed, and only his Bones remained.

That he revived, and ſtood upon his feet.] By which Miracle God did the higheſt Honour to his Prophet, and confirmed both the Truth of what he had promiſed the King, and the Belief of a future Life. For this was ſomething more than he had done in *Eliſha*'s Life-time, when he could not without many Prayers, and ſtretching himſelf with great Application, upon the Body of the Child, raiſe it to Life again; whereas now upon touching of his dead Body only, God reſtored a Man, in an Inſtant, to perfect Health; for he ſtood upon his Feet, and, it is likely, walked home with thoſe that brought him to be buried. It is a poor Conceit of *Abarbinel* and others, that he was a wicked Man, whom God rather would raiſe to Life again, than ſuffer his dead Body to reſt by ſuch an holy Perſon as *Eliſha*. It had been enough, if this had been the Reaſon, to have thrown this dead Body out of *Eliſha*'s Sepulchre, and let it lie upon the Ground.

Ver. 22. *But Hazael king of Syria oppreſſed Iſrael all the days of Jehoahaz.*] None of theſe things which *Eliſha* promiſed, were accompliſhed while *Hazael* lived; but after his Death *Joaſh* the Son of *Jehoahaz* (as it here follows) vanquiſhed *Ben-hadad* the Son of *Hazael*.

Ver. 23. *And the* LORD *was gracious unto them, and had compaſſion upon them, and reſpect unto them, becauſe of his covenant with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob.*] For whoſe ſake he ſpared them, and would not let the Oppreſſion of the *Syrians* continue ſo long, as to ruin them.

And would not deſtroy them, neither caſt them out of his preſence as yet.] But allowed them a longer Space for Repentance.

Ver. 24. *So Hazael king of Syria died, and Ben-hadad his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] The Name of *Ben-hadad* had for a long Time been common to the Kings of *Syria*; and now was renewed in another Family.

Ver. 25. *Jehoaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the ſon of Hazael, the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war:*] He took all the Country on the other Side of *Jordan* in the Days of *Jehu*, x. 33. Beſides which he made further Conqueſts on this ſide *Jordan*, in the Day of *Jehoahaz:* Whether *Jehoaſh* recovered all, is not certain; but what his Father loſt, it is here ſaid he regained.

Three times did Joaſh beat him, and recovered the cities of Iſrael.] It is not recorded where theſe three Battles were fought, but the Succeſs of them was ſo great, that he retook all that his Father had loſt.

CHAP. XIV.

Verſe 1. *IN the ſecond year of Joaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz king of Iſrael, reigned Amaziah the ſon of Joaſh king of Judah.*] This was, as Dr *Lightfoot* obſerves, the thirty-eighth Year of his Father *Joaſh* King of *Judah:* Three Years current before his Death. For his Father had thrown himſelf into ſuch a miſerable Condition, by his Apoſtacy, and his Murder of *Zachariah* (xii. 17, 18.) that he was become unfit to manage the Kingdom. See *Harm. of the Evang. Proleg.* Cap. 6.

Ver. 2. *He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and reigned twenty-nine years in Jeruſalem: and his mothers name was Jehoaddan of Jeruſalem.*] *Joaſh* King of *Iſrael* reigned ſixteen Years (xiii. 10.) therefore *Amaziah* reigned fourteen Years while he lived; and after his Death fifteen Years; which make twenty-nine. See *ver.* 17.

Ver. 3. *And he did that which was right in the ſight of the* LORD, *yet not like David his father: He did in all things according as Joaſh his father did.*] For both of them in the Beginning of their Reigns did very well: But both in their latter End fell into Idolatry. Both of them alſo, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, contemned God's Prophets, who ſpake to them in the Name of the LORD.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit, the high places were not taken away; for yet the people did ſacrifice, and burn incenſe on the high places.*] Even in the beſt Part of his Reign, before he fell to Idolatry, this Licence continued; which had been long practiſed, againſt the Law of God. In this he imitated his Father, xii. 3.

Ver. 5. *And it came to paſs when the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that he ſlew his ſervants which had ſlain the king his father.*] He durſt not venture upon this Piece of Juſtice preſently, 'till he was well ſettled in his Authority, and had diveſted thoſe of all Power, who were the Friends of thoſe Murderers. Who ſeem to have continued ſtill at Court; for they are called *his ſervants.*

Ver. 6. *But the children of the murderers ſlew he not: according to that which is written in the book of the law of Moſes, wherein the* LORD *commanded, ſaying, The fathers ſhall not be put to death for the children, nor the children for the fathers; but every man ſhall be put to death for his own ſin.*] In this he acted like a good Man, and was not moved to cut off the Children, contrary to Law, for fear they ſhould make a Faction againſt him, and take Revenge for their Fathers Death.

Ver. 7. *He ſlew of Edom*] He alone, and the Men of *Judah*, made the following Slaughter: Having, at the Command of a Prophet, abandoned the Help of the *Iſraelites*; though he had purchaſed it with a great Sum of Money, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 7. 8, 9, 10. The *Edomites* had revolted from *Judah* in the Days of *Joram*, viii. 10. and now *Amaziah* endeavours to reduce them.

In the valley of ſalt,] A Place mentioned 2 *Sam.* viii. 13. whence ſee what I have obſerved concerning the Reaſon of this Name.

Ten thouſand,] And he took as many Captives. See 2 *Chron.* xxv. 12.

And he took Selah by war,] The Metropolis of *Arabia Petræa*; which took its Name from hence: For *Selah* is the ſame with the Word *Petra*, a *Rock*; upon which the City ſtood. From this Rock he ſeems to have thrown down the ten thouſand, whom he took alive, and broke in Pieces, as is ſaid in the fore-named Place, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 12. *Hagar* ſignifies the ſame, as *Bochartus* obſerves, by which Name the *Arabians* call it, from the Rocky Mountain which hanged over this Place, which St *Paul* calls by the *Arabick* Name *Hagar.*

And called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.] Which Name imports, *Obedience of God*, or *to God.* Becauſe, having taken it, he ſettled, as ſome imagine, the Laws and Statutes of *Moſes* in this Place; or rather, he acknowledged, by giving it this Name, that the Poſſeſſion of this Place was a Reward of his Obedience to the Man of God, who required him to diſmiſs all the Forces he had hired of the *Iſraelites*, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 10.

Ver. 8. *Then Amaziah king of Judah ſent a meſſenger to Jehoaſh, king of Iſrael, ſaying, Come, les us look one another in the face.*] Being fluſhed with his great Victory over the *Edomites*, and incenſed by the Damages the *Iſraelites* had done him (2 *Chron.* xxv. 13.) he ſent this Challenge to the King of *Iſrael*, ſaying, Let us ſet our Armies in Battle-aray one againſt the other, and try our Strength. Which ſome think he did only to try their Military Skill and Proweſs; not to revenge Injuries, or get his own again. Which if he had intended, he would have aſſaulted the *Iſraelites* on a ſudden; and not given them ſuch fair Warning to ſtand upon their Defence. But it is more probable, that being encouraged, as I ſaid, by his late Victory, he reſolved to be revenged for the Slaughter of his Anceſtors by *Jehu* (Chap. ix.) and for the late Spoil the *Iſraelites* had made in his Country (2 *Chron.* xxv. 10, 13.) but he reſolved to have Satisfaction, in a fair and honourable Way, and not by Surprize. And the Words may be thus underſtood; *Either give me ſatisfaction, or let us try it out in a battle.* It is probable alſo, he might think of conquering the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, if he did not ſatisfy him, and bring it back to the Houſe of *David:* For ſo *Jehoaſh* underſtood him, as *Joſephus* thinks, and the Sequel ſhews.

Ver. 9. *And Jehoaſh king of Iſrael ſent to Amaziah king of Judah, ſaying, the thiſtle that was in Lebanon, ſent to the cedar that was in Lebanon,*] He compares himſelf to a Cedar, and *Amaziah* to a Thiſtle; which is a poor Shrub, not worthy of that Name; but having drawn Blood on ſome poor Traveller, and ſorely afflicted him (as *Amaziah* had done the *Edomites*) grew very proud, and would be no longer one of the Shrubs, but equal to the moſt goodly Trees.

Saying, Give me thy daughter to my ſon to wife:] Make an Affinity with me, and let us be one Kingdom. So ſome underſtand it, that *Jehoaſh* thought he would have him join his great Kingdom, which was ten Tribes, unto his poor one of two Tribes; that being united, there ſhould be but one King over them all; and they ſhould

try their Fortune in a pitched Battle, which of them two ſhould be the King. But this ſeems to be too much ſtrained. He only intimates, that if he ſhould deſire a friendly Alliance with him, he deſpiſed it as below him, as much as a Thiſtle is below a Cedar.

And there paſſed by a wild beaſt that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thiſtle.] This repreſents how eaſily his Soldiers (who are compared to wild Beaſts) would repreſs his Inſolence.

Ver. 10. *Thou haſt indeed ſmitten the Edomites, and thine heart hath lifted thee up:*] This hath made thee proud.

Glory in this, and tarry at home:] Be content with the Honour thou haſt won, and be quiet.

For why ſhouldſt thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou ſhouldſt fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?] He admoniſhes him to deſiſt from this needleſs Provocation of his Neighbours; which might end in his Ruin.

Ver. 11. *But Amaziah would not hearken: Therefore Jehoaſh king of Iſrael went up, and he, and Amaziah looked one another in the face,*] Encountred one another in a Fight.

At Beth-ſhemeſh, which belongeth to Judah.] See 1 *Sam.* vi. 12.

Ver. 12. *And Judah was put to the worſe before Iſrael, and they fled every man to their tents.*] So their Houſes were called, from their having no other Habitations for a long Time in the Wilderneſs; and in *Canaan* many continued in ſuch Dwellings. *Joſephus* ſaith, the People of *Judah* did not ſtrike a Stroke; but being poſſeſſed with a panick Fear, when they ſaw a formidable Army ſet in Battle-array againſt them, ran away.

Ver. 13. *And Jehoaſh king of Iſrael took Amaziah king of Judah, the ſon of Jehoaſh the ſon of Ahaziah, at Beth-ſhemeſh,*] I ſuppoſe his Anceſtors are mentioned, to ſhew, that this was the greater Diſgrace to him; being deſcended from a Race of Kings, which *Jehoaſh* was not.

And came to Jeruſalem,] Bringing *Amaziah* with him; and letting the Inhabitants know (as *Joſephus* ſaith) that he would ſlay him before their Eyes, if they did not immediately open their Gates unto him; which was accordingly done.

And broke down the wall of Jeruſalem, from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits.] That the City might lie open to his Invaſion, if they ſhould break the Conditions he impoſed upon them.

Ver. 14. *And he took all the gold and ſilver, and all the veſſels that were found in the houſe of the LORD, and in the treaſures of the kings houſe, and hoſtages,*] The Sons, I ſuppoſe, of the principal Perſons of the City; for a Security that they would be quiet, and give him no Diſturbance.

And returned to Samaria.] For he had enough to do to defend himſelf from the *Syrians*; and therefore did not intend a Conqueſt of the Kingdom of *Judah*, nor ſet a Garriſon in *Jeruſalem:* But contented himſelf with the Spoil of it; and perhaps made them Tributaries to him. This was an heavy Puniſhment upon *Amaziah*, for going after other Gods, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 20.

Ver. 15. *Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoaſh which he did, and his might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?*] There were many other Things which happened in this War, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, beſides theſe here compendiouſly related; for which he refers to a Record which was very well known in thoſe Days; but now is loſt.

Ver. 16. *And Jehoaſh ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Iſrael, and Jeroboam his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*

Ver. 17. *And Amaziah the ſon of Joaſh king of Judah, lived after the death of Jehoaſh the ſon of Jehoahaz king of Iſrael, fifteen years.*] But in no great Credit with his People; for *Raſhi* thinks he lived moſt of his Time in *Lachiſh*, whither he was forced to fly (as it follows) by reaſon of a Conſpiracy againſt him in *Jeruſalem.*

Ver. 18. *And the reſt of the acts of Amaziah, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] He mentions nothing of *his Might* which he ſhewed; being a weak Prince, who loſt the Reputation of his Country.

Ver. 19. *Now they made a conſpiracy againſt him in Jeruſalem:*] Their City having been expoſed to Reproach by the great Breach made in their Wall, and ſpoiled of its beſt Ornaments, and ſome of their Children carried away as Hoſtages for their good Behaviour, he became very odious to the great Men of the City; all this being brought upon them by his Pride and Raſhneſs, and Apoſtacy from God, 2 *Chron.* xxv. 27.

And he fled to Lachiſh,] The Conſpiracy it ſeems grew ſo ſtrong, that he could not reſiſt it; but was forced to ſeek for Safety by Flight, in a fortified City upon the Borders of the *Philiſtines.*

And they ſent after him to Lachiſh, and ſlew him there.] They ſent to have him privately murdered (as *Joſephus* reports it) which ſome undertook and effected.

Ver. 20. *And they brought him on horſes;*] In a Chariot.

And they buried him in Jeruſalem with his fathers, in the city David.] They did him ſome Honour when he was dead, though they hated him when he was alive.

Ver. 21. *And all the people of Judah took Azariah*] Called *Uzziah* in the next Chapter, *ver.* 30. and in 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 1. Both ſignify the ſame Thing; one being as much as *the help of God*, the other *the ſtrength of God.*

(Which was ſixteen years old) and made him king inſtead of his father Amaziah.] But this was twelve Years after *Amaziah*'s Death: For he was made King in the twenty-ſeventh Year of *Jeroboam* (See upon xv. 1.) who began to reign in the fiftieth of *Amaziah*, ver. 23.

Ver. 22. *He built Elath,*] Repaired it.

And reſtored it to Judah,] It was a City belonging to *Edom*, *Deut.* ii. 8. 2 *Chron.* viii. 17. which King *David*, I ſuppoſe, took when he conquered this Country; but in the Days of *Joram* the *Edomites* revolted, and recovered *Elath.*

After that the king ſlept with his fathers.] It is a probable Opinion of *Abarbinel*, that the

King his Father, after the great Slaughter of the *Edomites* mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, took this Place; but did not annex it to the Kingdom of *Judah*, by reaſon of his ſucceeding Troubles. Which *Azariah* did, by building a Wall about it, and fortifying it; whereby he ſecured the Poſſeſſion of it.

Ver. 23. *In the fifteenth year of Amaziah king of Judah, Jeroboam the ſon of Joaſh king of Iſrael began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years.*] Which was much longer than any of the Kings of *Iſrael*: *Jehu* himſelf, the firſt of his Family, reigning but twenty-eight Years, which was longer than any before him, as I obſerved, x. 36.

Ver. 24. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD: *he departed not from all the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin.*] As he had the Name, ſo he trod in the ſteps of him, who firſt corrupted *Iſrael* with Idolatry.

Ver. 25. *He reſtored the coaſt of Iſrael from the entring of Hamath, to the ſea of the plain,*] As *Joaſh* his Father had reſtored many Cities which *Ben-hadad* had taken; ſo *Jeroboam* reſtored a large Territory, which other Kings had taken from them, *viz.* all the Country from *Libanus* on the North, to the Lake *Aſphaltites* on the South.

According to the word of the LORD *God of Iſrael, which he ſpake by the hand of his ſervant Jonah the ſon of Amittai the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher.*] The Prophet *Jonah* encouraged them to this War, promiſing them Succeſs in it. Whoſe Words are not here ſet down; but this Place ſhews, that God was very merciful to them, though a very wicked People, ſtill in continuing Prophets among them, when *Eliſha* was dead. And this Prophet, the *Jews* fancy, was the Son of the Woman of *Sarepta*, whom *Elijah* raiſed from the dead. For which I cannot find they have any Ground, but this poor Conceit, that he is called the Son of *Amittai*, i. e. *of Truth*, ſay they: Becauſe his Mother ſaid to the Prophet when he reſtored her Son to her, now I know *the word of God in thy mouth is truth*, 1 *Kings* xvii. 24. But this is fully confuted from this ſingle Obſervation that he is ſaid to be of *Gath-hepher*, which was far from *Sarepta*, towards *Tiberias* in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, as St *Hierom* tells us.

Ver. 26. *For the* LORD *ſaw the affliction of Iſrael, that it was very bitter:*] He ſhewed them this Favour, not for any Goodneſs that was in them; but in Compaſſion to their Miſery, which was greater than could be expreſſed.

For there was not any ſhut up, nor any left,] Men of all ſorts were deſtroyed: Or, as ſome interpret it, they had loſt all they had in their Houſes, and all that was in the Field. But ſee of this Phraſe, 1 *Kings* xiv. 10. xxi. 21.

Nor any helper for Iſrael.] None to relieve, much leſs to deliver them.

Ver. 27. *And the* LORD *ſaid not that he would blot out the name of Iſrael from under heaven: but he ſaved them by the hand of Jeroboam the ſon of Joaſh.*] But ſince the LORD had not yet decreed to root them out of their own Land; therefore he ſaved them, even by this wicked Prince, for the preſent, from their Enemies; who would otherwiſe have made an utter End of them.

Ver. 28. *Now the reſt of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how he recovered Damaſcus, and Hamath, which belonged to Judah, for Iſrael,* &c.] Or rather *by Iſrael*, as *Abarbinel* expounds it; by the Hand or Power of *Iſrael* they were reſtored. For when *David* fought againſt the *Syrians*, and brought them in Subjection to him, he put Garriſons into *Damaſcus* and *Hamath*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 6, &c. Which the *Syrians* afterward recovered when they rebelled againſt *Judah*: But *Jeroboam* poſſeſſed himſelf of them again, and by his Valour made them as ſubject to *Iſrael* as they had been to *Judah*.

Ver. 29. *And Jeroboam ſlept with his fathers, even with the kings of Iſrael; and Zachariah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] He was the third King of *Iſrael* of *Jehu*'s Race, and ſo might be ſaid to ſleep with his Fathers of *Iſrael*.

CHAP. XV.

Verſe 1. *IN the twenty-ſeventh year of Jeroboam king of Iſrael, began Azariah ſon of Amaziah king of Judah to reign.*] Here is a great Difficulty, in the ſolving of which Interpreters much vary: For *Amaziah* the Father of *Azariah* lived but fifteen Years after the Beginning of *Jeroboam*'s Reign, xiv. 17. Therefore *Azariah* began his Reign, not in the twenty-ſeventh, but in the Beginning of the ſeventeenth of *Jeroboam*. Some think *Jeroboam* reigned with his Father eleven Years: Others, that there was an *Interregnum*; that is, the Throne was vacant eleven or rather twelve Years, between the Death of *Amaziah*, and the Inauguration of *Azariah*. Dr *Lightfoot* makes no Doubt of the Truth of this: That *Azariah* being but ſixteen Years old in the ſeven and twentieth of *Jeroboam*, he was but four Years old at his Father's Death; and the Throne being empty for eleven or twelve Years, the Government was managed by ſome of the Grandees in his Minority. But *Ralbag* will have theſe twenty-ſeven Years of *Jeroboam* not to be thoſe which were paſt, but thoſe which were to come; and the Meaning is, *Azariah* was made king when *Jeroboam* had yet twenty-ſeven Years to reign; before the Family of *Jehu* came to an end. For after this *Jeroboam* reigned twenty-ſix Years, and his Son ſix Months; which make twenty-ſeven imperfect Years. This *Abarbinel* thinks is the literal Senſe: But the other is more agreeable to the conſtant Account of the Reigns of other Kings. See Mr *Whiſton* in his late View of the Chronology of the Old-Teſtament, *pag.* 91.

Ver. 2. *Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jeruſalem, and his mothers name was Jecholiah of Jeruſalem.*] In which Time, which was longer than any King of *Judah* or *Iſrael* reigned, he did many great Things; which are recorded in 2 *Chron.* xxvi. from *ver.* 5, to 16.

Ver. 3. *And he did that which was right in the ſight of the* LORD, *according to all that Amaziah his father had done:*] He governed well in the former Part of his Reign, and was proſpered

by God (2 *Chron.* xxvi. 5.) but offended in the latter End of it, as *Amaziah* his Father had done.

Ver. 4. *Save that the high places were not removed: the people ſacrificed, and offered incenſe ſtill in the high places.*] Which was a common Error (as I have often obſerved) which continued through the Reign of the beſt of their Kings, 'till the Time of *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 5. *And the LORD ſmote the king, ſo that he was a leper to the day of his death, and he dwelt in a ſeveral houſe:*] The Cauſe of this Stroke is related at large in 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 16, &c. And by a *ſeveral houſe* the *Jews* underſtand an Houſe in the Country, which was *Domus libera:* Where he might have Liberty to take his Pleaſure, but not to meddle with publick Affairs.

And Jotham the kings ſon was over the houſe, judging the people of the land.] Over *the king's houſe*, as it is in 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 23. That is, he lived in the Palace, and managed all the Affairs of the Court, and of the Kingdom. This was in the ſeven and twentieth Year of *Azariah*, when he was ſmote with the Leproſy (as *Raſi* makes Account) and he continued a Leper twenty-five Years, during which Time *Jotham* took upon him the Adminiſtration of the Government, his Father being incapable of it.

Ver. 6. *And the reſt of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 7. *And Azariah ſlept with his fathers, and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David; and Jotham his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] He was not buried in the very *City of David* but in the *field of the burial which belonged to the kings*, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 23. In which Field, it is probable, the Sepulchre of the Kings was: Wherein they would not bury *Azariah*, becauſe he was a Leper; but yet very near to the Sepulchre, where his Anceſtors lay interred.

Ver. 8. *In the thirty-eighth year of Azariah king of Judah, did Zachariah the ſon of Jeroboam reign over Iſrael in Samaria ſix months.*] Some are confident the Throne was vacant two and twenty Years between the Death of *Jeroboam* and the Inauguration of his Son; either through Wars from abroad (which *Jeroboam* might have provoked againſt his Houſe, by the Conqueſt of *Hamath* and *Damaſcus*) or through War at Home, which appears, they think, from this diſtaſtrous End of *Zachariah*, ver. 10. See Dr *Lightfoot* in his *Prologomena* to his *Harmony of the Evangeliſts*, Sect. 6. But there are few that follow this Opinion, though one moſt learned in theſe, as well as other things, (Dr *Alix*) thinks there was an *Interregnum* of twenty-four Years. If there be any Difficulty in this Account, moſt think it is ſufficiently ſolved, by ſaying, that it was the thirty-eighth Year, from the Time that *Azariah* began to reign with his Father.

Ver. 9. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin.*] Therefore God cut him off ſpeedily; the Time approaching, when he intended to put an End to the Kingdom of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 10. *And Shallum the ſon of Jabeſh conſpired againſt him, and ſmote him before the people, and ſlew him, and reigned in his ſtead.*] It is uncertain who this *Shallum* was, or what was the Pretence of his Conſpiracy, and of his poſſeſſing himſelf of the Throne; but it is pretty plain, I think, that he laid his Treaſon privately and ſecret (*ver.* 15.) and then made an open Aſſault upon the King's Perſon in the Face of all the People.

Ver. 11. *And the reſt of the acts of Zachariah, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael.*] We read of nothing that he did; therefore the Meaning is, that his Behaviour in the ſix Months Time wherein he reigned, how he managed Things, and provoked this Conſpiracy, are recorded elſewhere: The Author of this Book intending only to give a brief Account of the remaining Kings of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 12. *This was the word of the LORD which he ſpake to Jehu, ſaying, Thy ſons ſhall ſit on the throne of Iſrael, unto the fourth generation. And ſo it came to paſs.*] How unfaithful ſoever they proved to God, he faithfully kept his Promiſe which he made to *Jehu:* Whoſe Sons *Jehoahaz*, *Jehoaſh*, *Jeroboam*, and *Zachariah*, ſucceeded him in the Throne of *Iſrael*. But this *Shallum* put an End to that Family, and fulfilled the Prophecy of *Hoſea*, i. 4. *I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the houſe of Jehu, and will cauſe to ceaſe the kingdom of the houſe of Iſrael.*] For though *Jehu* had a Command from God to deſtroy the Houſe of *Ahab*, yet he did it with ſuch ill Affections, and for ſuch wrong Ends, that God avenged that Blood by this Man, who ſlew *Zachariah*, and the reſt of his Poſterity, if there were any. At leaſt, he made the Kingdom to ceaſe in this Family, and not long after in all *Iſrael*; who were rooted out, and never reſtored to their Country, as *Judah* was.

Ver. 13. *Shallum the ſon of Jabeſh began to reign in the nine and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah, and he reigned a full month in Samaria.*] We are not told how he reigned, but it is likely he followed the Steps of *Jeroboam*, who made *Iſrael* to ſin.

Ver. 14. *For Menahem the ſon of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and ſmote Shallum the ſon of Jabeſh in Samaria, and ſlew him, and reigned in his ſtead.*] *Joſephus* thinks *Menahem* was General of the Army of *Iſrael*, which beſieged *Tirzah* when *Zachariah* was ſlain. And he hearing what *Shallum* had done, came and ſerved him in his kind, and made himſelf King.

Ver. 15. *And the reſt of the acts of Shallum, and the conſpiracy which he made, behold they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael.*] A larger account was given of his Conſpiracy, and the Occaſion of it, and his Succeſs in it, in that Book; where ſome other memorable Acts, which it ſeems he did in a Month's Time, were recorded.

Ver. 16. *Then Menahem ſmote Tiphſah, and the coaſts thereof from Tirzan: becauſe they opened not to him, therefore he ſmote it,*] Some take this *Tiphſah* to be the ſame with that mentioned in 1 *Kings* iv. 24. But they lay upon the River *Euphrates*, whereas this was near to *Tirzah*; which was once the Royal City of *Iſrael:* To

the Siege of which, *Joſephus* thinks *Menahem* returned after the Slaughter of *Shallum*: Not as General of the Hoſt, but as their King. But they knowing he had no Title to the Kingdom, would not open their Gates to him. Therefore he took it by Force, and ſpoiled it, and all the Territory about it, 'till he came to *Tiphſah*, which he uſed more cruelly.

And all the women therein that were with child, he ript up.] By which Barbarity he thought to terrify the whole Kingdom, that none might dare to withſtand him.

Ver. 17. *In the thirty-ninth year of Azariah king of Judah, began Menahem the ſon of Gadi to reign over Iſrael, and reigned ten years in Samaria.*] He ſeems to have reigned with ſuch Fury, that none durſt oppoſe him; but he poſſeſſed the Throne ten Years before God cut him off.

Ver. 18. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD: *He departed not all his days from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin.*

Ver. 19. *And Pul the king of Aſſyria came againſt the land:*] That is, the Land of *Iſrael*. He was Governor of *Babylon*, who together with *Arbaces* the *Mede*, ſlew *Sardanapalus* the laſt of the *Aſſyrian* Kings, and tranſlated the Empire to the *Chaldæans*. For he reigned over *Babylon* and *Nineveh*, and *Arbaces* over the *Medes* and *Perſians*. He was the firſt King of *Aſſyria* that invaded *Iſrael*, and began their Tranſportation out of their own Country; as *Abarbinel* gathers from 1 *Chron.* v. 26. And this is the firſt Time that we find any mention of the Kingdom of *Aſſyria*, ſince the Days of *Nimrod*, who erected a ſmall Kingdom here, *Gen.* x. 11. And they were no great People, one would think, when the lxxiid *Pſalm* was penned, where they are reckoned as Auxiliaries to the Children of *Lot*, againſt the *Iſraelites*, together with other ſmall Nations: But now they had a great and powerful Empire.

And Menahem gave Pul a thouſand talents of ſilver, that his hand might be with him, to confirm the kingdom in his hand.] By this great Preſent he not only turned away the Army of *Pul* from him, but purchaſed his Friendſhip; ſo that he helped to eſtabliſh his Authority. Which was very tottering, by reaſon he was not only an Uſurper, but had exerciſed extream great Cruelty upon his People, which no doubt made him extreamly hated, *ver.* 10.

Ver. 20. *And Menahem exacted the money of Iſrael, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each fifty ſhekels of ſilver, to give to the king of Aſſyria:*] By this means, I ſuppoſe, he thought to ingratiate himſelf with the common People; upon whom he laid no Tax, but charged only the Rich, according to the Proportion of their Wealth. For the *Hebrew* Words do not import that he made every rich Man in *Iſrael* pay fifty Shekels; but that he gave to the King of *Aſſyria* ſo many Shekels for every Man, that is, for every one in his Army. So they run exactly, *to give to the king of Aſſyria fifty ſhekels of ſilver for each Man.*

So the king of Aſſyria turned back, and ſtayed not there in the land.] At that Time he departed; but it is likely he afterward returned, in the Reign of *Pekah*, and made the Depor tation before-mentioned.

Ver. 21. *And the reſt of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael?*

Ver. 22. *And Menahem ſlept with his fathers, and Pekahiah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] This ſhews him to have been a mighty Man, that notwithſtanding his Violence and Cruelty, he left the Kingdom in his Family: Which the two foregoing Kings could not do. But it is evident, there was an *Interregnum* of a Year between the Reign of *Menahem* and *Pekahiah*: For *Pekahiah* did not begin his Reign 'till the fiftieth Year of *Azariah* (as it here follows) and *Menahem* died the Year before; for he began to reign in the thirty-ninth of *Azariah* (ver. 17.) and reigned but ten Years.

Ver. 23. *In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekahiah the ſon of Menahem began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, and reigned two years.*] His reign was ſhort; both becauſe he himſelf was wicked, and his Father alſo was an Uſurper.

Ver. 24. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin.*] He was the wicked Son of a wicked Father; and ſo periſhed (as it here follows) by ſuch a Conſpiracy as his Father made againſt *Shallum*.

Ver. 25. *And Pekah the ſon of Remaliah, a captain of his, conſpired againſt him, and ſmote him in Samaria, in the palace of the kings houſe, with Arbob, and Arieth,*] Theſe were two valiant Men, who ſome think were in the Conſpiracy with him againſt *Pekahiah*. But *Abarbinel* rather thinks they were two eminent Courtiers, who were always about the King.

And with him fifty men of the Gileadites:] Who were his Guards, and perhaps aſſiſted him in his Treaſon.

And he killed him, and reigned in his ſtead.] He was a great Commander under *Pekahiah*; for the *Hebrew* Word *Shaliſh* ſignifies more than a bare *Captain*. Therefore *Joſephus* calls him a *Chiliarch*, or an Officer over a thouſand Men. And the Word carrying in it the Notion of *three*, ſome later Writers have therefore thought him to be the third Perſon in the Kingdom, next the King. No queſtion he was ſome conſiderable Perſon, who had Soldiers at his Command to execute his Deſigns.

Ver. 26. *And the reſt of the acts of Pekahiah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael.*

Ver. 27. *In the fifty-ſecond year of Azariah king of Judah, Pekah the ſon of Remaliah began to reign over Iſrael in Samaria, and reigned twenty years.*] This is the fifth King that reigned over *Iſrael* during the reign of *Azariah* King of *Judah*.

Ver. 28. *He did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *he departed not from the ſins of Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin.*

Ver. 29. *In the days of Pekah king of Iſrael,*] In the laſt Year of his Reign, as the *Jews* ſay in *Seder Olam Rabba*.

Came Tiglath-Pileſer king of Aſſyria,] He was the Son of *Pul*, and is called by other Authors *Pul*, or *Phul-Aſſur*, and here *Tiglath-Pul-Aſſur*: The

The former Part of this Name being taken from the River *Tigris*, which is called by the Inhabitants *Diglito:* From whoſe Borders this King came.

And took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah,] Two ſtrong Towns mentioned 1 *Kings* xv. 20. See there.

And Janoah, a city in the tribe of Ephraim,] Joſh. xvi. 6.

And Kedeſh, and Hazor,] Which were in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *Joſh.* xii. 22. xix. 36.

And Gilead,] Which was on the other Side *Jordan.*

And Galilee, all the land of Naphtali,] The upper *Galilee*; which was poſſeſſed by this Tribe, and by *Zebulun.*

And carried them captive to Aſſyria.] This was the ſecond Deportation of the ten Tribes; the firſt being made by *Pul*, as I ſaid before, who carried away the two Tribes and half beyond *Jordan*; and this ſecond was made by his Son, who carried away two other Tribes. Then nine Years after, followed a third in the Days of the next King (xviii. 9.) when the Remainder of the ten Tribes were carried away from their own Land. The Tribe of *Judah* ſtill remained; but about eight Years after the former, Part of that was carried away by *Sennacherib*, when he took all their fenced Cities, xviii. 13. which with reſpect to the whole Country, the *Jews* call the fourth Deportation. Then a fifth followed, xxiv. 15. and a ſixth, xxv. 1, &c. The laſt is mentioned, xxv. 25. Thus they are reckoned up by *Abarbinel*; and in this ſecond (the *Jews* ſay in *Seder Olam Rabba*) *Tiglath-Pileſer* carried away the Golden Calf which was in *Dan.* But ſee a more exact Account of *Judah*'s Captivity in Mr. *Whiſton*'s learned *Chronology* of the Old Teſtament, *p.* 52.

Ver. 30. *And Hoſhea the ſon of Elah made a conſpiracy againſt Pekah the ſon of Remaliah,*] Who *Hoſhea* was, or what was the Ground of his Conſpiracy, is not recorded; but we may ſuppoſe it to have been, becauſe he governed ill, and by his cruel War with *Judah* had brought the King of *Aſſyria* upon his own Kingdom (2 *Chron.* xxviii. 16.) and thereby loſt a great Part of it.

And ſmote him, and ſlew him,] As *Pekah* had ſerved *Pekahiah.*

And reigned in his ſtead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the king of Judah. Theſe Words create a Difficulty; for it is ſaid, *ver.* 33. that *Jotham* reigned but ſixteen Years. Which *Seder Olam Rabba* thus reconciles (for none can think any Writer whatſoever would ſo ſoon contradict himſelf) that this Conſpiracy was begun in the latter End of *Jotham*'s Reign, but not put in Execution 'till four Years after his Death. So that theſe Words are to be underſtood as if he had ſaid, *Twenty years after Jotham began to reign over Judah Pekah was ſlain.* Dr *Lightfoot* gives another Account of it; that the Wickedneſs of *Ahaz* was ſo great, that the holy Writer would not mention him on this Occaſion, but rather ſpeaks of his good Father, as if he were yet alive, in which he follows *R. Solomon Jarchi.* But this hath no ſhew of Truth in it; ſince ſo much is ſaid of *Ahaz* in the following Part of this Hiſtory. A late very Learned Writer (in his *Short View of the Chronology of the Old Teſtament*, p. 47.) hath given a better Account of it, in theſe Words, *Becauſe there had been yet no mention made of Ahaz's Reign, therefore the old Epocha of his Predeceſſor Jotham is ſtill made uſe of.* But the plain Truth is, that *Jotham* reigned four Years with his Father *Azariah.*

Ver. 31. *And the reſt of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Iſrael.*] In that Book which is now called by the Name of *Chronicles* his War with *Judah* is recorded, 2 *Chron.* xxviii.

Ver. 32. *In the ſecond year of Pekah the ſon of Remaliah king of Iſrael, began Jotham the ſon of Uzziah king of Judah to reign.*] Why he ſhould be all along called *Azariah*, and here only *Uzziah*, and *ver.* 34. no Account can be given; unleſs it were to ſhew he had two Names, as I obſerved, *ver.* 1. And it appears by the Book of *Chronicles* that *Uzziah* was as much uſed, when that Book was written, as the other.

Ver. 35. *Twenty five years old was he when he began to reign,*] Alone by himſelf; for he reigned ſome Time with his Father during his Leproſy. See Dr *Lightfoot* in his *Prolegom.* to the *Harm. of the Evang.* Sect. 6.

And he reigned ſixteen years in Jeruſalem: and his mothers name was Jeruſha, the daughter of Zadok.] It is not ſaid of what Place, as is uſual: This *Zadok* being ſo well known, that there was no need to ſet down his Dwelling.

Ver. 34. *And he did that which was right in the ſight of the* LORD:] ὅσα τοῦ δικαίου ἄρχοντος ἀπελείπετο he wanted no Virtue belonging to a good Prince, as *Joſephus* writes (Lib. 9. *Antiq.* Chap. 11.) being, ſaith he, *pious towards God, juſt towards Men, and ſtudious of the publick Good.*

He did according to all that is his father Uzziah had done.] That is, according to all the good he had done; but did not imitate him in invading the Prieſts Office.

Ver. 35. *Howbeit, the high places were not removed: the people ſacrificed and burnt incenſe ſtill in the high places:*

He built the high gate of the houſe of the LORD.] which was between the Houſe of the King, and the Houſe of the LORD, xviii. 20. It was built by *Solomon*; but this King added a noble Structure to it.

Ver. 36. *Now the reſt of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] See 2 *Chron.* xxvii.

Ver. 37. (*In thoſe days the* LORD *began to ſend againſt Judah, Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah the ſon of Remaliah.*)] Theſe two Kings entred into a Confederacy againſt *Judah*, and made Preparations for War before *Jotham* died; but he was ſo happy as to be laid in his Grave in Peace; their Deſign being not executed 'till the Reign of the next King.

Ver. 38. *And Jotham ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father, and Ahaz his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*

CHAP. VI.

Verſe 1. IN *the ſeventeenth year of Pekah the ſon of Remaliah, Ahaz the ſon of Jotham king of Judah began to reign.*

Ver. 2. *Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jeruſalem,*] He was a little more than twenty Years old. See upon xviii. 2.

And did not that which was right in the ſight of the LORD *his God, like David his father.*] As might have been expected from the good Education which, no doubt, ſo pious a Man as *Jotham* his Father gave him; who left him an excellent Example.

Ver. 3. *But he walked in the ways of the kings of Iſrael, yea, and made his ſon to paſs through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the* LORD *caſt out before the children of Iſrael.*] He was far worſe than any of the preceding Kings of *Iſrael*; for he imitated thoſe abominable Idolaters, whom God rooted out of the Land of *Canaan*. Who it is moſt certain ſometimes burnt their Children in the Fire, as Sacrifices to their Gods, *Deut.* xii. 31. and the Children of *Iſrael* it is certain imitated them, *Ezek.* xvi. 20, 21. *Ezek.* xxxiii. 37, and 39. But whether *Ahaz* did that, or only made his Son paſs through the Fire by Way of Luſtration (as they called it) cannot be determined. It is no Argument that he did not offer him as a burnt Sacrifice, becauſe *Hezekiah* out-lived him; for he had more Sons, it is likely, than him. See concerning this horrible Impiety, what I have noted upon *Levit.* xviii. 21. and upon *Deut.* xviii. 10.

Ver. 4. *And he ſacrificed and burnt incenſe in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree.*] He added this to all his other Sins (of conſecrating his Son to *Moloch* by paſſing him through the Fire, if not offering him in Sacrifice) that he himſelf ſacrificed in high Places, and on Hills, and under every green Tree; by his Example incouraging this Practice, which other Kings had only tolerated. So we read, that People ſacrificed in high Places, even in good Kings Reigns, xii. 3. xiv. 4. xv. 4, &c. But as they ſacrificed to God in thoſe Reigns, ſo we never read 'till now that any of thoſe Kings ſacrificed there themſelves, as this King did; who not meerly ſuffered this, but gave Countenance to it by his own Practice, and thereby ſtrengthened this Licence of private ſacrificing, contrary to the Law of God; and which was worſt of all, ſacrificing to other Gods; it being very probable that he fancied ſome Deity to inhabit under every well-ſpread flouriſhing Tree.

Ver. 5. *Then Rezin king of Syria, and Pekah ſon of Remaliah king of Iſrael, came up to Jeruſalem to war: and they beſieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him.*] This ſeems not to agree with 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 5, &c. where theſe two Princes are repreſented as getting great Victories over him. To which *Abarbinel* anſwers, that theſe things hapened at different Times. For the Wars mentioned in the Book of *Chronicles* were made ſeverally by theſe two Kings, wherein they proſpered; being the Miniſters of Divine Providence. But when now they joined their Forces together, and not only came againſt other Cities, but againſt *Jeruſalem*, God was pleaſed to make them miſcarry.

Ver. 6 *And at that time Rezin king of Syria,*] When he broke up the Siege of *Jeruſalem*, upon Intelligence he received that *Tiglath-pileſer* was coming to its Relief.

Reſtored Elath to Syria,] This was a conſiderable Port upon the Red-Sea.

And drove the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there to this day.] This City had been recovered to the Dominion of *Judah* by *Azariah*, xiv. 22. who took it from the *Syrians*; who now took it from them again, that they might not quite loſe the Fruit of their Expedition againſt *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 7. *So Ahaz ſent meſſengers to Tiglath-pileſer king of Aſſyria,*] There is a learned Man of our own, who hath lately given another Account of the Name of *Pileſer*, than that abovementioned, xv. 29. For he thinks it is compounded of the Names of two of their Gods; *Pil* being the ſame with *Bel*, and *Azer* or *Azar* was the Name of a Planet worſhipped by the *Perſians*, viz. *Mars*: And they much affected to have the Names of their Gods in their own Names; which was a common thing alſo among the *Jews*: For which Reaſon the Name of *Tiglath* was added, which was the Name of *Tygris* (as I obſerved before) which, as all great beneficial Rivers, Mountains, and Trees, were accounted ſacred among the Heathen. See Dr *Hyde Hiſtor. Relig. Vet. Perſar.* Cap. 3.

Saying, I am thy ſervant and thy ſon: come up, and ſave me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Iſrael, which riſe up againſt me.] He not only put himſelf and all he had into his Protection; but made himſelf his Subject, to hold all he had of him by his Favour. For that is the Meaning of *I am thy ſervant and thy ſon*; that is, he was content to be his Vaſſal, if he would be his Protector.

Ver. 8. *And Ahaz took the ſilver and the gold that was found in the houſe of the* LORD, *and in the treaſures of the kings houſe, and ſent it for a preſent to the king of Aſſyria.*] Theſe Treaſures had been ſent ſome Years ago by *Jehoaſh* to the King of *Syria*, xii. 18. but it ſeems they were well repleniſhed again by the Piety of his Succeſſors, *Amaziah*, *Azariah*, but eſpecially *Jotham*.

Ver. 9. *And the king of Aſſyria hearkned unto him: for the king of Aſſyria went up againſt Damaſcus, and took it,*] It is very uncertain when King *Ahaz* ſent to deſire this Help. If it was when they were preparing to beſiege *Jeruſalem*, it was the Effect of his great Infidelity; for God had been ſo gracious to him, as to promiſe by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, that thoſe Kings ſhould do him no Hurt (*Iſa.* vii. 4.) giving him a Sign alſo to ſtrengthen his Faith. Others think, it was after the King of *Syria* and the King of *Iſrael* had miſerably harraſſed *Ahaz*'s Country, though they could not take *Jeruſalem*, as we read 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 5, 6, &c. Whenſoever it was, the King of *Aſſyria* gave a powerful Diverſion to the King of *Syria*, invading his Country, and beſieging the chief City of it, of which he made himſelf Maſter.

And carried the people of it captive to Kir,] A Place in the Country of the upper *Media*, as *Joſephus* tells us: From whence he brought ſome People, to plant in *Damaſcus*.

And

And ſlew Rezin.] Who was the laſt of their Kings; for the *Syrians* never got up again, as the *Jews* obſerve in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 20. Whether he was legal Succeſſor to *Ben-hadad* the Son of *Hazael*, or an Uſurper, is not certain.

Ver. 10. *And king Ahaz went to Damaſcus to meet Tiglath-pileſer king of Aſſyria,*] To compliment him upon his Succeſs; and perhaps to do him Homage, and to requeſt him to do as much againſt *Pekah*, as he had done againſt *Rezin*. For ſome think that after this he went and took all thoſe Places from *Iſrael*, which are mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 29. And after all he fell upon *Judah* it ſelf, and made great Spoil there alſo, as is ſuggeſted in 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 20, 21.

And he ſaw an altar that was in Damaſcus:] A beautiful Altar, both for the Matter and Form of it.

And king Ahaz ſent to Urijah the prieſt the faſhion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanſhip thereof.] Not only the Height, and Breadth, and Shape of it; but all the Carvings, I ſuppoſe, with the Figures and Images wherewith it was adorned.

Ver. 11. *And Urijah the prieſt built an altar, according to all that king Ahaz had ſent from Damaſcus: ſo Urijah the prieſt made it againſt the king came from Damaſcus.*] He took Care to have it done exactly according to the Pattern; directly contrary to the Command of God, who had appointed what kind of Altar he would have (*Exod.* xxvii. 1, 2, &c.) and that no other ſhould be made of any Matter or Figure whatſoever. But there are always ſome Men to be found that will comply with the moſt wicked Commands.

Ver. 12. *And when the king was come from Damaſcus, the king ſaw the altar:*] That is, liked it, and approved of it, as perfectly made agreeable to his Mind.

And the king approached to the altar, and offered thereon.] The Morning Sacrifice: Which he was ſo preſumptuous, perhaps, as to offer himſelf. But not to God; for we are told expreſsly, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 23, that he ſacrificed to the Gods of *Damaſcus*. A wonderful Blindneſs! To worſhip thoſe Gods, and expect Help from them, who could not preſerve their own Country from Ruin.

Ver. 13. *And he burnt his burnt-offering,*] Some underſtand it, that he burnt it with Spices.

And his meat-offering, and poured his drink-offering, and ſprinkled the blood of his peace-offerings upon the altar.] Theſe were all preſcribed by the Law of *Moſes:* But he offered them in a wrong Place, and unto other Gods.

Ver. 14. *And he brought alſo the brazen altar that was before the* LORD, *from the fore-front of the houſe; from between the altar and the houſe of the* LORD, *and put it on the north ſide of the altar.*] By theſe Words, it is plain that *Urijah* had a little more Modeſty than *Ahaz:* For he had placed *Ahaz* his Altar behind the Altar of the LORD, between it and the Eaſt-gate of the Court of the Prieſts. But when *Ahaz* came, he removed *Solomon*'s Altar out of its Place, which was before the Sanctuary, and ſet it toward the North-ſide of the Court; that he might bring up his own, and ſet it there, where the Altar of the LORD had ſtood. See Dr *Lightfoot* of *the Temple*, Chap. 34, latter End.

Ver. 15. *And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the prieſt, ſaying, Upon the great altar,*] Which he had now erected in the Place of God's Altar.

Burn the morning burnt-offering, and the evening meat-offering, and the kings burnt-ſacrifice, and his meat-offering, with the burnt-offerings of all the people of the land, and their meat-offerings, and their drink-offerings, and ſprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt-offering, and all the blood of the ſacrifice:] He makes a ſolemn Injunction, that all the publick Sacrifices, of what Sort ſoever they were, whether made by himſelf, or by the People, ſhould be conſtantly offered upon his Altar. Which he calls *the great altar*, becauſe it was much bigger, I ſuppoſe, than the Altar of God.

And the brazen altar ſhall be for me to enquire by.] He would not have it thought that he intended wholly to lay aſide the Altar made by *Solomon:* But rather to do it great Honour, by reſerving it for his own private Uſe; when he pleaſed to enquire of God by it. But there being no Mention of the Name of the LORD, ſome think the Meaning is no more, but that he would have it ſtand where he had ſet it, 'till he conſidered what to do with it: And they fancy that he made the famous Dial of *Ahaz* with the Braſs of it. So they underſtand the *Hebrew* Words *il lebaker*, I will take Care of it, and order what ſhall be done with it. And therefore, according to this Interpretation, he laid it quite aſide. But the other ſeems more agreeable to the *Hebrew* Phraſe, *it ſhall be to me to enquire*, or *ſeek*, or *pray:* A private Altar for his proper Uſe: Whereby he pretended to have ſtill ſome Regard to it, though he had degraded it.

Ver. 16. *So did Urijah the prieſt, according to all that king Ahaz commanded.*] Whatſoever good Inclinations he had, they were all overruled by the Commands of the King, with which he entirely complied.

Ver. 17. *And king Ahaz cut off the borders of the baſes,*] See 1 *Kings* vii. 28, 29.

And removed the laver from off them, and took down the ſea from off the brazen oxen that were under it, and put it upon a pavement of ſtones.] This was done out of Contempt, that the Sea might not appear ſo great and ſtately, nor be ſo uſeful to the Prieſts, as it was before. For he intended quite to aboliſh, not only to deface the Service of God at the Temple. So we read in 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 24, that he *ſhut up the doors of the houſe of God*, that none ſhould worſhip there.

Ver. 18. *And the covert for the ſabbath that they had built in the houſe,*] There is a vaſt Variety of Opinions concerning this *Muſach* (which we tranſlate *Covert*) and why it is called the *Covert for the Sabbath*. The moſt probable is, that it was a covered Place, where the King ſat in the Porch of the Temple, or at the Entrance of it, upon the *Sabbath*, or other great Solemnities, which were called by that Name. Thus *Procopius Gazæus*. This *Ahaz* took away, intending not to trouble himſelf to come to the Temple; but to ſacrifice any where:

In

In every *corner of Jeruſalem*, and in the *ſeveral cities of Judah*, which he would have be thought as holy as *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 24, 25. And it is a probable Conjecture of a very learned Man of our own, that *Ahaz* did this to expreſs his Hatred and Contempt of the *Sabbath*: For the Worſhip of Idols, and Violation of the Sabbath, are frequently joined together in Scripture, eſpecially in *Ezekiel* xx. 16. xxii. 8, 9. xxiv. 37, 38, and in a remarkable Place in the *Maccabees*, i. 44. See *Spencer de Leg. Hebræor.* Lib. 1. Cap. 1. 12.

And the kings entry without, turned he from the houſe of the LORD,] The Paſſage through which the King came from his own Houſe to the Temple, he turned another Way.

For the king of Aſſyria.] That he might ingratiate himſelf with him, by contemning his own Country Religion, and approaching nearer to his. But *Procopius* takes it the quite contrary Way, that he did this *for fear of the king of Aſſyria.* Which moved him to make a ſhorter Paſſage into the Houſe of the LORD, that he might flee thither inſtantly for Safety, in caſe of any Danger. Which is not probable, becauſe he profaned it, and ſhut up the Doors of it.

Ver. 10. *Now the reſt of of the acts of Ahaz, which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 20. *And Ahaz ſlept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David, and Hezekiah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*

CHAP. XVII.

Verſe 1. *IN the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah, began Hoſhea the ſon of Elah to reign in Samaria over Iſrael nine years.*] This doth not agree with xv. 30, where it is ſaid he began to reign in the twentieth Year of *Jotham*, which was the fourth of *Ahaz*. To this *Ralbag*, thinks it ſufficient to ſay, that 'till the twelfth Year of *Ahaz* he was but a Servant of the King of *Aſſyria*; nor was reputed a King, but only a Governour under him. And ſo *Abarbinel*. And it is no improbable Conjecture of Dr *Lightfoot*'s, that *Ahaz* gave him a great deal of Trouble, after the Death of *Pekah*, in Revenge of the Slaughters he had made in *Judah*: So that he kept *Hoſhea* out of the Throne a great while, and upon this Account is called the King of *Iſrael* (2 *Chron.* xxviii. 19.) as well as becauſe he walked in the Ways of thoſe Kings. Our learned Chronologer Mr *Whiſton* thinks there was an *Interregnum* for the Space of full twelve Years, from the Death of *Jeroboam* the ſecond. Which he takes to be moſt probable, and almoſt certain, from thoſe Words of *Hoſea*, who propheſied in that King's Time, *Now* (or e'er long) *they ſhall ſay, we have no king, becauſe we feared not the Lord, what then ſhould a king do to us? Hoſhea* x. 3. See his ſhort View of the Chronology of the Old Teſtament, p. 48.

And he reigned in Samaria over Iſrael nine years.] *Viz.* after his peaceable Poſſeſſion of the Throne. For from the Time that he pretended to it, upon the Slaughter of *Pekah*, he reigned ſeventeen or eighteen Years; *viz.* twelve in the Time of *Ahaz*, who reigned ſixteen Years; and ſix in the Time of *Hezekiah*, xviii. 10.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *but not as the kings of Iſrael that were before him.*] For he did not hinder his People from going to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*: But, as the *Hebrew* Doctors ſay, took away the Guard that *Jeroboam* ſet in the Paſſage, to keep Men from going to the ſolemn Feaſts there. And one of the golden Calves being carried away captive, his Devotion, it is likely, was not great for the other remaining. And yet notwithſtanding, God exterminated *Iſrael* in his Days: To ſhew (ſaith *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 22.) that it was not meerly for the Sake of their Kings, upon whom the *Iſraelites* caſt all the Blame of their Depravation, that they were carried captive. See *ver.* 17, 18, 19, *&c.*

Ver. 3. *Againſt him came up Shalmaneſer king of Aſſyria,*] Some take this to be but another Name for *Tiglath-pileſer*. For which I find no Ground, and rather think *Shalmaneſer* was his Son, and Succeſſor in the Kingdom of *Aſſyria.*

And Hoſhea became his ſervant, and gave him preſents.] Made himſelf a Tributary to him; and preſented him with Gifts in token of his Subjection to him, and as an Earneſt of his future Obedience.

Ver. 4. *And the king of Aſſyria found conſpiracy in Hoſhea: for he had ſent meſſengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no preſents to the king of Aſſyria, as he had done year by year:*] He deſigned to ſhake off his Yoke, and be no longer his Subject, as he found by two undeniable Evidences. Firſt, that he had ſent to treat with the King of *Egypt*; and denied him the uſual Tribute, which he was bound to pay him every Year. St *Hierom* calls this King of *Egypt*, *Sua*, and *Joſephus* calls him *Soan*, and the LXX *Segor*, who is the ſame with the famous *Sabacon*, an *Ethiopian* mentioned by *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Herodotus*. See Sir *J. Marſham*, Can. Chron. §. xvi, and our famous *Uſher* in his *Annals*, vid. A. 3989.

Therefore the king of Aſſyria ſhut up, and bound him in priſon.] He firſt beſieged *Samaria*, and when he had taken it, made him a cloſe Priſoner: The Hiſtory of which follows.

Ver. 5. *Then the king of Aſſyria went up throughout all the land,*] He firſt poſſeſſed himſelf of the Country of *Moab* (as the ſame great *Primate* obſerves) that he might leave no Enemies at his Back; and deſtroyed their two chief Cities, *Ar* and *Kir-hares*, according to the Prediction of *Iſaiah*, xvi. *ver.* 1. and the laſt: And then he invaded the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, and poſſeſſed himſelf of it.

And went up to Samaria, and beſieged it three years.] *Joſephus* rightly obſerves two Expeditions of this King againſt the Land of *Iſrael*. Firſt, when he made *Hoſhea* Tributary to him; and now, when he made himſelf Maſter of the whole Country, and beſieged the capital City, Lib. 9. *Antiq.* Cap. 13.

Ver. 6. *In the ninth year of Hoſhea, the king of Aſſyria took Samaria, and carried Iſrael away into Aſſyria, and placed them in Halah, and in*

Habor, by the river of Gozan,] There is no Reason that any should imagine these *Israelites* were carried into *Colchis*, *Iberia*, *Armenia* the less, and the farthest *Scythia*, when the Scripture saith so expressly that they were carried into *Assyria*, and the Cities of the *Medes*: And when the very Places are to be found into which they are said here to be carried in those Countries, *viz. Chalat*, and *Chabor*, and *Gozan*: For what was *Chalach* (as *Bochartus* observes) but *Ptolemy*'s *Chalachena*, or the North of *Assyria*: And *Chabor* is plainly enough the same with his χαβώρας, a Mountain between *Media* and *Assyria*. Between which Mountain and the *Caspian* Sea there is the City *Gauzania*, that is *Gozan*, between the two Channels of the River *Cyrus*.

And in the cities of the Medes.] Whither *Tiglath-Pileser* had carried others of them out of *Galilee*.

Ver. 7. *For so it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the* LORD *their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had served other Gods.*] This they had done a long Time: For from the Beginning of *Jeroboam*'s Schism to the carrying *Israel* captive was two hundred and sixty-three Years.

Ver. 8. *And walked in the statutes of the heathen (whom God had cast out from before the children of Israel)*] Of the *Amorites* and other impious People; whom he expelled from the Land of *Canaan*, to make room for them.

And of the kings of Israel, which they had made.] *Viz.* the golden Calves, whose Worship the kings of *Israel* had ordained, to keep them from going up to worship God at *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 9. *And the children of Israel did secretly those things which were not right, against the* LORD *their God*;] Besides the publick Impiety authorized by their Kings, they privately exercised Idolatry, according to their own Fancy.

And they built them high places in all their cities,] They were not content to worship upon Hills and Mountains, but they raised high Places in all Cities to offer Sacrifice.

From the tower of the watchmen to the fenced cities.] In all Places, both those that were desert, and those that were inhabited; or both in the Country, and in the City. For the *Tower of the watchmen* are thought to be those little Houses which the Country People built, wherein to watch their Flocks and their Fruits, and preserve them from wild Beasts or Robbers.

Ver. 10. *And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Asherim*, which we translate *Groves*, should be rendered Idols of that Name, as *Selden* hath observed, *Syntag. de Diis Syris*, 2. Cap. 2. Where he plainly demonstrates this Word doth not signify the Grove, but the *Numen* or *Deity* placed in the Grove. For how should Groves *be set under every green Tree?* as it is here said the *Asherim* were. And thus *Kimchi* said in the Root *Ashur*, that every wooden Thing that was worshipped, was called *Asherah*. And *Procopius Gazæus* observes, that this Word which the LXX here translate ἄλση Groves, others every where translate Ἀσταρώθ, which Word, saith he, Δηλοῖ τὴν Ἀστάρτην, Ἀφροδίτην, denotes *Astarte*, that is *Venus*.

Ver. 11. *And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen, whom the* LORD *carried away before them, and wrought wicked things to provoke the* LORD *to anger.*] For, as the Son of *Syrac* expresses it, *they sought out all wickedness, 'till the vengeance came upon them.* See *Ecclus* xlvii. ult.

Ver. 12. *For they served idols, whereof the* LORD *had said unto them, ye shall not do these things.*] They worshipped many other Gods, which were meer Idols, against the express Command of God, *Exod.* xx. 23. *Deut.* iv. 15, 16, &c.

Ver. 13. *Yet the* LORD *testified against Israel and Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers,*] I have before noted, that *Abarbinel* in his Commentary on these Books, hath observed one or more Prophets that were in every King's Reign, both in *Israel* and *Judah*, from the Time of *Saul* to *Zedekiah*, in whose Time *Jerusalem* was laid desolate. These admonished them of their Duty, as it here follows, and endeavoured to preserve them in God's true Religion, or to recover them when they apostatized from it; particularly in the Days of this very King, when *Israel* was carried captive, they had the Prophets, *Hosea*, *Amos*, *Isaiah*, and *Micah*: And in the Days of the last King when *Judah* was carried captive, they had *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*.

Saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments, and my statutes, according to all the laws which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.] As he had given them his Laws by *Moses*; so he continued a Succession of Prophets after him, whom he sent to call upon them to observe these Laws.

Ver. 14. *Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like the neck of their fathers,*] A Metaphor taken from refractory Oxen, that will not bow down their Necks to the Yoke. Even so the *Israelites* refused to submit to the Yoke of God's Laws.

That did not believe in the LORD *their God.*] This was the Original of all the Sins they committed: They did not believe God's Prophets, but hearkened to Deceivers.

Ver. 15. *And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them,*] By his Servants the Prophets.

And they followed vanities,] So Idols are called, which, as the Apostle speaks, are *nothing*; having no Power to do either Hurt or Good.

And became vain,] Like the Idols they worshipped; senseless, sottish, and good for nothing.

And went after the heathen that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD *had charged them, that they should not do like them.*] *Exod.* xxiii. 24, 32, and many other Places.

Ver. 16. *And they left all the commandments of the* LORD *their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made a grove,*] The making a Grove was a greater Impiety than is commonly imagined. For in their Groves they worshipped *Baalim*, as appears from *Judges* iii. 7; that is, Heroes, to whom those Groves were conse-

conſecrated, being their Sepulchre. And here many filthy Rites were practiſed, in Honour of *Venus*, *Bacchus*, and ſuch like Deities.

And worſhipped all the hoſt of heaven, and ſerved Baal.] They grew worſe and worſe, not contenting themſelves with the Worſhip of the two Calves, *&c.* but worſhipped the Stars of Heaven (againſt which *Moſes* had given them a particular Caution, *Deut.* iv. 19.) *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Venus*, and the *Moon*, but eſpecially *Baal*, which was the Sun.

Ver. 17. *And they cauſed their ſons and their daughters to paſs through the fire, and uſed divination and inchantments,*] Which were the moſt abominable Sins of the Heathen. See *Lev.* xviii. 21. xix. 26. xx. 2, 3, *&c.* and *Deut.* xviii. 10. and upon *ver.* 3. of the foregoing Chapter.

And ſold themſelves to do evil in the ſight of the LORD, *to provoke him to anger.*] They were ſo induſtrious to do wickedly, and ſo inceſſant in it, as if they had been Slaves that were ſold to that Drudgery.

Ver. 18. *Therefore the* LORD *was very angry with Iſrael, and removed them out of his ſight,*] From the Holy Land, where his Temple was, in which he dwelt among them.

'Till there was none left, but the tribe of Judah only.] Unto whom adhered part of *Benjamin* and the *Levites:* Who, as it here follows, imitated the Wickedneſs of *Iſrael*; but yet had ſome Mixture of good Kings among them. Whereas all the Kings of *Iſrael* perſiſted in the Sins of *Jeroboam:* And therefore before their Removal out of their Land, they ſuffered great Calamities, no leſs than nine of their Kings being killed (as *Abarbinel* notes) before their laſt King was carried Captive.

Ver. 19. *Alſo Judah kept not the commandments of the* LORD *their God, but walked in the ſtatutes of Iſrael which they made.*] Followed the idolatrous Devices of the ten Tribes; as they did moſt notoriouſly in the loſt Reign of *Ahaz*. Whoſe Son *Hezekiah* indeed made a noble Reformation; but it laſted no longer than his Time; ſo extreamly was this Nation corrupted.

Ver. 20. *And the* LORD *rejected*] With Loathing and Abhorrence, as the Word imports.

All the houſe of Iſrael,] The whole ten Tribes.

And afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of ſpoilers, until he had caſt them out of his ſight.] See x. 32, 33. xiii. 3, 7.

Ver. 21. *For he rent Iſrael from the houſe of David,*] Here was the Foundation of their Ruin.

And he made Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat their king; and Jeroboam drave Iſrael from following the LORD, *and made Iſrael ſin a great ſin.*] Of which he was the Author; but they were too forward to comply with him.

Ver. 22. *For the children of Iſrael walked in all the ſins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them:*] They were ſo inclined to Idolatry, that a long Succeſſion of God's Judgments upon them could not reclaim them.

Ver. 23. *Until the* LORD *removed Iſrael out of his ſight, as he had ſaid by all his ſervants the prophets.*] Unto whoſe Admonitions and Threatnings they had no Regard.

So was Iſrael carried away out of their own land to Aſſyria, unto this day.] As they *ſold themſelves to do evil*, (*ver.* 17.) ſo God delivered them up to be Slaves to thoſe whoſe Gods they had worſhipped, *ver.* 16, 17.

Ver. 24. *And the king of Aſſyria brought men.*] This was not done by *Shalmaneſer*, but by his Son *Eſer-haddon*, *Ezra* iv. 2.

From Babylon,] Which was then ſubject to the King of *Aſſyria*; but not long after revolted.

And from Cuthah,] A City of *Chaldæa*, as *Abarbinel* expounds it. And ſo doth our Dr *Hyde* out of ſeveral *Perſian* Writers, *Hiſt. Relig. Vet. Perſ.* Cap. 2. But it rather here ſignifies a Country called *Cuſh* alſo (which perhaps had its Name from the forenamed City) from whence the greateſt Part of this Colony being brought, the People in after-times were called *Cuthæi*. For the ſame Author truly obſerves that the Country called *Cuſh* was in the *Babyloniſh* Dialect (afterwards called the *Chaldæan*) called *Cuth*. For they were wont to change the Letter *Schin* into *Thau*. In this Country, in the Land of *Shinar*, *Chuſh* firſt ſettled; and his Poſterity ſpread itſelf into *Arabia*.

And from Ava,] The *Avites* were a very ancient People, who were driven by the *Caphtorim* out of *Hazerim*; and went and ſettled beyond *Euphrates*. See upon *Deut.* ii. 23.

And from Hamath,] This was a City of *Syria*, on the Borders of *Canaan*; which was now ſubject to the King of *Aſſyria* by a late Conqueſt of it, xvi. 9.

And from Sepharvaim,] There is a City called *Siphara*, on the Side of which the River *Euphrates* runs, not far from the Sea. From this Mixture of Nations it was, that afterward there happened ſuch a Confuſion of Laws, and Manners, and Rites of Religion, as was in this Country.

And placed them in the cities of Samaria, inſtead of the children of Iſrael; and they poſſeſſed Samaria,] That is, the whole Country, wherein the ten Tribes formerly dwelt.

And dwelt in the cities thereof.] Which were not deſtroyed, I ſuppoſe, but left ſtanding, with a Deſign to ſend new Inhabitants into them.

Ver. 25. *And it was ſo, at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the* LORD: *therefore the* LORD *ſent lions among them, which ſlew ſome of them.*] And did not the *Iſraelites* alſo want the Fear of the LORD, as *Abarbinel* here notes, and yet were not devoured by Lions? To which he anſwers, that though the *Iſraelites* alſo ſerved Idols, yet they did not deny the Divine Power and Providence; but imagined theſe Idols to be the intermediate Cauſes by which the Divine Influences might be conveyed unto them: For it is plain *Jeroboam* did not deny the LORD, (1 *Kings* xiii. 6.) but acknowledged his Power. But theſe new Inhabitants believed the Idols which they worſhipped to be true Gods; and therefore were deſtroyed by Lions, becauſe they did not acknowledge the Power and Providence of God over all inferior Beings, whoſe Land this was; and hereby he vindicated his ancient Inheritance and Poſſeſſion to himſelf.

Ver. 26. *Wherefore they ſpake unto the king of Aſſyria, ſaying, The nations which thou haſt removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land; therefore he hath ſent lions among them, and behold, they ſlay them; becauſe they know not the manner of the God of the land.*] They took the God of *Iſrael* to be of the ſame kind with their own, who affected a particular Country and People, and would be honoured with peculiar Rites, which were acceptable to him, and none elſe. The *Syrians* had the ſame Conceit of *Topical* Gods, as I obſerved upon 1 *Kings* xx. 23. and ſee below, xviii. 35.

Ver. 27. *Then the king of Aſſyria commanded, ſaying, Carry thither one of the prieſts, whom ye brought from thence, and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.*] The *Jews* in *Pirke Elieſer*, Cap. 38, tell the Story thus; that the King of *Aſſyria* called the Elders of *Iſrael* together, and ſaid: All the while you dwelt in the Land of *Samaria*, it was not infeſted with Lions; what is the Reaſon that my People are devoured by them? To which they anſwered, Our Lord the King, this Land will not receive any uncircumciſed Nation; Let two of you go then, replied the King, and circumciſe them, and teach them the Book of the Law. So *R. Doſithæus*, and *R. Zechariah* were ſent, who did the Buſineſs. Here they make bold to go beyond the Scripture, in making two great Doctors to have been ſent, when there was but one. Though it is very probable there were ſome Aſſociates who accompanied this principal Prieſt. For the Text ſaith, when the King bad them *carry one of the Prieſts* thither, he added, and *let them* dwell there. Which ſignifies he did not go alone: Though he alone was to teach them, as it follows, *the manner of the God of the land.*

Ver. 28. *Then one of the prieſts whom they had carried away from Samaria, came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they ſhould fear the LORD.*] That is, how they ſhould worſhip and ſerve him. From whence many learned Men conclude, that he brought the Book of the Law with him, without which he could not fully inſtruct them how to worſhip God, and govern themſelves: Which Book they ſuppoſe was written in the *Babylonian* Character, becauſe it was to teach a Colony of that Nation. This is oppoſed by a late learned Man, who earneſtly contends, that the Book of the Law was not brought to them 'till the Time of *Sanballat*, and therefore this Prieſt inſtructed them without Book, only by Tradition. Which is not probable; for they would have had little Regard to him, if he had not produced the Authority of that holy Book, delivered to them by that great Law-giver *Moſes*, the Man of God: For that he taught them the right Way of worſhipping God, according to the Law, as it was practiſed in *Judah*, is very likely; being ſenſible that God abhorred the other Worſhip which *Iſrael* practiſed; for which he had thrown them out of their Land.

Ver. 29. *Howbeit, every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houſes of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt.*] It ſeems the People of *Iſrael*, who are here called *Samaritans*, had built little Temples in the high Places; wherein theſe new Inhabitants worſhipped the Gods of the Country from which they came (that is, the *Gods of Aſſyria*, *Ezek.* xxvii. 7.) together with the God of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 30. *And the men of Babylon made Succothbenoth,*] The *Jewiſh* Doctors do but trifle in their Expoſition in this Word, which they ſay ſignifies *an Hen and Chickens*. The Word plainly imports *the Tabernacles of Daughters*, or of *young Maidens*: Who were conſecrated to *Venus*, whoſe Name Mr *Selden* probably conjectures was derived from *Benoth*. The old Idolaters, it is evident, did proſtitute their Daughters in Honour of *Venus*, as not only *Strabo*, *Herodotus*, and other profane Writers teſtify; but ſome think is ſuggeſted in holy Scripture, *Lev.* xix. 29. And therefore they of *Babylon* are ſaid to make the *Tabernacles of Daughters*; that is, Chapels wherein their Daughters were proſtituted to every one that came to worſhip *Venus*, as the Manner was in *Babylon*, from whence the forenamed Authors teſtify this Filthineſs had its Original. See *Selden de Diis Syris*, *Syntag.* 2. Cap. 7. and *Voſſius de Idololatr.* Lib. 2. Cap. 22.

And the men of Cuth made Nergal,] Which the *Jews* would have to ſignify *a Cock*. But their Conjecture is better, who think it ſignified *Fire*. For the Men of *Cuth* are thoſe that were afterward called *Perſians*; who it is certain anciently worſhipped the Fire. See *Selden*, Cap. 8. But the famous *Bochart* ingenuouſly confeſſes he doth not know what *Nergal* was; but that there is a Sort of Palm-Tree called *Nergil*, by the *Perſians*, *Arabians*, and *Indians*, of which they report ſtrange Things. From whence, perhaps, the *Perſians* gave the Name of *Nergal* to this Idol, as in *Syria* their God was called *Rimmon* from the Pomegranate. *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 1. Cap. 16.

And the men of Hamath made Aſhima,] I know no Ground the *Jews* have to ſay, this Word *Aſhima* ſignifies a *ſmooth Goat*. Our great *Selden* modeſtly acknowledges he doth not know what God it was, *Ib.* Cap. 9. But a late Author takes *Aſhima* to be the ſame with *Mars*: Becauſe among the Ancients *AS* ſignified the ſame with *Ἄρης* among the *Greeks*, and *Schemah* is as much as hearing or obedient, *Jo. Genſius*, *de Victimis Humanis*, p. i. p. 92. And this *AS* he conjectures is the ſame, whom the *Romans* called *Heſus*, whom *Lucan* mentions in his *Pharſalia*, Lib. 1. ver. 443.

——— *Horrentque feris altaribus Heſus.*

But after all, I think my learned Friend Dr *Alix* hath made the moſt probable Conjecture, that *Aſhima* is the Name of God, whom the *Hebrews* call *Haſhem*, *the Name*: From whence *Aſhima*, I doubt not, is derived. Accordingly *Aben-Ezra* ſaith in his Preface to the Book of *Eſther*, that he ſaw in a *Samaritan* Pentateuch, *Geneſis* i. 1. *Bara Aſhima*, inſtead of *Bara Elohim*. Which *Bochart* cenſures as a Falſity, becauſe no ſuch Word is to be found in the whole *Samaritan* Pentateuch; but it might be then in ſome Paraphraſe upon it.

Ver. 31.

Ver. 31. *And the Avites made Nibhaz, and Tartach,*] No body knows what theſe were; for no Credit is to be given to the *Jews*, who ſay the former was in the Shape of *a Dog*, and the other of *an aſs*. *Selden* thinks they were the ſame Idol called by different Names, but was not able to give an Account of them.

And the Sepharvaites burnt their children in the fire to Adramelech and Anammelech the gods of Sepharvaim.] Theſe were the ſame Gods with *Moloch*; unto whom the ſame Sacrifices were offered. The *Jews* after their vain Fancies make one of them to have been in the Form of a *Peacock*, and the other of a *Pheaſant*: But in all Probability they were but different Names of *Moloch*, which was the Sun, as is evident from xxiii. 10, 11. And the Addition of *Addir*, which ſignifies Magnificent or Potent, makes *Adramelech* as much as the mighty *Moloch*. And of *Ana*, which ſignifies to anſwer, makes *Anamelech* as much as *Oracular Moloch*. For *Moloch*, and *Melech*, and *Milcom*, are all the very ſame in the Language of different People, ſignifying a *King*: The Sun being by them accounted *the King*, as the Moon *the Queen of Heaven*. And there is nothing more known than that the *Gentiles* burnt their Children in Sacrifice to them. But whether theſe People did ſo, or only made them paſs through the Fire to purify them, may be queſtioned; tho' the Words ſeem to import the former: Which was the Practice of the *Phœnicians*, *Syrians*, *Tyrians*, *Carthaginians*, *Cretians*, *Arabians*, and many other Nations; and is ſtill practiſed by the *Americans*, and other *Gentiles*.

A Learned Writer of our own, Dr *Hyde*, in the Book before-mentioned, had a quite different Apprehenſion of theſe Words: For he will have *Adramelech* to ſignify *the King of the flock*, *Adre* being as much as *Greges*: And *Anamelech* he thinks is much of the ſame Signification, *Ana* being as much as *Pecus* in the *Perſian* Language; always ſignifying collectively in the Plural Number, the leſſer Cattle, Sheep and Goats. Of which he imagines theſe Gods had the Care, and were therefore worſhipped, the Riches of thoſe People conſiſting much in Cattle. They were alſo cœleſtial Conſtellations (as he there obſerves) which they imagined promoted the Breeding and Growth of Cattle.

Ver. 32. *So they feared the LORD,*] Worſhipped the LORD God of *Iſrael*.

And made unto themſelves of the loweſt of them prieſts of the high places, which ſacrificed for them in the houſes of the high places.] I ſuppoſe theſe Sacrifices were offered to the God of *Iſrael*, but in high Places, and by Prieſts of their own making. As for their Sacrifices to the God of their ſeveral Countries, no doubt they brought Prieſts along with them, to perform the Service belonging to them.

Ver. 33. *They feared the LORD, and ſerved their own gods, after the manner of the nations, whom they carried away from thence.*] That is, after the manner of the ten Tribes, who worſhipped the LORD, and the Golden Calves together with him, and ſometimes *Baal*, and other Gods, *ver.* 16.

Ver. 34. *Unto this day they do after the former manner: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their ſtatutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law and commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Iſrael;*] Theſe, and the following Words, give an Account of the Children of *Iſrael*; who being carried Captive out of their own Land (as hath been related) were not at all amended thereby; but ſtill neglected all the Laws which God had given them, and did not worſhip him alone; and therefore in Truth *they feared not the LORD*.

Ver. 35. *With whom the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, ſaying, Ye ſhall not fear other gods, nor bow your ſelves to them, nor ſave them, nor ſacrifice to them:*] Whoſe Sins he aggravates (and thereby juſtifies his ſevere Proceedings againſt them) by repreſenting them as a ſelect People, who were in a ſtrict and gracious Covenant with him, obliging them not to ſhew the leaſt Reſpect to any other God but himſelf.

Ver. 36. *But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, with great power, and a ſtretched-out arm, him ſhall ye fear, and him ſhall ye worſhip, and to him ſhall ye do ſacrifice.*] This was a Benefit, one would think, that ſhould never have been forgotten; but eternally engaged them to his Service, who delivered them from ſo vile a Slavery.

Ver. 37. *And the ſtatutes, and the ordinances, and the law, and the commandment which he wrote for you, ye ſhall obſerve to do for evermore, and ye ſhall not fear other gods.*] This is repeated again, being ſo very often mentioned in the Book of the Law, that they ſhould worſhip no other God.

Ver. 38. *And the covenant that I have made with you, ye ſhall not forget, neither ſhall ye fear other gods.*] Which was the principal Thing in the Covenant.

Ver. 39. *But the LORD your God ye ſhall fear, and he ſhall deliver you out of the hand of all your enemies.*] As he did, whenſoever they renounced Idolatry, and promiſed to worſhip him alone; as we read throughout their whole Hiſtory, in theſe holy Books.

Ver. 40. *Howbeit, they did not hearken, but they did after their former manner.*] They ſoon revolted, when they ſolemnly proteſted to repent; and did juſt as they had done before, as the ſame Books teſtify.

Ver. 41. *So thoſe nations feared the LORD, and ſerved their graven images, both their children, and their childrens children: as did their fathers, ſo do they unto this day.*] Juſt thus did the Nations who came in their room into the Country of *Samaria*: They joined their own Gods with the LORD God of *Iſrael*, and continued ſo to do, they and their Poſterity, unto the Time this Book was written, and long after. For as Mr *Mede* hath obſerved, this Medley of Religions laſted above three hundred Years, 'till towards the End of the *Perſian* Monarchy. At which Time *Manaſſe*, Brother to *Jadda* the High Prieſt of the *Jews* (that were returned to their own Land) married the Daughter of *Sanballat* Governour of *Samaria*. And after his Example, other *Jews* of the beſt Rank having married ſtrange Wives, contrary to the Law, and being loth to leave them, betook themſelves thither

thither alſo; whom *Sanballat* entertained, and made his Son-in-law their Prieſt. And when *Alexander* the Great ſubdued the *Perſian* Monarchy, he obtained Leave of him to build a Temple upon Mount *Gerizim*, where *Manaſſeh* exerciſed the Office of High-Prieſt. This was very prejudicial to the *Jews*, and the Occaſion of a Schiſm; whilſt thoſe who were diſcontented or excommunicated at *Jeruſalem*, were wont to run hither. Yet by this means the *Samaritans* (having gotten one of the Sons of *Aaron* for their Prieſt, and ſo many *Jews* being mingled among them) were brought to throw away all their falſe Gods, and worſhip the God of *Iſrael* only. Yet ſo, that though they ſeemed to themſelves to be the true Worſhippers of God, they retained a ſmack of Idolatry; worſhipping God under a viſible Repreſentation, *viz.* that of a *Dove*. Juſt as their Predeceſſors, the ten Tribes, worſhipped the ſame God under the Similitude of a Calf, *Book* 1. *Diſcourſe* 13. And indeed this Inclination to have ſome ſenſible Repreſentation of God was ſo univerſal, that they who had none, were thought by the Gentile World to worſhip nothing.

CHAP. XVIII.

Verſe 1. *NOW it came to paſs in the third year of Hoſhea ſon of Elah king of Iſrael, that Hezekiah the ſon of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign.*] The third Year of thoſe nine, which are mentioned before, xvii. 1. See there.

Ver. 2. *Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jeruſalem: his mothers name alſo was Abi, daughter of Zachariah.*] Unto this it is objected, that *Ahaz* lived but thirty and ſix Years (xvi. 2.) and therefore, according to this Account, begat *Hezekiah* when he was but eleven Years old, which ſeems incredible. To which *Capellus* in his *Chronologia* anſwers, that he reigned two or three Years with his Father; which is not likely, for the Text ſaith he was twenty. Years old when he began to reign, after his Father's Death, which is before-mentioned. And the Solution of the *Jews*, mentioned by St *Hierom*, is not much better, who ſay, he did not begin to reign preſently after his Father's Death, but there was an *Interregnum* for ſome Years; becauſe of a Sedition that was in *Jeruſalem*. But as there is no Proof of this, ſo it is improbable that *Hezekiah*, who was a grown Man, and beloved of the People, ſhould not preſently ſucceed his Father. *Calviſius*'s Account is ſtill worſe, who will have *Hezekiah*, to have been only the adopted Son of *Ahaz*: Which ſpoils the Deſcent of our Saviour from *David*, as *Bochartus* obſerves: Who therefore plainly admits that he did beget *Hezekiah*, when he was eleven or twelve Years old. For ſo it may be underſtood, that he was but juſt entred upon the twenty-fifth Year of his Age, when he began his Reign; and ſo but twenty-four compleat. Therefore his Father begat him about the twelfth Year of his Age. For if, from thirty-ſix Years, four and twenty be taken, there remain twelve. And if we ſuppoſe, as we may very well, that *Ahaz* was near one and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and near ſeventeen Years older before he died (for the Scriptures, no more than other Writers, do not take Notice whether the Year be perfect or imperfect) then he might be near fourteen Years old when he begat *Hezekiah*. But take it according to the firſt Account, that he was but eleven or twelve Years old, *Bochartus* hath given a vaſt Number of Inſtances of Perſons that procreated Children at that Age. For Ripeneſs for Procreation is not to be preciſely determined, either by *Phyſicians*, *Philoſophers*, or *Lawyers*, (who have been pleaſed to fix the Time) but Conſideration is to be had of the Climate wherein Men live, of the Temper and Conſtitution of their Bodies, of their Diet, and many other things; as he obſerves in an Epiſtle to *Nicol. Carbonellus*, in his Additions to the laſt Edition of his *Phaleg*. p. 920.

Ver. 3. *And he did that which was right in the ſight of the LORD, according to all that David his father did.*] A Character which is not given, I think, to any of the Kings of *Judah*, ſince the Reign of *Aſa*, 1 *Kings* xv. 11.

Ver. 4. *He removed the high places,*] Which none of his Predeceſſors had the Courage to attempt. But the carrying of the ten Tribes captive, I ſuppoſe, mightily awakened both him and all the People, for the preſent (while it was freſh before their Eyes) to obſerve the Law of God very ſtrictly.

And brake the images, and cut down the groves,] Which his Father *Ahaz* had multiplied, xvi. 14. 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 2, 24, 25.

And brake in pieces the brazen ſerpent that Moſes had made:] Which had been piouſly preſerved as a Monument of God's wonderful Mercy to them in the Wilderneſs; as *Gideon* intended his *Ephod* ſhould be of another Deliverance, *Judges* viii. 27. But as they went a whoring after that, ſo they did after this, as the *Jews* phraſe it in *Avada Zara*. And therefore *Hezekiah* broke it in Pieces; that is, as the *Talmudiſts* there explain it, ground it to Powder, and then ſcattered it into the Air, that nothing of it might remain to be worſhipped as a Relique by ſuperſtitious People. And yet there is a Fable that ſome Fragments of it did remain 'till *Joſiah*'s Time; and at this Day, as *Sigonius* relates in his Hiſtory of the Kingdom of *Italy*, they ſhew this brazen Serpent entire at the Church of St *Ambroſe* in *Milan*. But the wiſer *Romaniſts* are aſhamed of it, and acknowledge it is not the Serpent made by *Moſes* (which being broken in Pieces by *Hezekiah*, was never reſtored) but another made in Imitation of it. See *Buxtorf. Hiſtor. Serpentis Æenei*, Cap. 6.

For unto this day; the children of Iſrael had burnt incenſe to it:] When this Superſtition began we are not told; but no body gives a better Account of it than *David Kimchi*, whoſe Words are theſe. From the Time that the Kings of *Iſrael* did evil, and the Children of *Iſrael* followed Idolatry, until the Reign of *Hezekiah*, they offered Incenſe to it. For it being written in the Law of *Moſes*, *whoſoever looks upon it ſhall live*, they fancied they might obtain Bleſſings by its Mediation, and therefore thought it worthy to be worſhipped. It had been kept from

Moſes

Moſes his Days in Memory of a Miracle, juſt as the Pot of *Manna* alſo was; and *Aſa* and *Jehoſhaphat* did not extirpate it when they rooted out Idolatry, becauſe in their Reign they did not obſerve that the People worſhipped this Serpent, or burnt Incenſe to it, and therefore they left it as a Memorial. But *Hezekiah* thought fit to take it quite away, when he aboliſhed other Idolatry, becauſe in the Time of his Father they worſhipped it as an Idol. And though pious People among them accounted it only to be a Memorial of a wonderful Work, yet he judged it better to aboliſh it, though the Memory of the Miracle were loſt together with it, than ſuffer it to remain, and leave the *Iſraelites* in Danger to commit Idolatry hereafter with it.

And he called it Nehuſhtan.] Some think *Hezekiah* called it by this Name; others, that the *Iſraelites* called it ſo; the Words ſignifying indifferently *it was called Nehuſhtan*, viz. by Way of Contempt and Scorn. For the Letter *Nun* at the End of a Word, the *Jews* ſay, is added by Way of Diminution. And *Nechoſheth* ſignifying Braſs, this is as much as to ſay, this Serpent was meer Braſs or Copper, and had no Power in it, no Profit, no Ability to help, no Divinity; and therefore not to be worſhipped with divine Honour. Thus *Kimchi:* It being called by this Name ſignified as much as if *Hezekiah* had ſaid, *How could it come into any man's heart to think, that this Serpent could do any thing, which is meer braſs?* Or, as *Ralbag* expounds it, *this Serpent hath no more Virtue in it, than the common Braſs in their Houſes.* For he takes *an*, in the End of the Word, to be the ſame with *am*, *ipſorum.* But there is a great and good Man of our own, who having endeavoured to ſhew that the Deſtruction of the old Serpent the Devil was foreſhadowed by the lifting up the Brazen Serpent in the Wilderneſs, concludes that *Hezekiah* was moved with the greater indignation againſt the Worſhip of it, becauſe in Truth it never was a Type of our Saviour and Redeemer, but a Figure of his grand Enemy. This made him expreſs ſuch Deteſtation of it, as is imported, he thinks, in the Word *Nehuſhtan.* The Signification of which is not to be found in our *Lexicons:* For though *Nechoſheth* ſignify no more than Braſs, yet *Nehuſhtan* imports no leſs than our Engliſh Words, *foul Fiend, the old Dragon, or Satan.* See Dr *Jackſon, Humiliation of the Son of God*, Chap. 31. Paragr. 6.

Ver. 5. *He truſted in the LORD God of Iſrael,*] And not in the Help of foreign Forces, as his Father *Ahaz* did, (xvi. 7.) nay, which that good King *Aſa* called into his Aſſiſtance, 1 *Kings* xv. 18, 19.

So that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him.] Since the Time that the Kingdoms of *Judah* and *Iſrael* were divided.

Ver. 6. *For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moſes.*] He continued to obſerve God's Laws through the whole Courſe of his Reign, to the Concluſion of it; and did not like ſome of his Predeceſſors, who began well, but fell off in the End of their Days, as *Joaſh* and *Amaziah* did, xii. 2. xiv. 3. 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 2, 19. xxv. 14.

Ver. 7. *And the LORD was with him, and he proſpered whitherſoever he went: and he rebelled againſt the king of Aſſyria, and ſerved him not.*] His proſperous Succeſs in all his Enterprizes, which were viſible Tokens of God's Preſence with him, emboldned him to throw off the Yoke of the King of *Aſſyria*, to which *Ahaz* had baſely ſubmitted, xvi. 7. which was not properly *Rebellion* in *Hezekiah*, for *Ahaz* could not ſubject his Kingdom to the *Aſſyrian* Monarch, but only for his own Time: His Son was not bound to be his Slave. Therefore the Meaning is, he owned not the Authority of the *Aſſyrian* King over him, but looked upon himſelf as a free Sovereign in his own Kingdom, independent upon him. In this perhaps he was a little too forward, being very much lifted up by his Victories; but it is plain he was not able to maintain himſelf free from all Subjection to the King of *Aſſyria*, ver. 14.

Ver. 8. *He ſmote the Philiſtines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen, to the fenced cities.*] We had this Phraſe before, xvii. 19. See there. And theſe Words ſeem to ſignify that he ſmote them all the Country over, and recovered from them more than his Father had loſt, 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 18. According to the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, xiv. 18. where he bids the *Philiſtines* not to rejoice, becauſe the Rod that ſmote them was broken (that is, *Uzziah* was dead, who had ſorely afflicted them, 2 *Chron* xxvi. 6, 7.) for out of his Root ſhould come another, that would more grievouſly gall them, which was *Hezekiah.*

Ver. 9. *And it came to paſs in the fourth year of king Hezekiah (which was the ſeventh year of Hoſhea, ſon of Elah, king of Iſrael) that Shalmaneſer king of Aſſyria came up againſt Samaria, and beſieged it.*] We had an Account of the taking of *Samaria* before; and therefore the mentioning of it here again may ſeem needleſs. But as now the Year of *Hezekiah*'s Reign is ſet down wherein it was taken, ſo *Abarbinel* thinks the Intention of the divine Writer was to connect theſe two Hiſtories together; the taking of *Samaria*, and the Aſcent of *Sennacherib* againſt *Jeruſalem*; who eight Years after the Deſtruction of the former, with great Pride and Confidence imagined he ſhould do as much by the latter.

Ver. 10. *And at the end of three years they took it, even in the ſixth year of Hezekiah (that is the ninth year of Hoſhea) Samaria was taken.*

Ver. 11. *And the king of Aſſyria did carry away Iſrael into Aſſyria, and put them in Halah, and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes:*] As was before related (Chap. xvii. 6.) but could not be too oft repeated, to make Poſterity dread the Judgments of God, that were fallen upon them for their Sins; as it follows again in the next Words.

Ver. 12. *Becauſe they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but tranſgreſſed his covenant, and all that Moſes the ſervant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear them, nor do them.*] xvii. 34, 35.

Ver. 13. *Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, did Sennacherib king of Aſſyria,*] He was the Son of *Shalmaneſer*, and ſucceeded him in his Kingdom after his Death; as we read in the Book of *Tobit*, i. 15.

Come up againſt all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them.] That is, took a great many of them, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 1.

Ver. 14. *And Hezekiah king of Judah ſent to the king of Aſſyria to Lachiſh,*] This ſhews he had not taken all the fenced Cities, for *Lachiſh* was a City of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 39. which is mentioned before in this Book, xiv. 19. and was not yet taken, though Siege was laid to it. Which when he had taken, he intended to go up againſt *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 2. which moved *Hezekiah* to divert him from his Purpoſe, by begging his Pardon, as it here follows, for what he had done in ſhaking off his Yoke.

Saying, I have offended thee,] In denying to be ſubject to him, which no doubt was the Reaſon of this Invaſion.

Return from me: that which thou putteſt upon me, I will bear.] Though he had made great Proviſion againſt him, as we read, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 3, 4, *&c.* yet he durſt not venture to abide a Siege; but choſe rather to divert him, by ſubmitting to ſuch Conditions as he would impoſe upon him.

And the king of Aſſyria appointed to Hezekiah three hundred talents of ſilver, and thirty talents of gold.] This was a great Burden, though it was not a yearly Tribute, but only a preſent Payment; which his Weakneſs forced him to ſubmit unto.

Ver. 15. *And Hezekiah gave him all the ſilver that was found in the houſe of the LORD,*] Which in publick Neceſſities they thought it was lawful to make uſe of, for their Preſervation. Yet the *Talmudiſts* reckon this one of the three ill Things that *Hezekiah* did, in cutting off the *Golden Plates*, mentioned in the next Verſe. See *Selden de Synedr.* Lib. 2. Cap. 1. N. 4.

And in the treaſures of the kings houſe.] Which had been ſo exhauſted before, that he was forced to raiſe the Money by other Means, as it follows, *ver.* 16.

Ver. 16. *At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the LORD, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Aſſyria.*] It is very probable, that when *Ahaz* defaced the Temple, and ſhut up the Doors of it (xvi. 17. 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 2, 4.) he cut off this Gold; which *Hezekiah* took Care to repair; but was now conſtrained to cut it off himſelf. Upon which Words *Procopius Gazæus* ſeems to me to have very well obſerved; That *Hezekiah* finding he had not ſufficient Treaſure of his own, to anſwer the Impoſition laid upon him, was driven by Neceſſity to make uſe of Things ſacred, leſt the Enemy ſhould burn the City and the Temple. But what was thus employed, pious Kings were wont to reſtore as ſoon as they were able, out of the Spoils of War, when it was ended.

Ver. 17. *And the king of Aſſyria ſent Tartan, and Rabſaris, and Rabſhakeh from Lachiſh, to king Hezekiah with a great hoſt againſt Jeruſalem: and they went up and came to Jeruſalem:*] Some of the *Jews* think, that *Sennacherib* having received the Tribute from *Hezekiah*, went to his own Land; but becauſe *Hezekiah* did not continue to ſend it every Year, after ſome Time returned to *Judæa* again, and beſieged *Jeruſalem*. But there is not a Word of this either in this Book, or the *Chronicles*, or in the Prophet *Iſaiah:* Therefore it is more probable, that having received the Money he demanded, he made his Expedition into *Egypt*, of which *Herodotus* and others, and ſome think *Iſaiah* alſo ſpeaks, as Sir *John Marſham* obſerves, *Iſaiah* x. 26, 28. But as he was the firſt King of *Aſſyria* that invaded *Egypt*, ſo he went no further than to the Entrance of it, to *Peluſium*, which he could not take, and ſo at his Return broke his Faith with *Hezekiah*; and notwithſtanding his Preſent, wherewith he pretended to be ſatisfied, laid Siege to *Jeruſalem*.

And when they were come up, they came and ſtood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the high way of the fullers field.] They took up their Head Quarters, as we now ſpeak, by the Conduit or Canal, into which Water was derived from the upper Fiſh-pond or Pool; which was in the high Way to the Field, where the Fullers, after they had waſhed their Cloaths in that Pool, were wont to ſpread them.

Ver. 18. *And when they had called to the king,*] They were ſo bold as to demand Audience of the King himſelf, that they might treat with him in Perſon for a Surrender.

There came out to them Eliakim the ſon of Hilkiah, which was over the houſhold, and Shebna the ſcribe, and Joah the ſon of Aſaph the recorder.] Though he would not vouchſafe to go himſelf, yet he ſent his *Major Domo*, as they now ſpeak, and his *Secretary*, or a Principal Doctor of the Law, and the *Maſter of the Requeſts*. For ſince the King of *Aſſyria* ſent three Meſſengers, he thought fit to ſend as many. *Iſaiah* indeed mentions only *Rabſhakeh*, as ſent by the King of *Aſſyria:* Which *Seder Olam Rabba* thinks is meant of the firſt Legation; but in the ſecond when he beſieged *Libnah* (xix. 8.) he joined *Tartan* and *Rabſaris* with him. It is very uncertain what Officer *Shebna* was; for he is ſaid, *Iſa.* xxii. 15. to be *over the houſe*, and the LXX ſometimes make him *Treaſurer*, ſometimes *Scribe*, and Mr *Selden* thinks he might be *præfectus prætorio*. Lib. *de Succeſ.* in *Pontif.* p. 142.

Ver. 19. *And Rabſhakeh ſaid unto them,*] He was the chief Speaker, being an eloquent Man; and as the *Hebrew* Doctors will have it (whom *Procopius* follows) an Apoſtate *Jew*. Which is not altogether improbable; both becauſe he could ſpeak readily in the *Hebrew* Tongue, and when he blaſphemed the divine Majeſty, the King and his Nobles rent their Cloaths; which was not uſual, unleſs he that uttered ſuch blaſphemous Words was an *Iſraelite*. Some think his Name imports that he was the principal *Cup-bearer* to the King of *Aſſyria*.

Speak ye now to Hezekiah, ſaying, Thus ſaith the great king, the king of Aſſyria,] He aſſumed to himſelf the Stile of the *Great King*, becauſe of his great Conqueſts and large Dominions.

What confidence is this wherein thou truſteſt?] As much as to ſay, it was the greateſt Folly to think any body could defend him from ſo great a King.

Ver. 20. *Thou ſayeſt (but they are but vain words) I have counſel and ſtrength for the war:*] In Reaſon, he thought *Hezekiah* ſhould not ſtand

out againſt his Maſter, unleſs he had all things neceſſary for his Defence: But he did delude his People, if he told them, that he wanted neither Skill to manage War, nor Power to execute good Counſels.

Now on whom doſt thou truſt, that thou rebelleſt againſt me?] He derides him, as full of vain Hopes; and upbraids him with his Rebellion. Of which he was thought formerly to be guilty, but could not now be juſtly accuſed of it, when he had ſubmitted to him with ſuch a great Preſent. Theſe are therefore Words of the higheſt Pride and Inſolence.

Ver. 21. *Now behold, thou truſteſt upon the ſtaff of this bruiſed reed, even upon Egypt.*] He thought it probable he would ſeek for Succour from *Egypt*, being a neighbouring Country; which would be ready to aſſiſt him, that they might be revenged of the King of *Aſſyria* for his late Invaſion. But he repreſents *Egypt* as very weak, and utterly unable to help him; being ſorely cruſhed, though not deſtroyed, by *Sennacherib*.

On which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it: ſo is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that truſt on him.] He repreſents the Power of *Egypt* to be as brittle as the Cane, or Reeds that grow on the Banks of the *Nile* (to which he ſeems to allude) on which if a Man leaned, they brake, and the Splinters run into his hand. Such is *Pharaoh*, ſaith he, a Man gets no Help, but Miſchief by relying upon him; as he doth who takes one of thoſe Canes for his Staff to ſupport him.

Ver. 22. *But if ye ſay unto me, We truſt in the LORD our God: is not that he whoſe high places and alters Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath ſaid to Judah and Jeruſalem, Ye ſhall worſhip before this altar in Jeruſalem?*] This weak arguing proceeded from his Ignorance of that God and his Law, in whom *Hezekiah* truſted. Which made him call thoſe Crimes, which were his greateſt Virtues; in prohibiting their offering Sacrifice in any other Place, but that which God appointed.

Ver. 23. *Now therefore, I pray thee, give pledges to my lord the king of Aſſyria, and I will deliver thee two thouſand horſes, if thou be able on thy part to ſet riders upon them.*] He ſeems to challenge him to come out, and fight with his Maſter: And if he could give Security to make that Uſe of them, he would furniſh him with two thouſand Horſes, provided he was able to find ſo many Men to ſit upon them. Which are Words of the higheſt Contempt, and undervaluing of his Power. Or, the Meaning may be, he would lay a Wager with him, he could not find Men to ſit upon ſo many Horſes; for few were good Horſemen in *Judæa*, where Horſes were ſcarce.

Ver. 24. *How then wilt thou turn away the face of one captain of the leaſt of my maſters ſervants,*] Much leſs ſtand before his whole Army.

And put thy truſt in Egypt for chariots, and horſemen?] With which *Egypt* abounded above moſt other Countries; who ſometimes furniſhed the *Iſraelites* with Horſes, but none like *Egypt*. For which Reaſon *Moſes* forbids them to multiply Horſes, leſt it ſhould cauſe them to return to *Egypt*, *Deut.* xvii. 16. and the Prophet reproves them ſeverely for going to *Egypt* for Help, and ſtaying upon Horſes, *&c. Iſa.* xxxi. 1, 3.

Ver. 25. *Am I now come up without the LORD againſt this place to deſtroy it? the LORD ſaid unto me, Go up againſt this land and deſtroy it.*] If he had not been a *Jew*, yet he had learned the Name of their God; and pretended his Maſter was come up againſt *Jeruſalem*, by a Commiſſion from him. Which were vain Words (as he calls *Hezekiah*'s, ver. 20.) for there were none of his Prophets among the *Aſſyrians*. But perhaps he concluded from what the *Aſſyrian* King had done to *Samaria*, God intended he ſhould do ſo to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 26. *Then ſaid Eliakim the ſon of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabſhakeh, ſaying, Speak, I pray thee, unto thy ſervants in the Syrian language (for we underſtand it) and ſpeak not with us in the Jews language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.*] I ſuppoſe *Eliakim* perceived the People to be frighted with his big Words, and therefore intreated him, in the Name of the other Commiſſioners ſent to treat with him, to ſpeak no longer in the *Jews* Language, but in his own: For he was not ſent to treat with the People, but with them who underſtood the *Syrian* Tongue very well.

Ver. 27. *But Rabſhakeh ſaid unto them, Hath my maſter, ſent me to thy maſter, and to thee, to ſpeak theſe words? Hath he not ſent me to the men that ſit on the wall, that they may eat their own dung, and drink their own piſs with you?*] To make them know, that he will reduce them to the greateſt Extremity, if they do not ſubmit unto him: For it is an Hyperbolical Speech, importing ſuch Straits as were never known.

Ver. 28. *And Rabſhakeh ſtood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews language, and ſpake, ſaying, Hear the words of the great king, the king of Aſſyria.*] He ſeems to have raiſed both himſelf, and his Voice higher, that he might be better heard by all.

Ver. 29. *Thus ſaith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you, for he ſhall not be able to deliver you out of my hand.*] He repeats with the greateſt Aſſurance, the Power of his King, and the Weakneſs of *Hezekiah*: Repreſenting from thence, how they were deluded with empty Promiſes, if he perſwaded them he ſhould be able to preſerve them.

Ver. 30. *Neither let Hezekiah make you truſt in the LORD, ſaying, the LORD will ſurely deliver us, and this city ſhall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Aſſyria.*] This was the higheſt Preſumption to perſwade them not to place their Hope in God; as if his Maſter was ſtronger than he.

Ver. 31. *Hearken not to Hezekiah: but make an agreement with me by a preſent, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig-tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his ciſtern:*] Having repreſented to them the Miſeries unto which a Siege would reduce them, he invites them to a Surrender, upon advantageous Conditions.

Ver. 32. *Until I come, and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive, and of honey, that ye may live and not die: and hearken not to Hezekiah, when he perſuadeth you, ſaying,*

ſaying, the LORD will deliver us.] If they would ſeek the Favour of the King of *Aſſyria*, by making him a Preſent, and delivering themſelves up to his Mercy; he promiſes they ſhould be tranſported to a better Country than that to which the *Iſraelites* were carried: And in the mean Time, every one enjoy his own Poſſeſſions. But he was afraid *Hezekiah*'s avowed Confidence in God would prevail with them, to truſt to him for Deliverance, which makes him ſo often deſire them not to depend upon that.

Ver. 33. *Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land, out of the hand of the king of Aſſyria?*] He argues very popularly and ſtrongly, if his Suppoſition had been true, That the God of *Iſrael*, the God of the whole Earth (yea, of Heaven and Earth) was like thoſe of all other Nations, who preſided only over one Country, or City.

Ver. 34. *Where are the gods of Hamath, and Arpad?*] Thoſe were Cities or Countries, which the King of *Aſſyria* had conquered.

Where are the gods of Sephervaim,] Mentioned before, xvii. 31.

Hena, and Ivah?] Some think theſe were the Gods of *Sephervaim*; which is confuted by the Place before-named. They were rather Cities, whoſe Gods could not protect them.

Have they delivered Samaria out of my hand?] That is, have the Gods of *Samaria* been able to do more than the reſt?

Ver. 35. *Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their conntry out of my hand, that the LORD ſhould deliver Jeruſalem out of my hand?*] He deſires an Inſtance of one God, that had been able to ſave his Country, when his Maſter invaded it: And therefore it was beſt for them to yield their City up to him, ſince God himſelf could not preſerve it unleſs he could do more than any other had done, which he concluded was unlikely. It muſt be acknowledged that *Rabſhakeh* was an excellent Orator, as well as a Soldier; not inferior in Eloquence to *Julius Cæſar*.

Ver. 36. *But the people held their peace, and anſwered him not a word: for the kings commandment was, ſaying, Anſwer him not.*] This was a very wiſe Order, becauſe he might have made ſome Advantage by a ſudden Anſwer; and it was no leſs pious: For *Hezekiah* believed God would anſwer for himſelf, not in Words, but in ſuch Deeds as would demonſtrate he was above all Gods.

Ver. 37. *Then came Eliakim the ſon of Hilkiah, which was over the houſhold, and Shebna the ſcribe, and Joab the ſon of Aſaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabſhakeh.*] It was the Cuſtom of the *Jews* to rend their Clothes, when they heard a Man blaſpheme God's Name. And if we will believe them, when the Witneſſes of a Blaſphemy did but repeat the Words before the Judges, they rent their Clothes. Accordingly *Hezekiah*, when his Commiſſioners gave an Account of *Rabſhakeh*'s Words to him, he did ſo, xix. 1. But they have determined, that they were not bound to rend their Clothes, unleſs he were an *Iſraelite* that blaſphemed. Therefore they have reſolved, as I ſaid before, that *Rabſhakeh* was an Apoſtate *Iſraelite*. And this Cuſtom was common to all Nations (as appears from *Homer*, *Herodotus*, and *Virgil*) who expreſſed great Grief in this Manner.

CHAP. XIX.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes,*] See the laſt Verſe of the foregoing Chapter.

And covered himſelf with ſackcloth, and went into the houſe of the LORD.] He faſted and mourned, and went into the Temple to pray. Sometimes they put on Sackcloth next to their Skin, inſtead of a Shirt: But here it ſeems to ſignify only, that he was clothed in this vile Habit, in Token of his great Trouble and Sorrow.

Ver. 2. *And he ſent Eliakim, which was over the houſhold, and Shebna the Scribe,*] See xviii. 18.

And the elders of the prieſts,] The principal Perſons among the Prieſts.

Covered with ſackcloth, to Iſaiah the prophet, the ſon of Amoz.] In the ſame mournful Habit to beg his Prayers to God for them.

Ver. 3. *And they ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith Hezekiah, this day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke and blaſphemy:*] They repreſent to him the great Straits in which they were, and the Reproaches caſt upon them: And (which was worſt of all) the Blaſphemy they had heard againſt God.

For the children are come to the birth, and there is not ſtrength to bring forth.] And the preſent Danger wherein they were of periſhing, unleſs ſpeedily relieved: Like that of a Woman, whoſe Child being fallen down, after many Throws, to the Place of Birth, ſhe was ſo ſpent that ſhe had no Strength left to bring it forth. Or, as *Procopius Gazæus* expounds it, *We are in Pain to hear ſuch blaſphemous Words, and have no Power to puniſh thoſe wicked Wretches as they deſerve.*

Ver. 4. *It may be the LORD thy God will hear the words of Rabſhakeh,*] So as to take Notice of them, and puniſh him.

Whom the king of Aſſyria hath ſent to reproach the living God; and will reprove the words which the LORD thy God hath heard:] Reprove him for the Words (as the *Targum* expounds it) which he had ſpoken againſt God. But *Lud. de Dieu* following *R. Solomon Jarchi*, thinks that the Word we tranſlate *reprove*, ſignifies to *prove*, and by Arguments to demonſtrate. And ſo refers it to *Rabſhakeh* in this Manner: *It may be the LORD will hear all the words of Rabſhakeh, whom the king of Aſſyria hath ſent to reproach the living God: and that openly with a bold Face, fearing nothing, becauſe all things ſucceeded according to their hearts deſire.* And he ſaith, he ſhall wonder if this Senſe diſpleaſe any body.

Wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left.] That *Judah* might not be carried captive, as *Iſrael* had been.

Ver. 5. *So the ſervants of king Hezekiah came to Iſaiah.*] And delivered the foregoing Meſſage to him.

Ver. 6. *And Iſaiah ſaid unto them, Thus ſhall ye ſay to your maſter, Thus ſaith the LORD, be not afraid of the words which thou haſt heard, with*

with which the ſervants of the king of Aſſyria have blaſphemed me.

Ver. 7. *Behold, I will ſend a blaſt on him,*] A peſtilential Blaſt, which deſtroyed his Army in one Night, *ver.* 35. Others tranſlate it *a Spirit*; which is the ſame: For God ſent an Angel, who ſmote them with that Peſtilence.

And he ſhall hear a rumour, and ſhall return to his own land,] The Report perhaps was renewed after that Stroke, that *Tirhakah* (of whom he had heard before, *ver.* 9.) was coming againſt him; which made him haſte away, with the ſmall Remains of his Army, to his own Country.

And I will cauſe him to fall by the ſword in his own land.] Which was fulfilled, *ver.* 37.

Ver. 8. *So Rabſhakeh returned,*] Not with the Hoſt that he brought with him (xviii. 17.) but he himſelf returned to give his Maſter an Account of what he had done; and left *Rabſaris* to carry on the Siege, and ſtraiten the City, 'till he could come with the whole Army againſt it.

And found the king of Aſſyria warring againſt Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachiſh.] Being unable, I ſuppoſe, to make himſelf Maſter of it.

Ver. 9. *And when he heard ſay of Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, he is come out to fight againſt thee:*] Whether he fought with *Tirhakah* or no, and what the Succeſs was, doth not appear. But it is to be noted, that there were two Countries called *Cuſh* (which we tranſlate *Ethiopia*) one in *Africa* beyond *Egypt*; the other in *Arabia*, which is the *Ethiopia* here meant. For the King of the other was far off, and muſt have marched through *Egypt* before he could come to fight with *Sennacherib*. But this was near, and was able to raiſe a powerful Army, as appears by the vaſt Forces which *Zarah* brought againſt *Aſa*, 2 *Chron.* xiv. 9. And thus 2 *Chron.* xxi. 16, as *Bochartus* obſerves, muſt neceſſarily be underſtood, where the *Arabians* whom God ſtirred up againſt *Jehoram*, are ſaid to be near to the *Ethiopians*: Which cannot be true of thoſe beyond *Egypt*. See his *Phaleg*, Lib. 4. Cap. 2.

He ſent meſſengers again to Hezekiah, ſaying,] Among which *Rabſhakeh* was the chief.

Ver. 10. *Thus ſhall ye ſpeake to Hezekiah king of Judah, ſaying,*] They could not come to the Speech of him; but ſent him a Letter containing the Words following, *ver.* 14.

Let not thy God in whom thou truſteſt deceive thee, ſaying, Jeruſalem ſhall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Aſſyria.] He had heard, I ſuppoſe, that *Hezekiah* declared he truſted in the LORD, and had Aſſurance from him, that he, the King of *Aſſyria*, ſhould not prevail againſt him.

Ver. 11. *Behold, thou haſt heard what the king of Aſſyria hath done to all lands, by deſtroying them utterly:*] The Letter is of the ſame Import with the former Meſſage, preſuming the God of *Iſrael* was like the Gods of other Countries, and had no more Power than they to preſerve his Worſhippers.

And ſhalt thou be delivered?] Such Queſtions imply a ſtrong Denial, and therefore it is as much as to ſay, thou ſhalt be delivered no more than they were.

Ver. 12. *Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have deſtroyed?*] He argues from the long Succeſſes his Anceſtors had enjoyed: None of the Gods, whoſe Countries they had deſtroyed, making Oppoſition to them for ſome Ages.

As Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Thelaſar.] Theſe were Places well known in thoſe Days; there was a *Gozan* and *Hara* in *Media*, as *Bochartus* obſerves (Lib. 3. *Phaleg.* Cap. 14.) Where *Rezeph* was is uncertain, but *Ptolomy* mentions ſuch a City in *Syria*, where St *Hierom* places *Thelaſar*: And there were more Cities than one, in thoſe Countries, called *Adana*, which is the ſame with *Eden*.

Ver. 13. *Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivah?*] Places beforementioned, xviii. 34. Nothing can be further obſerved of this, but that the Fury of *Rabſhakeh* increaſed: So that what he had uttered in Words, he now more deliberately ſet down in Writing: affirming boldly, that their God was a Deceiver, if he promiſed them Deliverance.

Ver. 14. *And Hezekiah received the letter of the hand of the meſſengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up into the houſe of the LORD, and ſpread it before the LORD.*] He could approach no nearer than to the outward Court of the Temple: Where at the Entrance of the Prieſts Court, he looked towards the Sanctuary, God's Dwelling-place, and laid this Letter before him.

Ver. 15. *And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD and ſaid, O LORD God of Iſrael, which dwelleſt between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou haſt made heaven and earth.*] Here he directly thwarts the blaſphemous Opinion of the *Aſſyrians* before-mentioned (xvii. 27. xviii. 35.) that the God of *Iſrael* was but the particular Lord of that Country; not the univerſal Sovereign, which *Hezekiah* acknowledged him to be, becauſe the Creator of the whole World.

Ver. 16. *LORD, bow down thine ear and hear: open, LORD, thine eyes, and ſee: and hear the words of Sennacherib, which hath ſent him to reproach the living God.*] That is, ſent *Rabſhakeh*. He ſpeaks in ſuch Language as Men uſe, when they earneſtly beſeech others not to neglect their Supplication; but vouchſafe to attend, and to give a gracious Anſwer to them.

Ver. 17. *Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Aſſyria have deſtroyed the nations and their lands,*] Do not boaſt of more than they have done.

Ver. 18. *And have caſt their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of mens hands, wood and ſtone; therefore have they deſtroyed them.*] They had prevailed, he acknowledges, over their Gods, as well as over Men; but it was becauſe they were not ſo good as Men, being meer Wood and Stone.

Ver. 19. *Now therefore, O LORD our God, I beſeech thee, ſave thou us out of his hands, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.*] He beſeeches him to diſtinguſh himſelf upon thoſe Idols; by giving them ſuch a Deliverance as might demonſtrate to all the World that he was *the living God* (as he is often called) ſuperior

rior to all others, who were not able to ſave their Worſhippers.

Ver. 20. *Then Iſaiah the ſon of Amoz ſent to Hezekiah, ſaying, Thus ſaith the* LORD *God of Iſrael, that which thou haſt prayed to me againſt Sennacherib king of Aſſyria, I have heard.*] He knew by the Spirit of Prophecy, that *Hezekiah* had repreſented his Caſe to God in the Temple; who bid *Iſaiah* aſſure him his Petition was granted.

Ver. 21. *This is the word that the* LORD *hath ſpoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Sion hath deſpiſed thee, and laughed thee to ſcorn; the daughter of Jeruſalem hath ſhaked her head at thee.*] . Theſe Words comprehend the whole City. For by *the Daughter of Sion* he means the People that inhabited the upper Part of the City, where the King's Palace ſtood: And by the *Daughter of Jeruſalem*, the People of the lower Part of the City; and all that was not comprehended under the Name of *Sion*. They *ſhaked their heads at him*; which is the ſame with *deſpiſing*, and *laughing him to ſcorn*. For *ſhaking the Head* is the Poſture of thoſe that mock at others, *Pſal.* xxii. 7. St *Matth.* xxvii. 39. He calls *Sion* a *Virgin*; becauſe this Fortreſs, ſince *David* conquered it, had remained inviolable, and had never been taken by any Enemy. *Joaſh* indeed, King of *Iſrael*, took *Jeruſalem*, and brake down the Wall of it (xiv. 13, 14.) but I think the Fort of *Sion* had never been taken.

Ver. 22. *Whom haſt thou reproached and blaſphemed? and againſt whom haſt thou exalted thy voice,*] So *Rabſhakeh* did, xviii. 28.

And lift up thine eyes on high? As thoſe do, who have haughty Thoughts of themſelves; and overlook others with Contempt and Scorn, *Prov.* xxi. 4.

Even againſt the holy One of Iſrael.] God is called *the Holy One*, with Reſpect to his peerleſs Perfections; and *the Holy One of Iſrael*, as having a peculiar Reſpect to them above all People, who therefore ſhould be defended by his Almighty Power.

Ver. 23. *By thy meſſengers thou haſt reproached the* LORD, *and haſt ſaid, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the ſides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the foreſt of his Carmel.*] This is an admirable Deſcription of the Boaſtings of a King puffed up with great Succeſs; and is as much as if he had ſaid, What Place is there into which I cannot make my Way? When I have gone, even with my Chariots in great Number, to the Top of high Mountains; to *Lebanon* it ſelf, through the moſt difficult Paſſages, which I have opened and plained for them? Who ſhall hinder me from cutting down its talleſt Cedars and Fir-trees (perhaps he means their Princes and great Men) and when I have done, from marching and taking up my Quarters in the extreameſt Borders of the Land, climbing up to the Top of *Carmel* (which was towards the *Mediterranean* Sea) or entering into all the fruitful Places of the Country, by making an entire Conqueſt of it. For ſo *Carmel* often ſignifies not a Mountain, but a fruitful Field, in the Language of this Prophet, *Iſaiah* x. 18. xvi. 10.

Ver. 24. *I have digged and drunk ſtrange waters,*] He brags that he had marched with his vaſt Army through ſtrange Countries, and in the drieſt Places, where it was thought his Army would die with Thirſt; but he digged till he found Water.

And with the ſole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the beſieged places.] This is commonly thought to ſignify, that he had gone dry-ſhod with his whole Army over great Rivers; whoſe Streams he turned another Way; and ſo had taken the ſtrongeſt Fortreſſes ſurrounded with deep Waters, and great Ramparts. But *Bochartus* hath made a plainer Paraphraſe upon theſe Words, which he thus tranſlates, *I have dried up the rivers of Egypt.* As much as to ſay, *I will enter as eaſily into Egypt, in which you confide, as if, when I come thither, all the rivers wherewith it is invironed ſhould be dried up.* See his *Hierozoicon*, P. 2. Lib. 5. Cap. 15. For the *Hebrew* Word *Maſor* (which we tranſlate every where *beſieged Places*, or *Defences*, or *Fortreſſes*) ſhould rather be taken for the ſingular Number of *Meſoraim*, which by Contraction is called *Mitzraim*, that is, *Egypt*. And if this be allowed, the Senſe then here is, as I ſaid before, *I have dried up all the rivers of Egypt*: Which was the higheſt Vaunt he could make of his Power, and numerous Forces. Thus *Iſaiah* xix. 6. *The Brooks of Defences ſhall be dried up*, is interpreted by *Kimchi*, *the rivers of Egypt ſhall be emptied and dried up.* And more plainly, *Micah* vii. 12; where *from the Fortreſs to the River* is ſo obſcure, that it is not to be underſtood, but *from Egypt to Euphrates* is ſuch clear Senſe, that one cannot but think it ſhould be ſo tranſlated; for thoſe were the Bounds of the Land of *Canaan*.

Ver. 25. *Haſt thou not heard long ago, how I have done it, and of ancient times, that I have formed it?*] Theſe are the Words of God, in Anſwer to thoſe empty Boaſts. But what is this to what I have done? Haſt thou not heard how I brought my People dry-ſhod through the *Red-Sea?* How in ancient Times, I ſay, long before thou or thy Anceſtors were born, I did this by my own Strength alone, without the Help of Nature or Art? For ſo the Word *Jatzar*, which we tranſlate *formed*, is uſed *Gen.* ii. 8. and other Places.

Now I have brought it to paſs, that thou ſhouldſt be to lay waſte fenced cities into ruinous heaps.] And it is I that have now brought thee to do all theſe Things of which thou braggeſt. Thou couldſt not have done one of them without my Leave: Who therefore permitted it, that I might puniſh thoſe Cities by thy Hand, which I had devoted to Deſtruction. See *Iſaiah* x. 5, 6, 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 26. *Therefore were their inhabitants of ſmall power: they were diſmayed and confounded; they were as the graſs of the field, and as the green herb; as the graſs on the houſe-tops, and as corn blaſted before it be grown up.*] This was the Reaſon, that the People of thoſe Cities whereof thou ſpeakeſt (*ver.* 12, 13.) were ſo very feeble, and unable to oppoſe thee; becauſe I delivered them into thy Hand.

Ver. 27. *But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage againſt me.*]

As much as to ſay, there are none of thy Motions hidden from me. For before thou cameſt from thy own Country, I knew with what Deſign thou marchedſt out, and what thou haſt done ſince whereſoever thou haſt entred; and underſtand with what Rage and Fury thou art come up to deſtroy my Dwelling-place.

Ver. 28. *Becauſe thy rage againſt me, and thy tumult is come up into my ears,*] I have heard the Noiſe thou makeſt with thy furious Threatnings, and with thy great Army which hath entred *Judea*.

Therefore I will put my hook in thy noſe, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way that thou cameſt.] He compares his abſolute Power over him to that of a Fiſherman, who, let a Fiſh tumble ever ſo much in the Water, hath it faſt by a Hook he hath fixed in his Noſe; or to a Man upon a Horſe or a Mule, whom he can turn which Way he pleaſe, when he hath a Curb in their Mouth. Even ſo ſaith God will I do with thee, draw thee back, preſs thou ever ſo much to compaſs thy Deſigns, into thy own Country, without any Succeſs.

Ver. 29. *And this ſhall be a ſign unto thee,*] This is ſpoken to *Hezekiah*.

Ye ſhall eat this year ſuch things as grow of themſelves, and in the ſecond year that which ſpringeth of the ſame, and in the third year ſow ye and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit thereof.] This was not a Sign of the Truth of his Prophecy, becauſe it was to come after that was fulfilled; but a Token of God's extraordinary Favour and Love to them, when *Sennacherib* was gone; and they were in Fear of another Enemy, *viz.* a grievous Famine. For tho' he had trodden down or eaten up all the Corn with his Army, yet they ſhould find ſufficient left to maintain them this Year, which was the fourteenth of *Hezekiah*. And though the next were the *Sabbatical* Year, in which they were to let the Land reſt, and neither ſow nor reap; yet he promiſes enough ſhould grow up of it ſelf to ſuſtain them, without any Culture, out of the Corn ſcattered in the former Year. And then in the ſixteenth Year God aſſures them of Liberty to till their Land as they were wont, and that they ſhould ſow and reap, as in a Time of Peace, when no Enemy appeared, nor there was any Fear of any. But until the Corn ſprung up and was ripe that Year, they lived upon what grew of it ſelf in the *Sabbatical* Year, without Tillage. Which demonſtrates the wonderful Providence of God over this People, in taking Care they ſhould want nothing in thoſe Years, without any Care of their own, if they believed in his Word. See *Levit.* xxv. where the Precept about this *Sabbatical* Year is delivered; and was obſerved by this People, from the firſt Conqueſt and Diviſion of the Land of *Canaan* forty-ſeven Years after the coming out of *Egypt*. See Dr *Alix*, *Reflections* on the Old-Teſtament, Part 2. Chap. 1.

Ver. 30. *And the remnant that is eſcaped of the houſe of Judah, ſhall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.*] He purſues the Metaphor from Corn that is ſown in the Ground; ſignifying, that they ſhould have firm Poſſeſſion of their own Country; and therein increaſe, and multiply, and flouriſh exceedingly.

Ver. 31. *For out of Jeruſalem ſhall go forth a remnant, and they that eſcape, out of mount Sion:*] For they who were now ſhut up in *Jeruſalem* ſhould be at Liberty; and they who eſcaped the Enemy's Fury in the Country, and fled thither for Refuge, ſhould go out of Mount *Sion*, to their own Poſſeſſions.

The zeal of the LORD of hoſts ſhall do this.] His great Love to his own Honour, and to his People, ſhall do theſe Wonders; to vindicate his Glory from that Contempt which was caſt upon it by *Sennacherib*.

Ver. 32. *Therefore thus ſaith the LORD, concerning the king of Aſſyria, He ſhall not come into this city, nor ſhoot an arrow there, nor come before it with a ſhield, nor caſt a bank againſt it.*] He promiſes the King of *Aſſyria* ſhould be ſo far from poſſeſſing himſelf of the City at this Time, that he ſhould not aſſault it, by ſhooting ſo much as an Arrow in it: No, nor appear with his Army againſt it, or raiſe Bulwarks to beſiege it. Or, as the *Hebrews* underſtand it, they ſhould not caſt a Stone out of their Engines againſt it. *Rab-ſaris*, I obſerved, *ver.* 8. continued the Siege; but whatſoever he did before, after this Meſſage of *Iſaiah* he made no Attempt upon them.

Ver. 33. *By the way that he came, by the ſame way he ſhall return, and ſhall not come into this city, ſaith the LORD.*] He confirms what he ſaid before, *ver.* 28.

Ver. 34. *For I will defend this city to ſave it,*] To preſerve it from Deſtruction.

For my own ſake, and for my ſervant Davids ſake.] Upon which Account he had formerly ſpared them, when they deſerved to be puniſhed, 1 *Kings* xi. 12, 13.

Ver. 35. *And it came to paſs that night,*] The *Jews* in the *Gemara Sanhedrin* (Cap. 11. N. 20.) ſay, that in the very Night after they ſet down before *Jeruſalem*, and were ſo weary that they made no Attempt upon the City, this which follows fell out. Others think it was the ſame Night that *Hezekiah* received *Sennacherib*'s railing Letter; which is more probable than the Opinion of our Dr *Jackſon*, who will have it that it was the ſame Night, about two Years after. See upon the *Attributes*, Sect. 3. Cap. 26. However it was, the Blow was the more remarkable, becauſe it was given in that very Night, wherein he had lifted up himſelf againſt the God of Heaven; or *Belſhazzar* afterwards did, and had his fatal Stroke given him in like manner. See *Daniel* v. 30.

That the angel of the LORD went out, and ſmote in the camp of the Aſſyrians, an hundred fourſcore and five thouſand men: and when they aroſe in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpſes.] By a Peſtilential Diſeaſe, as *Joſephus* calls it, λοιμικὸν νόσον, ſuch a vaſt Number were ſuddenly cut off. It is a Queſtion, whether this Deſtruction was made in the Army that beſieged *Libnah*, or in that Hoſt which *Rabſhakeh* brought up againſt *Jeruſalem*. *Joſephus* thinks the latter; for it is probable *Rabſhakeh* was come with his whole Hoſt againſt *Jeruſalem*, which before was

ſtraitned

straitned by *Rab-saris*; and κατὰ τὴν πρώτην τῆς πολιορκίας νύκτα, the first Night after they had begirt the City (as the *Jews* say, I observed, in *Sanhedrin*) the Angel of the LORD made this great Slaughter among them. Lib. 10. *Antiq.* Cap. 2. where a little before, in the End of the first Chapter, he takes notice of an horrible Lye which *Herodotus* reports from the *Egyptians*; Who say their King, being also a Priest, by his Prayers to his God, brought this Destruction upon the *Assyrians*, as they lay before *Pelusium*: A great Army of *Rats* coming in the Night, and gnawing all their Bow-strings in Pieces, so that they could not fight. So studious they were to pervert the Truth, and corrupt the Sacred Story.

Ver. 36. *So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.*] Being afraid that *Tirhakah* should come and destroy the Remainders of his broken Army, *ver.* 9.

Ver. 37. *And it came to pass as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god,*] The LXX here call this God *Nesorach*; and upon *Isaiah*, where this Story is again told, *Asarach*. But what any of these Names signify, Mr *Selden* acknowledges he cannot tell, having in all his reading, never met with any thing that might explain it. But *Kircher* adventures to say it was the Image of a *Ship*, representing the Ark of *Noah*: the Reliques of which, *Josephus* tells us, some reported were in his Time, in the neighbouring Mountains of *Armenia*. And a later Writer, *Beyerus* (in his Additions to *Selden de Diis Syris*) thinks it signifies as much as the *Bird of Noah*, that is, a Dove, which was worshipped by the *Assyrians*: Or, as other conjecture (for they can do no more) this Word is derived from *Nes*, which in *Chaldee* signifies a Province, and *Rac*, which signifies a King; that is, *Jupiter* the King, and Conservator of that Province.

That Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword:] Which they might the more easily do, when he suspected no Danger. The Reason of it was, because in his Danger (we may suppose) he had vowed that he would offer them up unto his God. Therefore they sacrificed him, to prevent being sacrificed themselves. One of them seems to have been called after the Name of a God worshipped in those Countries. xv. 11, 31.

And they escaped into the land of Armenia;] Which was not far off; and where there were Mountains of very difficult Ascent, and inhabited by a Warlike People.

And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.] Who was the King that sent a Colony to people the Country of *Samaria* (as I observed before from *Ezra* iv. 2.) and the rather because he feared *Hezekiah* might take Possession of it, after such a Defeat as his Father *Sennacherib* had received. His Name is curtailed several Ways. For in the Book of *Tobit* he is called *Sar-chedon*, i. 21. the first Syllable of his Name being cut off; and the LXX cut off the next, calling him *Aser-dan*; and *Isaiah* cuts off both, calling him *Sargon*, *Isaiah* xx. 1.

CHAP. XX.

Verse 1. *IN those days was Hezekiah sick unto death:*] This is set down after the Death of *Sennacherib*; but with this general Note only of the Time, wherein this Sickness fell out, *in those days*. Which, as Primate *Usher* observes in his *Annals*, doth not relate to what went just before (to the Time when the King of *Assyria* invaded the Land) as is evident from *ver.* 6. of this Chapter. Where he promises to add Fifteen Years to his Life, and also to deliver him from the King of *Assyria*. Which Deliverance therefore was after this Sickness, which was in the latter End of his Fourteenth Year; to which if we add Fifteen, they make up the whole Twenty-nine Years of his Reign.

And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said, Thus saith LORD, Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live.] That is, his Disease was in its own Nature mortal, and could not be cured by any Humane Remedy. Therefore he wished him to settle his Estate, and, as we speak, to make his Will; how all Things in his House should be disposed, when he was dead.

Ver. 2. *Then he turned his face unto the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying,*] That is, towards the Wall of the Sanctuary, as the *Targum*, expounds it. See Dr *Hammond* upon *Acts* x. *Annot. b.* He thought as it was not beyond the Power of God to restore him, so he had not peremptorily decreed that he should die: But there was a tacit Condition in the Message (as in other Cases, *Jonah* iii. 4.) otherwise he would not have prayed to be spared.

Ver. 3. *I beseech thee, O LORD, remember how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight:*] He was not conscious to himself that he had omitted any thing which was to be done for the restoring the true Worship of God. In which he had been so exact, as to take away the High Places, which had continued ever since the Time of *David*, and none durst remove them. And therefore he presumed to beg that he might live, to settle and establish what he had begun to do.

And Hezekiah wept sore.] One Reason was, as many think, that he had not yet a Son to succeed him on the Throne. For he lived after this Fifteen Years; and when he died *Manasseh* was but Twelve Years old, who therefore was born after this Sickness.

Ver 4. *And it came to pass after Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,*] It is doubtful whether we are to understand the middle of the Court *of the King's House*, or the middle of *the City*; for the one is in the Text, the other in the Margin of the *Hebrew* Bibles. But it is not material which we follow, for the Meaning is, that he was not gone far, before he was ordered to go back and carry a new Message, that his Prayer was heard.

Ver. 5. *Turn again, and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the*

God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, and ſeen thy tears: behold I will heal thee; on the third day thou ſhalt go up unto the houſe of the LORD.] Recover his ſtrength ſo faſt, as to be able in three days Time to go to the Temple, and give God Thanks for his Cure. Which appears by this to have been miraculous.

Ver. 6. *And I will add unto thy days fifteen years,*] More than he could have lived according to the courſe of Nature.

And I will deliver this city out of the hand of the king of Aſſyria, and I will defend this city for my own ſake, and for my ſervant Davids ſake.] For this Sickneſs was that Year when he threatned to deſtroy it. See upon *ver.* 1. It was a great Encouragement to faithful Obedience, that God ſo often mentions *David*'s Services with ſuch a kind Remembrance of them.

Ver. 7. *And Iſaiah ſaid, take a lump of figs. And they took, and laid it on the boil, and he recovered.*] There might be ſome natural Virtue in this Cataplaſm, to ſoften and ripen an hard Tumor, as this ſeems to have been (ſome think a Plague-Sore) but it was a ſupernatural Power which made ſo ſpeedy a Cure; of which God uſed this as a Sign.

Ver. 8. *And Hezekiah ſaid unto Iſaiah, What ſhall be the ſign that the* LORD *will heal me, and that I ſhall go up into the houſe of the* LORD *the third day?*] He did believe, no doubt, what the Prophet ſaid; otherwiſe he would have been ſharply reproved. But he made bold to deſire a Confirmation of his Faith; as good Men had done in other Caſes: Particularly *Gideon*, who threw down the Altar of *Baal*, and cut down the Grove at God's Command, and blew the Trumpet, and gathered an Army, which were Arguments of a ſtrong Faith; and yet, after all this, deſired a Sign from God, that God would deliver *Iſrael* by his Hand. *Judges* vi. 25, 34, 36, 37, &c.

Ver. 9. *And Iſaiah ſaid, This ſign ſhalt thou have of the* LORD, *that the* LORD *will do the thing that he hath ſpoken: Shall the ſhadow go forward ten degrees, or back ten degrees?*] Sometimes God, who is a free Agent, intending to convince Men by great Wonders that he is to be believed, is ſo graciouſly condeſcending, as to give them Leave to chooſe what they would have him do, or when; that his Power may be the more notorious, and no room left for doubting. So he did with *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* viii. 9, 10. and with *Ahaz*, *Iſaiah* vii. 11. And here with his Son *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 10. *And Hezekiah ſaid, It is a light thing for the ſhadow to go down ten degrees: Nay, but let the ſhadow return backward ten degrees.*] It was comparatively ſmall, becauſe to go forward was the natural Courſe of it; but to return back was a Miracle, both in the Thing, and in the Manner of it.

Ver. 11. *And Iſaiah the prophet cried unto the* LORD, *and he brought the ſhadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.*] It is obſerved by many modern Interpreters, that there is not a Word here ſpoken concerning the Sun's going back; but only of the Shadow upon the Dial; which might by the Power of God go either forward or backward, the Sun ſtill holding its Courſe, as it was wont to do. And the *Degrees* or *Lines* in the Dial may ſignifie either Hours, or half Hours, or, as ſome think, Quarters. See *Voſſius de Orig. & Progreſſu Idol.* Lib. 2. Cap. 9. Now the going back being three Times mentioned in this Chapter, and always ſpoken of the Shadow; therefore they conclude the Miracle was wrought upon the Dial only; not upon the very Body of the Sun. It is ſaid indeed, in *Iſa.* xxxviii. 8. *So the Sun returned ten Degrees*; but they think that may be meant of the *Shadow of the Sun* (as it goes before) God ſo diſpoſing the Rays of the Sun, and ordering the Light, that no Shadow ſhould be projected, but where the Prophet foretold. This I thought fit to repreſent; but muſt add that the ancient Jews, and Chriſtians too, took the Words of *Iſaiah* to ſignify that the Sun it ſelf went back, and not meerly the Shadow. Whom Primate *Uſher* in his *Annals* follows, whoſe Words are theſe; *The Sun and all the heavenly bodies went back; and as much was detracted from the next night as was added to this day.* A. M. 4001, Which was done, I ſuppoſe, on a ſudden, by the Power of God, and laſted not long before all was reſtored again to their uſual Place; ſo that no Change was made in the ſtate of the Heavenly Bodies. But that there was ſome Change for the preſent, was obſerved both in the Northern Part of the World at *Babylon* (from whence *Merodach-Baladan* ſent to enquire about this Wonder, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 31.) and alſo in the Southern, in the Land of *Egypt*: As we may gather from a remarkable Paſſage in *Herodotus*, who tells us in his *Euterpe*, Cap. 1. 42. that the *Egyptians* had obſerved ſtrange Alterations in the Motions of the Sun; ſo that it had riſen Four Times ἐξ ἡδέων out of its uſual Courſe, ἐντεῦθεν νῦν δὶς καταδύεται, ἐντεῦθεν δὶς ἐπαντεῖλαι, &c. it riſing twice where it now ſets, and ſetting twice where it now riſes; and yet, ὐδὲν τῶν κατ' Αἰγυπτίων ὑπὸ ταῦτα ἐτεράιωθῆναι; And yet no Change at all made among the *Egyptians*, by theſe things, neither in the Earth, nor the River, nor any thing elſe. That is a plain Evidence that their Neighbours (and many others, 'tis like) had heard of the unuſual Motions of the Sun (though without any Alteration in the Heavenly Bodies, which were ſoon returned to their former Station) but had not a perfect Knowledge of them, or had corrupted their Knowledge; for to thoſe two mentioned in Scripture, in the Time of *Joſhua* and *Hezekiah*, the *Egyptians* added two more, and make them to have been near the ſame Time. But the *Jews* themſelves have been thus fabulous, who ſay in the Chapter *Chelek*, that the Day on which *Ahaz* died was but two Hours long; but now when *Hezekiah*'s Life was prolonged, God reſtored thoſe Ten Hours which were then wanting, and ſo brought Time even. See *Schickard* in his *Bechinah Happeruſchim*, p. 122. They alſo believe this Miracle was wrought a little before Sun-ſet; but that excellent Perſon, whom I have often mentioned, Dr *Alix*, thinks it evident it was before Noon, about our ten of the Clock.

Ver. 12. *At that time Berodach-Baladan, the ſon of Baladan king of Babylon,*] Who is called *Merodach-Baladan* in *Iſa.* xxxix. 1. *Merodach* was the Name of an Idol among the *Babylonians*,

as

as *Baal* or *Bel* was another; together with *Adan* or *Adonis*, as Sir *J. Marſham* obſerves. *Joſephus* calls him Βαλάδας, and ſo doth *Beroſus*. He was but a Tributary to the King of *Aſſyria*, 'till *Nebuchadnezzar* came to reign, who caſt off the Yoke of *Aſſyria*, and made that Monarchy ſubject to him.

Sent letters] Some think to make a League with him againſt the King of *Aſſyria*: and it is likely *to enquire about the wonder done in the land*, 2 Chron. xxxii. 31.

And a preſent unto Hezekiah :] As the manner was when they ſought any one's Friendſhip.

For he had heard that Hezekiah had been ſick.] And therefore in theſe Letters, I ſuppoſe, he alſo congratulated his happy Recovery to Health.

Ver. 13. *And Hezekiah hearkned unto them,*] He gave them a friendly and benign Audience (as *Abarbinel* explains it) being glad at their coming, as *Iſaiah* tells us (xxxix. 2.) becauſe he knew them to be Enemies to *Sennacherib*. And the Words ſeem to import that they came about ſome weighty Buſineſs, to which he conſented.

And ſhewed them all the houſe of his precious things, the ſilver, and the gold, and the ſpices, and the precious ointment, and all the houſe of his armour, and all that was found in his treaſures :] He was ſo pleaſed, or rather tranſported with Joy, at the Honour the King of *Babylon* had done him, that he not only gave them a gracious Audience, as was ſaid before, but ordered his Officers to ſhew them all the Rarities he had in his Treaſures. For though his Country had been lamentably harraſſed by the King of *Aſſyria* and he had endeavoured to appeaſe him with great Gifts (xviii. 14, 15.) yet there were many good Things remaining in *Jeruſalem*; and great Preſents had been made to *Hezekiah*, ſince the Stroke from Heaven upon *Sennacherib*'s Army. 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 23. The precious Ointment here mentioned, is called by *Kimchi* and other *Hebrew* Doctors *Apharſemon*; which they ſay was the true *Balſam*; not to be found any where but near to *Jericho*.

There was nothing in his houſe, nor in all his dominions, that Hezekiah ſhewed them not.] There were other valuable Things in other Parts of the Realm, beſides thoſe in his own Palace at *Jeruſalem*, which he thought worth their ſeeing, and therefore ordered his Officers to ſhew them to theſe Embaſſadors.

Ver. 14. *Then came Iſaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and ſaid unto him, What ſaid theſe men? And from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah ſaid, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon.*] He anſwers to the laſt Part of *Iſaiah*'s Queſtion, but not a Word of the firſt, what their Buſineſs with him was? And he calls that a far Country from whence they came (though it was not very remote) to expreſs the Honour that was done him, by a Prince at ſuch a Diſtance from him.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid, What have they ſeen in thy houſe?*] He knew well enough what they had ſeen; but had a mind to hear whether *Hezekiah* would confeſs the Truth, or excuſe his Folly.

And Hezekiah anſwered, All the things that are in my houſe have they ſeen: there is nothing among my treaſures, that I have not ſhewn them.] He honeſtly relates the Truth; being inſenſible of how dangerous a Piece of Vanity he had been guilty; in ſhewing Strangers thoſe Treaſures, which he might well think would invite them to endeavour to make themſelves Maſters of them.

Ver. 16. *And Iſaiah ſaid to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the* LORD.] How he reſents this Action. Which was the more blameable, becauſe he had lately received ſuch great Benefits from God, and ſeen ſuch an aſtoniſhing Wonder as he wrought for the Confirmation of his Faith; whereby he ſhould have been moved not to glory in any thing, but the Goodneſs of God to him; nor confide in the Friendſhip of great Princes, but only in the Power of the Almighty.

Ver. 17. *Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine houſe, and that which thy fathers have laid up unto this day.*] There had been ſeveral great Kings in *Judah* who had overcome many Enemies, and got great Spoils; ſome Remainders of which were ſtill in their Stores: But *Iſaiah* foretels, all ſhould be carried away to that very Place, from whence he had been complemented by thoſe Embaſſadors.

Shall be carried into Babylon: nothing ſhall be left, ſaith the LORD.] The moſt pertinent Obſervation that I can make upon theſe Words, is that of Dr *Jackſon* (in his *Anſwer to* John's *Queſtion*) where he ſaith, that whoſoever will conſider the State of things in this Time, and the ſmall Power which the *Babylonians* now had, in reſpect of their mighty Neighbour the King of *Aſſyria* (whom the *Jwes* had Reaſon to fear above all other Princes) the Accompliſhment of this Prophecy of *Iſaiah* was according to humany Conjecture far more unlikely and improbable, than if a Man ſhould in the laſt Age, have taken upon him to foretel, that the Duke of *Saxony*, or ſome ſuch Prince in *Germany*, ſhould conquer *France* and *Spain*, and lead them Captive to *Dreſden*. But the Word of the LORD ſtands faſt for ever; and *Iſaiah* was proved an Hundred and twenty-five Years after to be a true Prophet.

Ver. 18. *And of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, ſhall they take away,*] That is, his Poſterity deſcended from him.

And they ſhall be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.] Wait upon him, as his Servants, xxiv. 15. This was partly fulfilled in *Daniel* and his Companions, *Dan.* i. 1.

Ver. 19. *Then ſaid Hezekiah unto Iſaiah, Good is the word of the* LORD *which thou haſt ſpoken. And he ſaid, Is it not good, if peace and truth be in my days?*] As if he had ſaid, Thanks be to God, it is no worſe; let him do his Pleaſure. Have I not Reaſon to be thankful, if according to his promiſe he deliver me from the King of *Aſſyria* (ver. 6.) and not only prolong my Days, but let me enjoy firm Peace, and true Religion as long as I live? Some take this to be a careleſs Speech, as if he did not concern himſelf what became of his Poſterity, ſo he himſelf did live happily. But this is inconſiſtent with ſuch a pious Mind has he had; which no doubt, was ſenſible of the Vanity and Pride for which the Prophet reproved him; and ſubmitted to the

the Puniſhment of it; which might have been immediately inflicted, if God had not been very merciful unto him.

Ver. 20. *And the reſt of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made a pool, and a conduit, and brought water into the city,*] If he brought Water into the City by private Paſſages, whereby the Enemy was deprived of the Benefit of it, while the City enjoyed it (as *Grotius* underſtands it) it was certainly a Work of admirable Contrivance. See 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 3.

Are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?] The ſame great Perſon here obſerves, that the book of *Chronicles* ſpoken of here, and in other Places, were *Journals*, as theſe Books were *Annals*. Out of which *Journals Ezra* took many more Paſſages, in his Book of the *Chronicles*, not omitting what he had written in theſe *Annals*.

Ver. 21. *And Hezekiah ſlept with his fathers: and Manaſſeh his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] Here is no mention of his Burial with his Fathers in the City of *David*: But *Ezra* in 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 33, tells us, they buried him *in the chiefeſt of the ſepulchres of the ſons of David*, and that all the People *did him honour at his death.*

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *Manaſſeh was twelve years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five years in Jeruſalem: and his mothers name was Hephzibah.*] The Years wherein he was Captive in *Babylon* (2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 11.) muſt be comprehended in this Number.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *after the abominations of the heathen, whom the* LORD *caſt out before the children of Iſrael.*] He ſet up the Gentile Worſhip again: For being young, he was eaſily drawn aſide by the Princes and Nobles, who never heartily joined in *Hezekiah*'s Reformation; but were, in all Probability, diſpleaſed at it; and ſo revolted as ſoon as he was dead. For one cannot conceive how ſuch a ſudden Change ſhould be made in Religion, and ſuch groſs Idolatry reſtored, but from the general Corruption of the Great Men, who had the Management of this young King.

Ver. 3. *For he built up the high places, which Hezekiah his father had deſtroyed, and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Iſrael, and worſhipped all the hoſts of heaven, and ſerved them.*] The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, as *Procopius Gazæus* explains it.

Ver. 4. *And he built altars*] To the Gods of the Neighbouring Nations.

In the houſe of the LORD,] In the very Sanctuary it ſelf; for the outward Courts are mentioned in the next Verſe.

Of which the LORD *ſaid, in Jeruſalem will I put my name.*] Where God appointed, that he himſelf alone ſhould be worſhipped, 2 *Sam.* vii. 13.

Ver. 5. *And he built altars for all the hoſt of heaven, in the two courts of the houſe of the* LORD.] The inner Court, which was that of the Prieſts; and the outward, which was that of the People, were profaned, together with the Sanctuary.

Ver. 6. *And he made his ſon paſs through the fire,*] In 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 6. it is ſaid he cauſed *his Children* to paſs through the Fire; which was a moſt abominable Practice, ſtrictly forbidden by *Moſes* upon Pain of Death, *Levit.* xviii. 21. xx. 2, 3.

And obſerved times, and uſed inchantments,] See *Levit.* xix. 22. *Deut.* xviii. 10, 11.

And dealt with familiar ſpirits, and wizards:] See *Levit.* xix. 31.

He wrought much wickedneſs in the ſight of the LORD, *to provoke him to anger.*] For there were none before him, who committed ſuch things as theſe; which were the higheſt Provocations of God's Diſpleaſure.

Ver. 7. *And he ſet a graven image of the grove which he had made, in the houſe*] The *Hebrew* Words in this Place are *Peſel haaſherah*, which our *Selden* hath well reſolved (by comparing this with other Texts) ſignifies a Wooden Image of *Aſhtaroth*, or *Aſtarte*. Syntagm. 2. *De Diis Syris*, Cap. 2. For *Baal* and *Aſtarte* were chief Gods of the *Sidonians*, whoſe Worſhip was introduced by *Ahab*; whom *Manaſſeh* imitated, *ver.* 3.

Of which the LORD *ſaid unto David, and to Solomon his ſon, In this houſe, and in Jeruſalem, which I have choſen out of all the tribes of Iſrael, will I put my name for ever.*] I obſerved before what God ſaid to *David*, and what he ſaid to *Solomon* is recorded, 1 *Kings* viii. 29. ix. 3. But *Manaſſeh* endeavoured to make the Name of the God of *Iſrael* to be forgotten; by placing other Gods in his Houſe.

Ver. 8. *Neither will I make the feet of Iſrael move any more out of the land which I gave their fathers; only if they will obſerve to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my ſervant Moſes commanded them.*] This Promiſe was included in the Choice God made of *Jeruſalem* to fix his Dwelling-place there Which was a Security to them againſt all their Enemies, if they proved obedient to him.

Ver. 9. *But they hearkened not:*] They had always been a rebellious People.

And Manaſſeh ſeduced them to do more evil than did the nations, whom the LORD *deſtroyed before the children of Iſrael.*] But in his Reign their Wickedneſs was grown to ſuch an Height, that it exceeded all that the People of *Canaan* had done; whom God expelled to make Room for the *Iſraelites*. For he broke all the Laws of *Moſes*, and worſhipped more Idols than they did. We never read of Horſes conſecrated to the Sun 'till his Time (See xxii. 11.) who in all Probability brought in that Idolatry.

Ver. 10. *And the* LORD *ſpake by his ſervants the prophets, ſaying,*] *Abarbinel* makes Account that *Hoſea*, *Joel*, *Nahum*, and *Habakkuk*, all propheſied in his Days. And ſome think *Obadiah* alſo, and *Iſaiah*: Who, as the Jews ſay, was ſawn aſunder by him.

Ver. 11. *Becauſe Manaſſeh king of Judah hath done theſe abominations and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him,*] The whole People of *Canaan* are comprehended under the Name of *Amorites*; who

were the moſt eminent of all the Seven Nations. See *Gen.* xv. 16.

And hath made Judah alſo to ſin with his idols:] They were too much inclined to Idolatry, by the long Corruptions that had been among them; but he made them far worſe than otherwiſe they would have been. For as *Jeremiah* charges them, in the next Reign but one, *according to the number of their cities were their gods, and according to the number of the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, they ſet up altars to that ſhameful thing, to burn incenſe to Baal.* Jerem. xi. 13.

Ver. 12. *Therefore thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, Behold, I am bringing ſuch evil upon Jeruſalem and Judah, that whoſoever heareth of it, both his ears ſhall tingle.*] The Report of it ſhall ſtrike Terror and Horror into Men, as *Procopius Gazæus* expounds it. See 1 *Sam.* iii. 11.

Ver. 13. *And I will ſtretch over Jeruſalem the line of Samaria,*] A Metaphor from thoſe who ſet out Mens Lots and Portions, by drawing a Line to divide them. And is as much as to ſay, he would give to *Jeruſalem* the ſame Meaſure that he had done to *Samaria*; that is, pull it down to the Ground; conſume ſome of them by Famine, others by the Sword, and carry the reſt into Captivity, as the ſame *Procopius* gloſſes.

And the plummet of the houſe of Ahab:] As they imitated his Sin, ſo they ſhould have his Puniſhment; whoſe Houſe was utterly deſtroyed. It ſeems to be a Metaphor from Builders, who meaſure with a Line and a Plummet what Part of a Building ſhall ſtand, and what be demoliſhed.

And I will wipe Jeruſalem as a man wipeth a diſh, wiping it, and turning it upſide down.] That is, leave no more People in it, than you ſee any thing in a Diſh after it is emptied, and wiped, and turned upſide down; as the Manner is when it is perfectly cleanſed. So the Meaning is, I will cleanſe her of all her Inhabitants, and leave none remaining. The Hebrew Word which we tranſlate *Diſh*, the LXX tranſlate ὁ ἀλάβαστρος, an Alabaſter Box of precious Ointment, as the Chaldee tranſlates it *Seluĉta*, in which the Greek Word λήκυθος lurks (as the illuſtrious *Spanhemius* obſerves upon *Callimachus* his *Hymn* in *Palad.* ver. 13.) ſignifying that *Jeruſalem* was once in high Eſteem with God, like a precious Ointment; but having loſt its Savour, he would reject her as a Man doth ſuch Ointment, when it is nothing worth.

Ver. 14. *And I will forſake the remnant of mine inheritance,*] That is, *Judah*, who alone was left when the ten Tribes were gone.

And deliver them into the hands of their enemies, and they ſhall become a prey, and a ſpoil unto all their enemies;] As their Brethren, the Children of *Iſrael*, had been.

Ver. 15. *Becauſe they have done that which was evil in my ſight, and have provoked me to anger from the day that their fathers came out of Egypt, even unto this day.*] God now intended to puniſh them for all their former Rebellions, ever ſince they were a People; which *Manaſſeh* had compleated, whoſe Sin was ſo great, that it is ſometimes mentioned as the ſole Cauſe of their Captivity. See *Jerem.* xv. 4.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, Manaſſeh ſhed innocent blood very much,*] Upon which Words *Procopius Gazæus* thus gloſſes, *He chiefly deſtroyed thoſe who oppoſed themſelves to his Impiety, and denounced the divine Anger againſt him* (that is, the Prophets.) *They ſay he cauſed the Prophet Iſaiah to be ſawed in ſunder.* So the Jews ſay in the *Babylonian Talmud*, in the Treatiſe *Jebamoth*, and *Juſtin Martyr* in his Dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew, and St *Hierom* upon *Iſa.* xx. 27. Nay, the Words of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* xi. 37. ἐπρίσθησαν are commonly referred to this, as Primate *Uſher* obſerves in his *Annals*, ad A. M. 3306.

'Till he had filled Jeruſalem from one end to another,] Top-full, as we ſpeak. For it is a Metaphor from Meaſures wet or dry, when they are filled up to the Brim.

Beſide his ſin wherewith he made Judah to ſin, in doing that which was evil in the ſight of the LORD.] That is, beſides his abominable Idolatry.

Ver. 17. *Now the reſt of the acts of Menaſſeh, and all that he did, and his ſin that he ſinned, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] All that he did in his Captivity, and after, were written in the *Journals*, from whence *Ezra* took what we find in 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 11, *&c.*

Ver. 18. *And Manaſſeh ſlept with his fathers, and was buried in the garden of his own houſe, in the garden of Uzza: and Amon his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] Some think this was the Place where *Uzziah* was buried, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 23. and that he choſe to be buried here, as unworthy becauſe of his manifold Sins (of which he repented) to be laid in the common Sepulchre of the Kings of *Judah.*

Ver. 19. *Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to reign, and he reigned two years in Jeruſalem:*] Which is the Number of Years to which the Sons of thoſe Kings arrived, who provoked God to Anger; as ſome of the Jews obſerve in the Son of *Jeroboam*, the Son of *Baaſha*, and the Son of *Ahab.* 1 *Kings* xv. 25. xvi. 8. xxii. 51.

And his mothers name was Meſhullemeth, the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah.]

Ver. 20. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the LORD, as his father Manaſſeh did.*] He imitated him in all Things but in his Repentance, as is obſerved, 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 23.

Ver. 21. *And he walked in all the ways that his father walked in, and ſerved the idols that his fathers ſerved, and worſhipped them:*] For he was bred up in Idolatry, and ſolemnly conſecrated by his Father to the Service of *Molech*, ver. 6.

Ver. 22. *And he forſook the God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD.*] As *Hezekiah*, and *Jotham*, and other of his pious Anceſtors had done. There are two Doctors alſo in the Chapter *Chelek*, the one of which ſaith, he burnt the Book of the Law; the other, that he lay with his own Mother.

Ver. 23. *And the ſervants of Amon conſpired againſt him, and ſlew him in his own houſe.*] As he forſook God, whoſe Servant he ought to have been; ſo his Servants forſook him, and murdered him in his own Palace.

Ver. 24. *And the people of the land ſlew all them that had conſpired againſt king Amon,*] It

was a thing of ſuch pernicious Example to kill their King, though very bad, that the People would not ſuffer it to go unpuniſhed.

And the people of the land made Joſiah his ſon king in his ſtead.] The common People ſeem to have been better diſpoſed than the Great Men; who, 'tis probable, were engaged in the Conſpiracy againſt *Amon*. But it is not likely that the common People took upon them to conſtitute a King, but their Elders and great Men met, together with the People, upon ſuch Occaſions as this, to declare to whom the Right of Succeſſion belonged. Therefore by the *People of the Land*, muſt be meant the People aſſembled in the common Council of the Nation.

Ver. 25. *Now the reſt of the acts of Amon which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*] There is nothing ſaid here of him, but that he was a groſs Idolater: Which was not the Ground of the Conſpiracy againſt him; but it is likely was related in the Book here mentioned.

Ver. 26. *And he was buried in his ſepulchre, in the garden of Uzza: and Joſiah his ſon reigned in his ſtead.*] He was buried either in his Father's Sepulchre; or in one that he made for himſelf in the ſame Place.

CHAP. XXII.

Verſe 1. *Joſiah was eight years old when he began to reign, and he reigned thirty and one years in Jeruſalem, and his mothers name was Jedidah, the daughter of Adaiah of Boſcath.*] Who it is likely was a good Woman, and took Care to inſtil early good Principles into him.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the ſight of the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aſide to the right hand, or to the left.*] In him was verified the Words of *Solomon*, *Prov.* xx. 11. *Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.* For when he had reigned Eight Years, *while he was yet young*, as *Ezra* obſerves, he began to reform all Abuſes in Religion, 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 3, *&c.*

Ver. 3. *And it came to paſs in the eighteenth year of king Joſiah, that the king ſent Shaphan the ſon of Azaliah, the ſon of Meſhullam, the ſcribe, to the houſe of the LORD, ſaying,*] This was in the Eighteenth Year of his Reign, not of his Age, as we are told, 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 4. *Go up to Hilkiah the high prieſt, that he may ſum the ſilver which is brought into the houſe of the LORD,*] He ordered him to give him an exact Account of what Money had been offered by pious People, for the Reparation of the Houſe of the LORD; as had been done in the Reign of *Jehoaſh*, xii. 4, *&c.*

Which the keepers of the door have gathered of the people.] They were the *Levites*, as we learn from 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 9.

Ver. 5. *And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the overſight of the houſe of the LORD: and let them give it to the doers of the work, which is in the houſe of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the houſe,*] They intruſted certain Perſons with the Money, who were to overſee the Work (whoſe Names are recorded in 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 12.) and they delivered it to the Workmen to buy Materials for the Reparation of the Houſe, as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 6. *Unto carpenters, and builders, and maſons, and to buy timber and hewen ſtone to repair the houſe.*] *Builders* (as diſtinguiſhed from *Carpenters* and *Maſons*) were ſuch as laid the Timber and the Stone together, which the other had prepared.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit, there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, becauſe they dealt faithfully.*] They were Men of ſuch approved Honeſty (like thoſe in the Days of *Jehoaſh*, xii. 15. that there was no need to call them to an Account, how they laid out the Money.

Ver. 8. *And Hilkiah the high prieſt ſaid unto Shaphan the ſcribe, I have found the book of the law in the houſe of the LORD: and Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.*] The Book of *Deuteronomy*, ſaith *Procopius Gazæus*. But it was rather the whole Book of the Law written by *Moſes*; that Authentick Copy which by God's Command was laid up in the moſt holy Place, *Deut.* xxxi. 24, *&c.* About which the Hebrew Doctors made great Difficulties in their Explication of this Place, particularly *R. Lipman* in his *Nitzacon*, out of which *Hottinger* hath alledged a long Paſſage concerning this Matter in his *Hiſtorica Eccleſiaſtica* N. T. §. 16. Parſ. 4. p. 137. Where he juſtly thinks it a Wonder that *Joſiah* ſhould ſo early fear God, and begin to reform Religion, if he had never ſeen the Book of the Law before this Time. And how ſhould the People have kept ſuch a Paſſover, and the Prieſts been ſo well inſtructed in the Rites of it, this very Year. (2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 19.) For the Copies of the Book now found could not be ſo ſoon made and diſperſed every were, as to teach them theſe Things. It is moſt likely therefore, nay certain, that though this was the Original Book, yet the Jews had many Copies of the Law among them, though ſome of them perhaps imperfect, or corrupted. For they report that *Manaſſeh* blotted the Name of *JEHOVAH* out of all the Books he could find. *Hilkiah* therefore rejoiced that he had found the Original, by which all might be corrected. Which had been hid, it is probable, from the impious Fury of their idolatrous Kings, in ſome ſecret Place of the Temple; where it was now found, when they were about to repair it: And the finding it at this very Time, when *Joſiah* was making a Reformation of Religion, could not but be looked upon as a remarkable Providence; which very much affected him, as we read afterwards.

Ver. 9. *And Shaphan the ſcribe came to the king and brought the king word again, ſaying, Thy ſervants have gathered the money that was found in the houſe, and have delivered it into the hand of them that do the work, that have the overſight of the houſe of the LORD.*] He gives him an Account, that they had executed his Commands, given him *ver.* 4, 5, 6.

Ver. 10. *And Shaphan the ſcribe ſhewed the king, ſaying, Hilkiah the prieſt hath delivered me a book: And Shaphan read it before the king.*] Some Part of it. It is ſaid indeed, in 2 *Chron.*

xxxiv. 30. that *they read in the ears of the people all the Book of the Law.* But that was done afterwards, and was done by Parcels, not all at one Time. And ſo it follows here, xxiii. 2. that *Joſiah* read, that is, cauſed ſome by his Order to read, all the Words of the Book of the Covenant that was found in the Houſe of the LORD, in the Ears of all the People.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.*] Being very much affrighted when he heard the dreadful Threatnings againſt the Tranſgreſſor of the Law, read out of the Book of *Deuteronomy*. At which the Book opened, either by the ſpecial Providence of God, or by the Deſign of *Shaphan*, who had read the Book before he brought it to the King, *ver.* 8. The *Hieruſalem Talmud*, and from thence *Abarbinel* ſaith, that he happened to read the Place where the Puniſhment of their King is denounced, *Deut.* xxviii. 36. or, that he obſerved the Time drew near, when the Puniſhments God threatned would be inflicted, for their long Offences againſt this Law. According to what the King himſelf here ſaith, *ver.* 13. *Great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled againſt us*, &c. By all which it is plain, the King had not written a Copy of the Law with his own Hand, according to the Command, *Deut.* xvii. 8. Diſuſe often cancels the moſt excellent Laws. For it is too probable they had a long Time neglected alſo to read the Law publickly every Seventh Year. *Deut.* xxxi. 9, 10.

Ver. 12. *And the king commanded Hilkiah the prieſt, and Ahikam the ſon of Shaphan, and Achor the ſon of Micaiah, and Shaphan the ſcribe, and Aſaiah a ſervant of the kings, ſaying,*] *Shaphan* was a Servant of the Kings, being Secretary, or ſome ſuch Officer; but *Aſaiah*, I ſuppoſe, was one that waited on his Perſon, and was always about him.

Ver. 13. *Go ye and enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people,*] Of *Jeruſalem.*

And for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled againſt us, becauſe our fathers have not hearkned unto the words of this book, to do according to all that which is written concerning us.] I ſuppoſe he ſent them to enquire whether there were any Hopes his Anger might be appeaſed; and by what Means.

Ver. 14. *So Hilkiah the prieſt and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Aſaiah, went unto Huldah the propheteſs, the wife of Shallum the ſon of Tikvah, the ſon of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe*] It is certain that both *Jeremiah* and *Zephaniah* propheſied in the Reign of *Joſiah*; therefore it may ſeem ſtrange that they did not reſort to one of them. Of which *Abarbinel* gives this Account, That *Jeremiah* was at this Time abſent from *Jeruſalem*, being gone to convert the Ten Tribes; or rather, being at his own Houſe in *Anathoth.* And the ſame he ſuppoſes of *Zephaniah*, that he was not near at hand; and therefore they went to *Huldah* who lived at *Jeruſalem*; and the rather, as ſome ſuppoſe, becauſe Women are more inclined to Pity and Compaſſion than Men. But this is an abſurd Reaſon, as *Abarbinel* well obſerves: For the Prophets did not ſpeak according to their own Inclinations, but as God dictated to them. The *Jews* have a Tradition in *Maſſecheth Megillah*, that eight Prophets deſcended from *Rahab*, whereof *Huldah* was one. And *Kimchi* upon this Place ſaith, Our Doctors write, that three propheſied in the Days of *Joſiah*; viz. *Jeremiah* in the Streets or Villages, *Zephaniah* in the Synagogues, and *Huldah* among the Women.

(*Now ſhe dwelt in Jeruſalem in the college*) *and they communed with her.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Miſhneh*, which we tranſlate *College* (and which the *Targum* takes to ſignify a *School*) is in the Margin of our Bibles tranſlated *the ſecond Part.* For there were three Walls about *Jeruſalem*, as *Abarbinel* obſerves. Within the *firſt* of which lived Artificers, and the common People; within the *ſecond*, the better Sort, the wiſe Men, Prophets, and Propheteſſes lived; and within the *third* was the Mountain of the LORD, as they ſpeak. Now of the middle Part of *Jeruſalem* they think the holy Writer here ſpeaks, in which *Huldah* dwelt.

Ver. 15. *And ſhe ſaid unto them, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, tell the man that ſent you unto me,*] She ſpeaks in the Prophetical Stile, and with great Boldneſs tells them the plain Truth.

Ver. 16. *Thus ſaith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read.*] All the Plagues threatned in *Deuteronomy* xxviii. and other Places.

Ver. 17. *Becauſe they have forſaken me, and have burnt incenſe unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands: therefore my wrath ſhall be kindled againſt this place, and ſhall not be quenched.*] This was the Anſwer to the King's Enquiry; that the Decree of God was peremptory, and irreſiſtable, againſt *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, for their Extirpation; and he adds the Reaſon thereof.

Ver. 18. *But to the king of Judah which ſent you to enquire of the LORD, thus ſhall ye ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, As touching the words which thou haſt heard;*] As far as they concerned his Perſon.

Ver. 19. *Becauſe thy heart was tender, and thou haſt humbled thy ſelf before the LORD, when thou heardeſt what I ſpake againſt this place, and againſt the inhabitants thereof, that they ſhould become a deſolation and a curſe, and haſt rent thy clothes, and went before me: I alſo have heard thee, ſaith the LORD.*] Here are *four* Tokens, as ſome obſerve, of a true Repentance and Converſion unto God, *Firſt*, Softneſs of Heart; which is oppoſed to that Hardneſs which ariſes from Unbelief of God's Threatnings; becauſe Faith makes Men tenderly affected with them. *Secondly*, Great Humility, ariſing from a Senſe of his Unworthineſs of any Mercy. Theſe two were inward: The other were outward Tokens of this inward Senſe; which were Rending his Cloaths, and Weeping for his own, and for the publick Offences; which moved God to take ſome Pity upon him, though he reſolved to deſtroy the Nation.

Ver. 20. *Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers,*] The Time haſting for their utter Deſtruction, God would let him live but a ſhort Time; which was a Mercy to him, that

he

he might not ſee the Miſeries that were coming upon them.

And thou ſhalt go unto thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all the evil which I will bring upon this place.] Though he was ſlain in Battle (xxiii. 29.) yet *he went to his grave in peace*; becauſe, as the next Words explain it, he did not live to ſee the Calamities which were inevitably threatned to come upon the Nation; but left his Kingdom in a peaceable Condition. For the *Egyptians* who ſlew him, gave them no long Diſturbance, and the *Babylonians* were not yet ready to come up againſt them.

And they brought the king word again.] Who immediately ſet himſelf to do all the Good he could for his Time; though he could not prevent the Evil that was coming.

CHAP. XXIII.

Verſe 1. *AND the king ſent, and they gathered unto him all the elders of Judah, and of Jeruſalem.*] Whom he acquainted with what he intended to do; and, I ſuppoſe, had their Conſent, which gave the greater Authority to what follows.

Ver. 2. *And the king went up into the houſe of the LORD, and all the men of Judah, and all the inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and the prieſts, and the prophets,*] *Jeremiah* and *Zephaniah* were the principal Prophets; and, it is likely, there were many more who are not mentioned.

And all the people both ſmall and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant] He ordered ſome to read (xxii. 10.) in ſeveral Places, ſo that all might hear; for it is not likely that one Man's Voice could reach ſo great a Multitude.

Which was found in the houſe of the LORD.] And ſome of the *Jews* ſay, was found lying open at that very Place, where thoſe Words preſented themſelves, *Deut.* xxxviii. 36, which awakened the King to cauſe all the Law of God to be read to them.

Ver. 3. *And the king ſtood by a pillar,*] Unto which his Throne adjoined; wherein the King was placed when he came to the Temple, as the *Hebrew* Doctors will have it. The King's Seat, ſaith *Jacob Juda Leo*, was in the Court of the *Iſraelites*, at the Entrance into the Court of the Prieſts, by a Marble Pillar. There he ſat when he came into the Temple to worſhip God. There *Joaſh* was made King by *Jehoiada* (xi. 14.) there *Hezekiah* read before the LORD the blaſphemous Letter which the King of *Aſſyria* ſent him (xix. 14.) and there *Joſiah* now made a Covenant with God that he would ſerve him. See *Vitringa Proleg.* ad L. *De Synag. Veteri.* Cap. 4.

And made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his teſtimonies, and his ſtatutes,] That is, all his Laws of all Sorts.

With all their heart, and with all their ſoul,] He made this Covenant in his own Name, and in the Name of all the People, whom he engaged faithfully to God's Service.

To perform the words of the covenant, that were written in this book: and all the people ſtood to the covenant.] They gave their Conſent to the Covenant; ſtanding before the LORD as he did, and not ſtirring from the Place where he propounded it unto them.

Ver. 4. *And the king commanded Hilkiah the high prieſt,*] It was very proper to commit the Reformation of the Houſe of God to the High Prieſt; and thoſe who miniſtred under him. Some will have *Hilkiah* to be the Father of *Jeremiah*, as is aſſerted by *Greg. Abulpharagius*, in his *Hiſtor. Dynaſtarum*, p. 68. Which is an Error; for *Jeremiah* was a Prieſt of *Anathoth*, whither *Abiathar* was baniſhed, of the Seed of *Ithamar*, from whom it is likely he was deſcended, 1 *Kings* ii. 26.

And the prieſts of the ſecond order,] They that were under the High Prieſt; eſpecially the *Sagan* (as the *Targum* here hath it) who was the Vicar of the High Prieſt, and ſtood at his Right Hand when he officiated, as the *Jews* tell us, in *Joma*, where they ſay a Man could not be made a High Prieſt, unleſs he had been firſt a *Sagan*.

And the keepers of the door,] Whom the *Chaldee* call *Amarcelim*; which Word we find xii. 10. Where the *Targum* expounds it, *Prieſts that were Treaſurers:* That is, ſuch *Levites* as had the Cuſtody of the ſacred Money, which was for the Repair of the Temple. And the *Hebrew* Phraſe is not much different, *the Keepers of the Threeſholds*; that is, the Entrance into thoſe Chambers (as *Hottinger* thinks) wherein were kept ſuch Things as were of publick Uſe in the Temple. Of which there were *ſeven*; wherein the Prieſts Garments were laid up, and other ſuch like things.

To bring forth out of the temple of the LORD, all the veſſels that were made for Baal.] The Word we tranſlate *Veſſels* or *Inſtruments*, ſignifies all the various Furniture belonging to *Baal*, and the reſt of the falſe Gods, which ſerved either for offering of Incenſe, or Sacrifices, or the Veſtments of the Prieſts, *&c.*

For Baal,] Who was the principal Idol, whoſe Worſhip *Ahab* firſt introduced, and *Manaſſeh* reſtored after *Jehu* had aboliſhed it, as was ſaid before, xxi. 3.

And for the grove,] I obſerved before, that by a Grove is meant the *Image or Idol of the Grove*; which *Ahab* had brought in alſo. See there xxi. 3, 7, and here below, *ver.* 6.

And for all the hoſt of heaven:] That is, the Planets, and the reſt of the Stars, which the *Sabæans*, and *Chaldæans*, and other eaſtern People worſhipped. Whom the *Jews* impiouſly imitated though they had been taught in the very Beginning of their Law, that the Sun, the Moon, and all the Stars, were all created by their God.

And he burnt them without Jeruſalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the aſhes of them into Beth-el.] Which Place (where, as *Kimchi* ſpeaks, was the very *Foundation of Idolatry*) he polluted and profaned, by caſting this Filth there; that they who were wont to worſhip the Calves in that Place, might avoid it, and not come near it.

Ver. 5. *And he put down the idolatrous prieſts, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incenſe in the high places, in the cities of Judah, and*

and in the places round about Jeruſalem :] Theſe idolatrous Prieſts are called *Chemarim* in the *Hebrew*; becauſe they were cloathed in black Garments (as *Kimchi* gives the Reaſon both upon this Place, and upon *Zephan.* i. 4.) Whereas the Prieſts of the Moſt High were cloathed in White; eſpecially thoſe whoſe Genealogy was not queſtioned. They indeed who could not make out their Deſcent, were cloathed in black Habit, to diſtinguiſh them from undoubted Prieſts: And ſo were they who had any Defect or Blemiſh in their Body, as appears from the *Talmud* in *Middoth.* And indeed it is certain, that they among the Heathen who ſacrificed to the infernal Gods, were cloathed with ſuch Veſtments, as appears by *Canida* in *Horace*, *Lib.* 1. *Sat.* 8, and *Medea* in *Apollonius Rhodius*, *Lib.* 3. *ver.* 861; from whence ſome think they had the Name of μελανηφόροι, which we find in ſome ancient Inſcriptions. And thus the *Egyptians* bewailed *Oſiris*, all which was ſuitable to their mighty Sacrifices; wherein they were ſad for the Abſence of the Sun, who was meant by *Oſiris*, as *Gilbertus Cuperus* obſerves in his *Harpocrates*, p. 129. And here now we have found the Original of theſe *Chemarim*, Prieſts cloathed in Black. For it was a *black Ox* which repreſented *Oſiris* among the *Egyptians*, and it was covered ἱματίῳ μέλανι βυσσίνῳ with a black Silk Garment; from whence, in all Likelihood, the Prieſts came to be ſo cloathed.

Them alſo that burnt incenſe unto Baal, to the ſun, and to the moon,] Here *Baal* is diſtinguiſhed from the *Sun*; and therefore ſignifies the ſame with *Belus*, who was a deified King: And indeed it is highly probable, that not only *Baal*, but *Moloch*, and *Adonis*, were the Names only of ſome very potent Kings, who were adored when they were dead, and in Time were thought to be real Gods.

And to the planets, and to all the hoſts of heaven.] The *Hebrew* Word *Mazaloth*, which the LXX pronounce *Mazuroth*, it thought by *Procopius Gazæus* to be the Name of a Star, and moſt likely the Evening Star: Which others take to ſignify a *Conſtellation*, as we tranſlate it in the Margin; or all the twelve Signs. For the *Jewiſh* Aſtronomers call the *Zodiack*, *Ophan hamazaloth*, the Circle of the Signs.

Ver. 6. *And he brought out the grove from the houſe of the* LORD, *without Jeruſalem, unto the brook Kidron,*] By the *Grove*, as I have obſerved before, is meant the *Image of the Grove*, or in plainer Words *Aſhtaroth*: For ſo *Procopius Gazæus* ſaith, that where the LXX tranſlate this Word the *Grove*, others render it Ἀσήρωθ, or Ἀσάρωθ; that is, Ἀσάρτη or *Venus*. For τῆς Ἀφροδίτης τὸ ξόανον ἔνδον ἔστησαν ἐν τῷ θείῳ νεῷ, *they had ſet up the Statue of* Venus *in the Temple of God.* See *Selden* Syntag. 2. *De Diis Syris*, Cap. 2.

And burnt it at the brook Kidron, and ſtampt it ſmall to powder, and caſt the powder thereof upon the graves of the children of the people.] Which by the Law were impure, and unclean; and ſuch he declared theſe Aſhes to be, and actually made them unclean, that none might touch them; much leſs gather them up as ſacred Reliques. And ſo *Kimchi* expounds this Place, he brought forth the wooden Statue of *Diana*, which *Manaſſeh* had placed there (xxi. 7.) and having burnt it and ſtamped it to Powder, ſcattered the Aſhes on the Graves of the Idolaters, in Deteſtation and Contempt of their Idolatry.

Ver. 7. *And he broke down the houſe of the Sodomites, which were by the houſe of the* LORD,] From this ſome gather they were come to ſuch an Height of Wickedneſs, that there were thoſe among them who expoſed their Bodies to be abuſed contrary to Nature, in Honour of thoſe filthy Deities which they worſhipped. For theſe publick Houſes were near the Temple of the LORD; and therefore theſe were Perſons conſecrated to Impurity, contrary to *Deut.* xxiii. 17. See 1 *Kings* xiv. 24. And ſo the ancient Interpreters here underſtand corporal Filthineſs: Only the *Chaldee* tranſlates it, the Houſes of Things conſecrated to Idols. *R. Solomon Jarchi* thinks it probable, that among thoſe who worſhipped the Statues of the *Moon* or *Venus*, there were thoſe who proſtituted themſelves to filthy Mixtures. But Mr *Selden* by *Kedeſchim* (which we tranſlate *Sodomites*) underſtands the Prieſts of *Aſtarte*, whom St *Hierom* upon *Hoſea* iv, calls *exſectos*, upon Pretence of greater Purity, depriving themſelves of thoſe Parts that ſerve for Procreation of Children.

Where the women wove hangings for the grove.] For *Aſherah*, or *Aſtarte* before mentioned; as *Selden* expounds it in the fore-named Place. Theſe *Hangings* or Curtains, incompaſſed the Image, and made a kind of *Houſe* for it, as the *Hebrew* Word imports, which the *Greeks* called καίσκους and ναίδια, little Temples, or Habitations. Into thoſe Tents the Worſhippers went, and there committed all manner of Lewdneſs; for they had not arrived to ſuch a Degree of Impudence, as not to ſeek for Privacy in their Filthineſs.

Ver. 8. *And he brought all the prieſts out of the cities of Judah,*] Would not ſuffer them to dwell there, to corrupt the People.

And defiled the high places where the prieſts had burnt incenſe,] He made them, ſaith *Kimchi*, Receptacles of Impurity, by caſting dead Carkaſſes there, and other ſuch like unclean Things; that ſo he might remove out of the Peoples Hearts all Idolatry: For where ſweet Odours were wont before to be, there was nothing but Stench.

From Geba to Beer-ſheba,] That is, throughout the whole Country; for *Geba* was in the Northern Parts, and *Beer-ſheba* in the Southern. See 1 *Kings* xv. 22. *Judges* xx. 1.

And brake down the high places of the gates that were in the entring in of the gate of Joſhua, the governour of the city; which were on a mans left hand at the gate of the city.] The high Places of the Gates ſeems to have been erected there, to offer Incenſe to thoſe Tutelar Gods, unto whom their idolatrous Kings had committed the Protection of their City. And *Kimchi* thinks that the Governour of the City had his private houſhold God, and a portable Altar whereon he offered to his domeſtick Idol. Which *Joſiah* did not ſpare; but let the greateſt Men ſee his impartial Zeal againſt all Idolatry.

Ver. 9. *Nevertheleſs, the prieſts of the high places came not up to the altar of the* LORD *in Jeruſalem, but they did eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren.*] He mixed Mercy together with Severity. For though he did not ſuffer thoſe

thoſe Prieſts, who had offered Incenſe in thoſe High Places (directly contrary to the Law, *Deut.* xii. 11.) to offer Sacrifices at God's Altar; becauſe they had defiled themſelves with that ſinful Worſhip, though to the true God; yet he permitted them to partake of the Bread of the Prieſts, which comprehends all thoſe Parts of any Sacrifice that was the Prieſt's Portion. He mentions indeed only the Meat-offering; which was to be of *unleavened bread* (*Levit.* ii. 4, 5, 11.) but that is put by a *Synechdoche* for all other Offerings belonging to the Prieſts. So that they were put into the Condition of thoſe Prieſts that had any Blemiſh; who might not *offer the bread of their God*, *Levit.* xxi. 17, 21. But they *might eat the bread of their God, both of the* Holy and moſt Holy, *ver.* 22. *Ezek.* xliv. 10.

Ver. 10. *And he defiled Tophet, which is in the valley of the ſon of Hinnom.*] By throwing all manner of Filth into it, as well as by throwing down the Altars on which they ſacrificed their Children, as the *Syriack* and *Arabick* ſeem to underſtand it.

That no man might make his ſon or his daughter paſs through the fire to Moloch.] Though a great Number of the *Hebrew* Doctors think that their *paſſing their children through the fire*, was nothing more, than making them paſs between two Fires, whereby they were conſecrated to that Idol; yet it is certain, as I have ſhewn before, xvi. 3, that they offered their Children ſometimes as burnt Sacrifices to Idols. Which was a thing ſo horrid, that perhaps they invented this inſtead of it, to make them paſs through two Fires. Or perhaps the Opinion of *Maimonides* may be true, that they did not burn their Children to *Moloch*, as they did to other Idols: But the entire Worſhip of *Moloch* was abſolved, by making Children only paſs through the Fire to him; as his Words are in his Book of *Idolatry*, Cap. 6. §. 5; which may be confirmed from *Jerem.* xix. 5, where he ſaith; *they burnt their ſons with fire unto Baal* in *Tophet*. See *Selden* Syntag. 1. *De Diis Syris*, Cap. 6. where he largely treats of this.

Ver. 11. *And he took away*] That is, he deſtroyed, as the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies, *ver.* 5. where we tranſlate it, *he put down the Chomarim*; that is, deſtroyed or ſlew thoſe Prieſts, as *Bochartus* interprets it. So *Levit.* xxvi. 6, we tranſlate the ſame Word, *I will rid evil Beaſts out of the Land*; that is, deſtroy them. The LXX here tranſlate it κατέκαυσε, *he burnt* the Horſes; as before, κατέκαυσε χώμειμ, he burnt the Prieſts: Though perhaps in both Places it ſhould be κατέπαυσε, *he made to ceaſe*, as the *Hebrew* Word literally ſignifies.

The horſes that the kings of Judah had given to the ſun,] That is, had conſecrated to the Sun; as *Levit.* xx. 2, they are ſaid to give their Children to *Molech*. A great Number of Authors tell us, that among ſeveral Nations theſe Animals were ſacred to the Sun (as *Hawks* and ſome other Creatures were) becauſe of their Swiftneſs in their Courſe. But it is uncertain, whether they were kept to be ſacrificed to the Sun (as they were among the *Maſſagetæ*, *Perſians*, *Armenians*, and other People mentioned by *Bochartus*) or only to be led forth in Pomp (as ſome of the *Jews* ſpeak) every Morning to meet the Riſing Sun. Or, as others take it, the Worſhippers of the Sun got upon theſe Horſes early in the Morning, and rode out to adore the Sun at its riſing. See *Hierozoicon. P.* 1. *Lib.* 11. *Cap.* 10.

At the entring in of the houſe of the LORD, *by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain,*] Or, the Eunuch, who was ſome great Officer in the Court.

Which was in the ſuburbs,] So the *Targum* interprets the Word *Parvarim*; which moſt Tranſlations retain as the Name of a Place, unto which the Street in which theſe Horſes were kept reached; from the Chamber of *Nathan-melech*. He was the principal Officer, perhaps, that looked after them; and had the Overſight of all thoſe Stables which were built from the Temple Gate to *Parvarim*. And perhaps he rode out himſelf every Morning upon one of them, to ſalute the riſing Sun in the King's Name.

And burnt the chariots of the ſun with fire.] The ancients fancied the Sun it ſelf was carried about in a Chariot (as *Bochart* obſerves in the Place above-mentioned) and therefore Chariots as well as Horſes, were dedicated to it. Which he makes an Argument, that they were not meer brazen, ſilver, or golden Statues of Horſes that are here meant; but real living Horſes to draw thoſe Chariots. See *Voſſius de Orig. & Prog. Idol.* Lib. 11. Cap. 4. Some of thoſe who think they were only *imagines equorum & quadrigarum* (as *Selden* ſpeaks, *Syntag.* 2. *De Diis Syris*, Cap. 8.) Images of Horſes and Chariots, made of ſome Metal or other, imagine they were repreſented in the Shape of *Griffins*, as the famous *M. Spoon* thought. See Dr *Hyde*, *De Relig. Vet. Perſ.* p. 117.

Ver. 12. *And the altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made,*] They were not ſatisfied with the publick Altars they had made, in a vaſt Number of high Places: But the Roofs of their Houſes being flat, they made Altars there (ſee *Jerem.* xix. 13. xxxii. 29. *Zephan.* i. 5.) and particularly upon the King's Palace, where they worſhipped the Sun, Moon, and Stars. But this could not privilege them from Deſtruction, that they were on the Top of the King's Houſe.

And the altars that Manaſſeh had made in the two courts of the houſe of the LORD, *did the king beat down, and brake them down from thence; and caſt the duſt of them into the brook Kidron.*] It is ſaid in 2 *Chron.* xxxiii. 13, that when *Manaſſeh* repented, he *took away all the altars he had made in the mountain of the houſe of the* LORD: and I ſuppoſe thoſe in the Courts of the Prieſts and of the People were then removed. But *Amon* ſet them up again in the very Place where *Manaſſeh* had erected them; and ſo they are here called his Altars.

Ver. 13. *And the high places that were before Jeruſalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of corruption,*] That is, Mount *Olivet*, 1 *Kings* xi. 2, which was anciently called *Harmiſchah* the *Mount of Unction*; becauſe of the Olives that grew there in great Plenty; but, by Way of Contempt and Scorn, was called by the Prophets *Harmaſchith*, the *Mount of Corruption*, becauſe of the Idols that were placed there, whereby

whereby the People were corrupted in their Religion.

Which Solomon the king of Iſrael had builded for Aſhtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemoth the abomination of the Moabites, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon,] It is not to be doubted but theſe deteſtable Idols had been taken away by ſuch religious Kings as *Aſa*, *Jehoſhaphat*, and *Hezekiah*; but they were reſtored again by their impious Succeſſors, in the very ſame Place, and the ſame Figure with thoſe ancient ones; and ſo are here called thoſe that *Solomon* made, becauſe he was the firſt Author of them, or at leaſt permitted them to be made by his Wives, and connived at their Worſhip, as *R. Levi* thinks.

Did the king defile.] By dead Mens Bones, and other unclean things, which he threw into thoſe Places.

Ver. 14. *And he broke down the images, and cut down the groves.*] Wherein the Images were.

And filled their places with the bones of men.] Which he cauſed to be digged out of their Graves, and burnt; being the Bones of idolatrous Prieſts, *ver.* 16.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, the altar that was at Beth-el,*] For this City and the Territories thereof had been under the Power of *Judah*, ever ſince the Reign of *Abijah*, 2 *Chron.* xiii. 19, 20.

And the high places which Jeroboam the ſon of Nebat, who made Iſrael to ſin, had made, both that altar and the high place, he brake down, and burnt the high place, and ſtampt it ſmall as powder, and burnt the grove.] That is, he burnt the golden Calf, as Mr *Selden* thinks; for *Aſherah* commonly ſignifies ſome Image, as he ſhews in his Diſcourſe about *Aſtarte*, whoſe Image 'tis likely this was; for the golden Calf, as the *Jews* think, was carried away before this. But that is not certain: and *Selden*'s Opinion is probable, that the *Golden Calves* were made of Wood gilded over, and thence called *Golden*, which were eaſily burnt. *Syntag.* 1. *De Diis Syris*, Cap. 4.

Ver. 16. *And as Joſiah turned himſelf,*] Looking round about him; being reſolved to truſt no Man's Eyes but his own, in diſcovering the Monuments of Idolatry.

He ſpied the ſepulchres that were there in the mount,] It is not ſaid whoſe Sepulchres they were; but it is probable, of the idolatrous Prieſts (for in the *Chronicles* he is ſaid to have burnt their Bones) and of the Prophets and great Men, who had been Inſtruments to promote *Jeroboam*'s Idolatry.

And ſent and took the bones out of the ſepulchres, and burnt them upon the altar, and polluted it,] For nothing was more unclean than that which had touched dead Mens Bones.

According to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed theſe words.] Who foretold three hundred and ſixty-two Years ago theſe very things ſhould be done by a King called *Joſiah*, 1 *Kings* xiii. 2.

Ver. 17. *Then he ſaid, What title is that that I ſee?*] There was one Stone, or Pillar, I ſuppoſe, more eminent than the reſt, with the Name of the Perſons buried under it: And therefore called a *Title*, becauſe there was an Inſcription engraven upon it, according to the Cuſtom among the *Jews* (as now among us) to preſerve thereby the Memory of thoſe they loved.

And the men of the city told him, It is the ſepulchre of the man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed theſe things that thou haſt done againſt the altar of Beth-el.] The King was the more curious (as *Raſi*, and *Kimchi* alſo tells the Story out of the *Midraſch*) to know whoſe Grave that was; becauſe on one Side of it he ſaw Nettles and Thiſtles grow, and on the other Side Myrtles and other odoriferous Plants; ſignifying that there lay a true Prophet and a falſe. For which there is no Ground, but their fabulous Fancy.

Ver. 18. *And he ſaid, Let him alone, let no man move his bones:*] It is pertinently obſerved by *Joh. Walphius*, that if pious Perſons in thoſe Days had had the ſame Opinion about Reliques which now is in the Church of *Rome*, the King would not meerly have ordered his Bones to lie quiet and undiſturbed; but put them into golden Boxes, and carried them to *Jeruſalem*, to be there religiouſly worſhipped by the People.

And they let his bones alone, and the bones of the prophet that came out of Samaria.] That is, out of the Country of *Samaria*.

Ver. 19. *And all the houſes alſo of the high places*] What theſe Houſes were, whether Places for Worſhip, or for the Habitation of the Prieſts of the high Places (mentioned in the next Verſe) is uncertain. It is moſt likely the former; becauſe they provoked God to Anger.

That were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of Iſrael had made to provoke the LORD to anger,] In ſuch Cities of *Samaria* as were in the Poſſeſſion of the King of *Judah*; for upon the Fall of the *Aſſyrian* Empire, many of the Cities, no doubt, became ſubject to their old Maſters.

Joſiah took away, and did unto them according to all the acts that he had done in Beth-el.] That is, he brake them down, and burnt them, and ſtamped them to Powder, *ver.* 15.

Ver. 20. *And he ſlew all the prieſts of the high places that were there, upon the altars,*] There were ſome Prieſts of the high Places (of whom we read before, *ver.* 8, 9.) that he did not kill; for they were ſuch as ſacrificed only unto God in the high Places. But thoſe whom he ſlew, were either the Prieſts of *Jeroboam* who worſhipped the Calves, and had no Right to the Prieſthood (but had invaded it by the Favour of their King) or ſuch Prieſts of the Order of *Aaron* as ſacrificed to *Baal*, or other falſe Gods.

And burnt mens bones upon them,] Which was the higheſt Pollution of thoſe Altars, *ver.* 13, 14.

And returned to Jeruſalem.] Having made a Progreſs through all the Country, to aboliſh idolatrous Worſhip where it was practiſed; he returned to *Jeruſalem*, there to reſtore the Solemnities of true Religion.

Ver. 21. *And the king commanded all the people, ſaying, Keep the Paſſover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in the book of this covenant.*] Which he had bound them and himſelf to obſerve, *ver.* 3. and now tried them whether they would *ſtand to the Covenant*, as they promiſed, by making a Proclamation through the whole Kingdom that they ſhould keep this Feaſt.

Which

Which was a Commemoration of the greateſt Benefit God ever beſtowed on them, before the giving them the Law, for it made them a free Nation.

Ver. 22. *Surely there was not held ſuch a paſſover from the days of the judges, nor in all the days of the kings of Iſrael, and of the kings of Judah.*] Since the Time of the Prophet *Samuel*, the laſt of their Judges, there had never been ſuch a great Concourſe of People at any Paſſover, nor ſuch a Multitude of Sacrifices offered; nor ſuch an exact Obſervation of the Rites and Ceremonies belonging to this Feaſt. For in the Time of *Hezekiah* many were abſent; and many had not purified themſelves as they ought: But now, as *Ralbag* expounds it, they were all turned to the LORD, and there were no Idolaters nor Apoſtates among them. See *Selden*, *Lib.* 1. *De Syned.* Cap. xii. p. 478.

Ver. 23. *But in the eighteenth year of king Joſiah, wherein this paſſover was held unto the LORD in Jeruſalem.*] In the ſame Year that he took care to have the Temple repaired (xxii. 3.) and to purge it from all Idols (xxiii. 4.) he reſtored the true Worſhip of God to ſuch Purity as it had not been in for ſome Ages.

Ver. 24. *Moreover, the workers with familiar ſpirits, and the wizards,*] Of which ſee what I have noted upon *Levit.* xix. 31. xx. 6.

And the images,] In the Hebrew the *Teraphim*, which were very ancient among Idolaters, as I have obſerved upon the Book of *Geneſis*, xxxi. 19.

And the idols,] Of which there were many ſorts, that are all comprehended in this Word.

And all the abominations that were ſpied in the land of Judah, and in Jeruſalem,] What theſe Abominations were is not certain, but it is likely they were ſuch as *Ezekiel* ſaw and deſcribes in after-times; when God ſhewed him what odious things they committed ſecretly. See *Ezek.* viii. 6, 9, 10, 13, 15, *&c.*

Did Joſiah put away, that he might perform all the words of the law, which were written in the book that Hilkiah the prieſt found in the houſe of the LORD.] He had his Spies, it is probable, to diſcover all ſecret Idolatry, as well as publick, which being found out he aboliſhed, as abominable unto God.

Ver. 25. *And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his ſoul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moſes; neither after him aroſe there any like him.*] He doth not compare him with *David* and *Hezekiah* (as *Procopius Gazæus* here notes) but with other pious Kings, ſuch as *Aſa*, *Jehoſhaphat*, and *Jotham*; who were far inferior to him in Piety. And *Hezekiah* himſelf was not ſo exact, and did not make ſuch a thorough Search as he did, after all idolatrous Practices. The Nation alſo was ſo much corrupted ſince his Days, by his Son *Manaſſeh*, who reigned a long Time, that it made the Work of Reformantion more difficult in the Time of *Joſiah*. Yet in ſome regard *Hezekiah* excelled him; and therefore the ſame Character is given of him (xviii. 5.) which is here given of *Joſiah*; becauſe of his Truſt in God, in the Time of his greateſt Diſtreſs, for which he was very eminent. But as to Repentance, *Joſiah* was moſt exemplary.

Ver. 26. *Notwithſtanding, the LORD turned not from the fierceneſs of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled againſt Judah, becauſe of all the provocations that Manaſſeh had provoked him withal.*] Though *Joſiah* was moſt ſincere in what he did, and omitted nothing to reſtore the Purity of God's Worſhip among them; yet he could not procure the Preſervation of the Nation from Deſtruction, but only a Forbearance of it for a Time. For the People were ſo corrupted by *Manaſſeh*, that they rather complied with *Joſiah* in his Reformation, than heartily deſired it, out of an inward Affection to it. The innocent Blood alſo ſhed by *Manaſſeh* was unpardonable, xxiv. 3, 4. Of which the People 'tis likely approved, and ſo fell under an irreverſible Sentence of Deſtruction. See *Ezek.* xxiv. 6.

Ver. 27. *And the LORD ſaid, I will remove Judah alſo out of my ſight, as I have removed Iſrael, and will caſt off this city Jeruſalem, which I have choſen, and the houſe of which I ſaid, my name ſhall be there.*] He peremptorily decreed that they ſhould be carried away Captive, as the Ten Tribes had been; and that his divine Preſence among them, ſhould not ſave them; but he would abandon his own Dwelling-place, and removing from them, leave them a Prey to their Enemies: Which we find livelily repreſented in *Ezek.* x. 18, 19. where the Prophet ſaw the Glory of the LORD departing from his Houſe, and carried away by the *Cherubims*.

This may ſeem ſtrange, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, that God ſhould thus viſit the Sins of *Manaſſeh* of which he had repented; and not be reconciled after *Joſiah* had aboliſhed all Monuments of Idolatry, and the *Iſraelites* had kept ſuch a Paſſover, as is before mentioned; unto which he anſwers, that though it be ſaid *Manaſſeh* repented; yet it is not ſaid he turned to God with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, as *Joſiah* did. For *Manaſſeh* repented only when he was in great Diſtreſs; and though he repented, the People did not; but fell to their idolatrous Practices as ſoon as he was dead, following his wicked Son *Amon*. Nay, he thinks in the Days of *Joſiah* they were little better, as he gathers from xi and xii *Jeremiah*. To which may be added what we read in the Prophet *Zephaniah*, who lived in the Days of *Joſiah*, and threatned in the Name of God, *I will utterly conſume all things from off the land, and conſume both man and beaſt*, *Zeph.* i. 2, 3. For they were ſtill private Idolaters, though they complied with the publick Reformation; ſwearing by the LORD, and by *Malcom*; and when the High Places were taken away, worſhipping the Hoſt of Heaven upon the Houſe-Tops, *ver.* 5.

Ver. 28. *Now the reſt of the acts of Joſiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*]

Ver. 29. *In his days Pharaoh-Nechoh king of Egypt*] Whom *Herodotus* in his ſecond Book, calls Νεκὼς, and mentions the Fight which he had with the *Syrians*, ἐν Μαγδώλῳ. See *Uſher* his *Annals*, *ad* A. M. 3394.

Went up againſt the king of Aſſyria,] Who was then King of *Babylon*; for he had ſubdued the *Aſſyrians*, and brought them under his Empire. There are thoſe indeed who think this happened before that Time, and that this King of *Egypt* went to revenge the Injuries done them by *Sennacherib*; and he hoped for the better Succeſs, becauſe he was much weakened by that Slaughter the Angel had made of his Army; and becauſe the *Medes* and *Babylonians* had rebelled againſt the *Aſſyrians*. But why *Joſiah* ſhould go to help the *Aſſyrians* no Account can be given. Our forementioned *Primate* hath better expounded it, that as the King of *Perſia* having ſubdued *Babylon* and *Aſſyria*, is called the *King* of *Aſſyria*, *Ezra* vi. 22. So here the King of *Babylon* having ſubdued *Aſſyria*, is called *King* of *Aſſyria*. Beſides, that *Babylon* was anciently accounted a Part of *Aſſyria*; and the Land of the *Chaldæans* is ſaid to be founded by the *Aſſyrians*, *Iſaiah* xxiii. 13. And thus *Joſephus* expreſsly ſaith, Lib. 10. *Antiq.* Cap. 6. Μήδης πολεμῶν καὶ τὴς Βαβυλωνίης. οἱ τὴν Ἀσσυρίων καθέλυσαν ἀρχήν. *The King of Egypt came to fight the Medes and Babylonians, who had overturned the Aſſyrian Empire.*

To the river Euphrates:] To beſiege *Carchemiſh*, which lay upon that River, as we read, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 20. Which City was poſſeſſed by the *Aſſyrians* in the Time of *Sennacharib* (*Iſaiah* x. 9.) but their Empire being overthrown, it returned under the Power of the *Babylonians*.

And king Joſiah went againſt him,] Being afraid he intended to invade his Country in his Paſſage; or to divert him from his Expedition againſt the *Babylonians*, with whom he was in League. It is likely the latter was the Reaſon; for the King of *Egypt* aſſured him he had no Quarrel with him; and yet he would fight him, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 21, 22.

And he ſlew him in Megiddo,] Gave him a mortal Wound; of which he died, not till he came to *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 24.

When he had ſeen him.] At the firſt Brunt, as ſoon as they had joined Battle. See xiv. 8.

Ver. 30. *And his ſervants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo,*] Mortally wounded (as was ſaid before) which befel him, the *Jews* think, becauſe he did not aſk Counſel of the LORD, by the prophet *Jeremiah*.

And brought him to Jeruſalem, and buried him in his own ſepulchre:] With ſuch Lamentations, as we no where read were made for any other King, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 25. which continued ſo long that it came a Proverb, *Zechar.* xii. 11.

And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the ſon of Joſiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his fathers ſtead.] He is called *Shallum*, *Jerem.* xxi. 11. and was younger than *Jehoiakim*, as appears by this, that he was but twenty-three Years old when he began to reign, and reigned but three Months: After which *Jehoiakim* being made King, was twenty-five Years old, *ver.* 31, 36. But the People preferred *Jehoahaz* before him, becauſe perhaps he was the more warlike Perſon. And they *anointed* him, as *Abarbinel* thinks, becauſe he was not the Firſt-born, and his Title queſtionable. For they anointed Perſons only when there was a Controverſy about the Succeſſiou. *Ralbag* alſo is of Opinion that the People by Force made him King againſt his Will; which he will have to be the Import of that Phraſe, *they took Jehoahaz*, &c.

Ver. 31. *Jehoahaz was twenty-three years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jeruſalem: and his mothers name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.*] His Father *Joſiah* had four Sons, and this was the youngeſt of them, as appears from 2 *Chron.* iii. 15. where he is called *Shallum*, as he his by the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Which Name our great *Primate* thinks ſeemed to the People to be of an ill Omen (for *Shallum* King of *Iſrael* reigned but one Month) which made them change it into *Jehoahaz*; which proved not much more fortunate to him, for he reigned but three Months, *ad* A. M. 3371.

Ver. 32. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *according to all that his fathers had done.*] After the Example of *Ahaz*, *Manaſſeh*, *Amon*, and ſuch like wicked Kings; his Mother perhaps having infuſed ill Principles into him.

Ver. 33. *And Pharaoh-Nechoh put him in bands at Riblah, in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jeruſalem,*] When he returned from his Expedition againſt the *Babylonians*, he depoſed this Prince, as an Uſurper; or hearing that he intended to be revenged of him for his Father's Death; or that he was of a turbulent Spirit, and ſo put it out of his Power to give him any Diſturbance.

And put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of ſilver, and a talent of gold.] In Token of their Subjection to him.

Ver. 34. *And Pharaoh-Nechoh made Eliakim, the ſon of Joſiah king, in the room of Joſiah his father,*] For the eldeſt Son *Johanan*, in all Likelihood, was dead.

And turned his name to Jehoiakim,] As the Manner of Conquerors was, to change the Names of thoſe whom they had ſubdued, in Token of their abſolute Power over them. See *Daniel* i. 7. And the forenamed *Primate* thinks he gave him this Name, that he might teſtify, he aſcribed his Victory over the *Babylonians* to *Jehovah*, the God of *Iſrael*; who he ſaid excited him to that Expedition, 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 21, 22.

And he took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there.] According to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, whom God ſent to call this new King and the People to Repentance (xxii. 1, 2, 3.) *Weep ye not for the Dead (i. e.* for *Joſiah) neither bemoan him, but weep ſorely for him that goeth away* (that is, for *Shallum*) *for he ſhall return no more, nor ſee his native Country*, &c. *but he ſhall die in the place whither they ſhall lead him captive*, &c. *Jerem.* xxii. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 35. *And Jehoiakim gave the ſilver and the gold to Pharaoh, but he taxed the land to give the money, according to the commandment of Pharaoh;*] For the Treaſures of the LORD's Houſe, and of the King's, it ſeems were empty.

He exacted the ſilver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it to Pharaoh-Nechoh.] Proportionable to every Man's Eſtate.

Ver. 36. *Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jeruſalem: and his mothers name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.*] In the very Beginning of his Reign *Jeremiah* was ſent to him with a Meſſage from God, to bring him to Repentance, *Jerem.* xxvi. 1, 2, 3. *Jerem.* xxvii. where he ſeems (*ver.* 12.) to have told his Brother *Zedekiah* that he ſhould be King, if *Jehoiakim* was diſobedient; and exhorts him not to be ſo.

Ver. 37. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *according to all that his fathers had done.*] See *ver.* 32. For he killed the Prophet *Urijah*, and was at the Charge to fetch him out of *Egypt*, whither he fled to ſave his Life, *Jerem.* xxvi. 20, 21, &c. And if it had not been for *Ahikam* the ſon of *Shaphan*, who had been a great Man in his Father *Joſiah*'s Court, he had ſerved *Jeremiah* in the ſame Manner, *ver.* 24.

CHAP. XXIV.

Verſe 1. [*IN his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up,*] He is called by heathen Writers *Nabo-col-aſſar*: and, as Primate *Uſher* thinks, *Nebopolaſſar* was his Father. He begun his Reign in the fourth Year of *Jehoiachim*, as *Jeremiah* tells us, xxv. 1. When having ſmote the Army of *Pharaoh-Nechoh* at *Carchemiſh* near *Euphrates* (*Jerem.* xlvi. 2.) he came up to make the *Jews* Tributaries to him, as they had been to *Pharaoh*.

And Jehoiachim became his ſervant three years: then he turned and rebelled againſt him.] He omits his being bound in Chains, and carried to *Babylon*, which was in the fifth Year of King *Nebuchadnezzar*, and the eighth of *Jehoiakim* (2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 6.) where having been kept a while, and promiſing Fidelity to *Nebuchadnezzar*, he reſtored him to his Kingdom, in which he ſerved him three Years; and then in his ninth Year rebelled againſt him, by the Inſtigation, it is probable, of *Pharaoh*, who began to gather Strength again. But this proved fatal to him, for *Pharaoh* was not able to help him, *ver.* 7.

Ver. 2. *And the* LORD *ſent againſt him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and ſent them againſt Judah to deſtroy it,*] Theſe were all ſubject to *Nebuchadnezzar*, whom he ſent to chaſtiſe *Jehoiakim*, before he came himſelf, and beſieged *Jeruſalem*, and carried away Part of the Veſſels of the Houſe of the LORD, *&c.* For this was the third Year mentioned by *Daniel* after he was reſtored to his Kingdom (*Dan.* i. 1, 2.) when he, *Hananiah*, *Michael*, and *Azariah* were carried captive to *Babylon*, ver. 6.

According to the word of the LORD, *which he ſpake by his ſervants the prophets.*] By the Prophet *Iſaiah*, xx. 17, 18. of this Book, and by *Huldah*, xxii. 16. and *Jeremiah* in the xiv and xv Chapters.

Ver. 3. *Surely at the commandment of the* LORD *came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his ſight, for the ſins of Manaſſeh, according to all that he did:*] By God's ſpecial Order thoſe People came up againſt *Judah* (therefore in the Verſe before he is ſaid to *ſend them*) becauſe they were incurable. For *Manaſſeh*, had ſo corrupted the whole Body of the people, that *Joſiah*'s Reformation could not recover them; but immediately upon his Death, his Son relapſed to the old Idolatry.

Ver. 4. *And alſo for the innocent blood that he ſhed (for he filled Jeruſalem with innocent blood) which the* LORD *would not pardon.*] See xxi. 16. Upon the Repentance of *Manaſſeh*, and the Reformation made by *Joſiah*, God deferred their Puniſhment; but he reſolved not to grant them an abſolute Pardon of their Iniquity; which provoked him to decree their Extirpation.

Ver. 5. *Now the reſt of the acts of Jehoiakim, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?*

Ver. 6. *So Jehoiakim ſlept with his fathers:*] It appears by this, that *to ſleep with one's fathers* ſignifies no more than to die, as they did. For *Jehoiakim* was not buried with them, nor died in his Bed: But being taken by the *Chaldeans*, he died as they led him out of *Jeruſalem*, and, according to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah* (xxii. 18, 19.) they caſt him out of the Gates, and he had the Burial of an Aſs; that is, lay upon the Ground unburied. *Abarbinel* thinks he died in the Way to *Babylon*; and his Body was left in the High-way, without any Care taken to interr it; but it lay expoſed to the Sun by Day and to the Froſt by Night, *Jerem.* xxxvi. 30.

And Jehoiachin his ſon reigned in his ſtead.] Who is called alſo *Jechoniah*, 1 *Chron.* iii. 16. and more briefly *Choniah* (by way of Contempt, as ſome think) *Jerem.* xxii. 24.

Ver. 7. *And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt, to the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the king of Egypt.*] After the Fight at *Carchemiſh* (which I mentioned, *ver.* 1.) *Nebuchadnezzar* conquered all the Places that the King of *Egypt* held, between that and the River of *Egypt*. Concerning which, ſee my Notes on *Gen.* xv. 13. So that he durſt not ſtir out of the Limits of his own Country, which was bounded by that River, till the Reign of *Zedekiah*. When the King of *Egypt* adventured to come up to help him, but in vain; for he was forced to return to his own Land, *Jerem.* xxxvii. 7, 8.

Ver. 8. *Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to reign,*] That is, when he began to reign alone after his Father's Death: But his Father when he was but eight Years old made him his Aſſociate in the kingdom (2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 9.) that he might continue the Kingdom in his Family, and there might be no Contention among his Sons about it. Thus this Account and that in the *Chronicles* are eaſily reconciled. When his Father had reigned one Year, he took him to reign with him; and ſo he came to reign ten Years with his Father, and three Months alone. Now here *Ezra* mentions only the Years he reigned alone, but there he ſpeaks of all that he reigned with his Father and alone. *Abarbinel* gives another Account of this Diffi-

culty, with which I ſhall not trouble the Reader; it ſeeming to me a little more forced than this Solution of it. And the plaineſt Way is to acknowledge an Error in the Tranſcriber of the Book of *Chronicles*.

And he reigned in Jeruſalem three months, &c.] *And ten days*, as it is explained, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 9. but ſuch ſmall Numbers are wont to be omitted in greater Sums. See 1 *Kings* xvi. 18.

Ver. 9. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *according to all that his father had done.*] A wonderful thing, that he ſhould not be moved to do better, by the ſad Example of his Father, and his Predeceſſor.

Ver. 10. *At that time the ſervants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up againſt Jeruſalem, and the city was beſieged.*] It is likely that *Nebuchadnezzar* heard he was entered into a Confederacy with the King of *Egypt*, as his Succeſſor did; and therefore ſent an Army againſt him in the very Beginning of his Reign, to lay Siege to *Jeruſalem*, againſt which he intended to come himſelf. Some of the *Jews* ſay, that the Counſellors of *Nebuchadnezzar* repreſented to him how unadviſedly he had acted, in making him King, whoſe Father had been in Rebellion againſt him; uſing this Proverb, *From an ill Dog never comes a good Whelp.* Whereupon he reſolved to depoſe him, and make *Zedekiah* King.

Ver. 11. *And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came againſt the city, and his ſervants did beſiege it.*] He firſt ſent an Army under his great Commanders, and then came in Perſon, and found they had obeyed his Orders, and inveſted the City.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he and his mother, and his ſervants, and his princes, and his officers:*] He made a Surrender of the City into the Hands of the King of *Babylon*; by the Counſel of *Jeremiah* perhaps, who adviſed the ſame to his Succeſſor more than once, *Jerem.* xxi. 9. xxvii. 17. xxxviii. 2. And happy was it for him that he obeyed, and gave up himſelf to the King of *Babylon*; for God declared by the Figure of good and bad Figs, that he had ſent them into the Land of the *Chaldæans* for their Good; whereas they that remained in the Land ſhould be removed into all the Kingdoms of the Earth, for their Hurt. See *Jerem.* xxiv. 5, 6, 7, 8, &c.

And the king of Babylon took him the eighth year of his reign.] That is, in the eighth Year of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s Reign: For he began to reign in the fourth Year of *Jehoiakim*; who reigned ſeven more after that, which was the eighth Year of *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Ver. 13. *And he carried out thence all the treaſures of the houſe of the* LORD, *and all the treaſures of the kings houſe,*] There being no Mention of the carrying away of the Ark, either here, or in the Book of the *Chronicles*, or in *Jeremiah*, among the holy Things of the Temple, it is probable that it was burnt, together with the Temple, in the next Reign, when the remaining holy Things were carried away, but nothing ſaid of this. For what the *Jews* ſay of its being hidden by the Prophet *Jeremiah* in a certain Cave in Mount *Nebo*, is a meer Fable; there being no Ark in the ſecond Temple, as they confeſs, which there might have been, if it had been only hidden 'till the Temple was reſtored.

And cut in pieces all the veſſels of gold which Solomon the king of Iſrael had made in the temple of the LORD,] That is, all in a manner, but not abſolutely all; for ſome were remaining, or elſe renewed again (which is not likely) xxvi. 14, 15. And by *cutting in pieces* muſt be meant no more than their being cut off from the Temple; which was deprived of a principal Part of its Treaſure; for theſe Veſſels were preſerved entire, and not cut in Pieces, as appears from *Dan.* v. 2.

As the LORD *had ſaid.*] By the Prophet *Iſaiah* unto *Hezekiah*, xx. 17. As for the Pillars, and the Sea, and the Baſes, and the Reſidue of the Veſſels that were not now taken away, they were only reſerved till the next Reign; when *Jeremiah* propheſied they ſhould be carried away alſo, *Jerem.* xxvii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 14. *And he carried away all Jeruſalem,*] He explains what he means by the following Words; which reſtrain it to the principal Perſons.

And all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thouſand captives,] Among whom was *Ezekiel*; who began his Prophecy from this Captivity, *Ezek.* i. 2, 3, and calls it *our captivity*, xl. 1. *Mordecai* of the Tribe of *Benjamin* was carried away at this Time, *Eſther* ii. 5, 6, 7, if we believe the *Jews*.

And all the crafts-men and ſmiths:] By Crafts-men ſome underſtand Carpenters; who were Artificers, as the Smiths were.

None remained, ſave the pooreſt people of the land.] Who were ſo numerous, that *Zedekiah* was tempted to rebel, and that againſt his Oath of Fidelity to the King of *Babylon*.

Ver. 15. *And he carried Jehoiachim to Babylon, and the kings mother, and the kings wives, and the officers, and the mighty men of the land; thoſe carried he into captivity, from Jeruſalem to Babylon.*] All that belonged to the Court, or that were of any Quality in the Country. See *Jerem.* xxiv. 1. xxix. 1, 2. *Ezek.* xvii. 12, 13.

Ver. 16. *And all the men of might, even ſeven thouſand, and crafts-men, and ſmiths a thouſand; all that were ſtrong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon.*] This and the foregoing Verſes *Abarbinel* explains in this Manner. By the ten thouſand mentioned *ver.* 14. are meant in general the whole Number of *Judah* and *Benjamin* that were now carried Captive. Then here he comes to ſhew how this Number was made up (*ver.* 15, 16.) *Jehoiachim*, and all his Court and great Men were ſeven thouſand, the Crafts-men and Smiths a thouſand. The reſt were not mighty Men, nor ſuch Tradeſmen, but Miniſters and Servants of the Court, and other conſiderable Men in the Country who made up two thouſand more, and compleated the ten thouſand. *Jeremiah* computes them to have been but a little above three thouſand that were now carried away to *Babylon*: But he reckons only thoſe that were carried from *Jeruſalem*; whereas here is an Account of thoſe that were carried from

other Cities, and out of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, which were ſeven thouſand. There was another Captivity before this in the laſt Year of King *Nebupolazzar* (*Dan.* i. 1, 2, 3.) but then only a few ſelect Perſons were carried away, to wait upon the King of *Babylon*; and therefore are not mentioned either by *Jeremiah* or by this divine Writer. But a very learned Friend of mine, in his late *Chronology of the Old Teſtament*, p. 49, thinks that the firſt Captivity was the greateſt of all; thoſe Words, xxiv. 3. *This came upon Judah to remove them out of God's ſight*, implying (in his Opinion) that not only ſome of the Seed Royal, with ſome others, but the Body of the People were led into Captivity. And therefore he dates the *Seventy Years* Captivity from that Time; *viz.* the Fourth Year of *Jehoiachim*, in the Beginning of the Reign of *Nebuchadnezzar*. See *Jerem.* xxv. 1, 11, 12.

Ver. 17. *And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his fathers brother king in his ſtead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.*] Which ſignifies *the Juſtice of God*: And ſeems to have been given him, to put him in mind of the juſt Judgment of God, which would fall upon him, if he broke the Oath of Fidelity which he took to the King of *Babylon*, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 13. *Ezek.* xvii. 13, 14, 18.

Ver. 18. *And Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jeruſalem*, &c.] In the End of which he was carried Captive, *Jerem.* i. 3.

Ver. 19. *And he did that which was evil in the ſight of the* LORD, *according to all that Jehoiakim had done.*] Not regarding what *Jeremiah* ſaid unto him, but ſhut him up in Priſon, *&c. Jerem.* xxxiii. 1, 2. 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 12. And his Servants, and the People of the Land, were as bad as himſelf, *Jerem.* xxxvii. 1, 2.

Ver. 20. *For through the anger of the* LORD *it came to paſs in Judah and Jeruſalem, until he had caſt them out from his preſence, that Zedekiah rebelled againſt the king of Babylon.*] God was ſo highly diſpleaſed with this wicked People, that he permitted *Zedekiah* to break his Faith with *Nebuchadnezzar*, and to rebel againſt him, forgetting for what Cauſe he changed his Name. Unto his Revolt, it is probable, he was perſwaded by the Embaſſadors which the Kings of *Edom*, *Moab*, *Ammon*, *Tyre* and *Zidon* ſent unto him, to ſolicite him to throw off the Yoke of the King of *Babylon*, *Jerem.* xxvii. 2, 3, 4, &c. Which was the greater Crime, becauſe he had *made him ſwear by God* he would be true to him, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 13. The King of *Egypt* alſo, it is likely, promiſed him Help, as I noted before, *ver.* 7. and ſee *Ezek.* xvii. 15. And *Hananiah* a falſe Prophet aſſured him God would in two Years Time break the Yoke of the King of *Babylon*, and bring back all the Veſſels of the Houſe of God, with *Jehoiachin* and all the Captives. See *Jerem.* xxviii. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c. *Jeremiah* indeed proved that he made them truſt in a Lie, by predicting his Death that very Year, which accordingly fell out, *ver.* 15, 16, 17. But they ſtill perſiſted in their vain Hopes, there being other Deceivers, that *propheſied falſly in God's Name*, *Jerem.* xxix. 8, 9. And they moſt of all deceived themſelves with proud Conceits that they were the true Seed of *Abraham*, who had a Right to that Land, *Ezek.* xxxiii. 24.

CHAP. XXV.

Verſe 1. *AND it came to paſs, in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he, and all his hoſt, againſt Jeruſalem,*] See *Jerem.* xxxix. 1. lii. 4.

And pitched againſt it,] Encamped themſelves before it.

And they built forts againſt it round about.] On which to place their Batteries, and keep any Relief from coming to them.

Ver. 2. *And the city was beſieged to the eleventh year of king Zedekiah.*] There was another Siege begun before this; *viz.* in the third Year of *Zedekiah*; but during this ſecond Siege, the King of *Egypt* came to help *Zedekiah*. Which made the *Chaldæans* raiſe the Siege for a Time, *Jerem.* xxxvii. 12. And then *Jeremiah* endeavoured to get out of the City, but was hindred; and bad them not flatter themſelves, for the *Chaldæans* ſhould return, and burn the City with Fire; as he had told *Zedekiah* before, xxxiv. 1, 2, *&c.*

Ver. 3. *And on the ninth day of the fourth month the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land.*] Who had fled thither out of the Country, to ſecure themſelves, and their Families. This Famine is deſcribed as very terrible, in the Book of the *Lamentations* of *Jeremiah*, iv. 10.

Ver. 4. *And the city was broken up, and all the men of war fled by night, by the way of the gate, between two walls, which is by the kings garden (now the Chaldæans were againſt the city round about) and the king went the way toward the plain.*] It is an hard matter to underſtand how they made their Eſcape, ſince the *Chaldæans* had begirt the City round about; unleſs we ſuppoſe they kept ſtrong Guards only at the Gates of the City: But the *Chaldæans* having made a Breach in the Wall, they got away privately between the Wall and the Out-works, in a Paſſage which the *Chaldæans* did not ſuſpect. And the King ran into the Champain Country with ſome of his Forces attending him. The *Jews* think there were Subterranean Conduits from the Royal Garden into the Plain, through which *Zedekiah* went out; but this is without any Ground.

Ver. 5. *And the army of the Chaldæans purſued after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho: and all his army was ſcattered from him.*] Every Man ſhifting away, and endeavouring to ſave himſelf in ſuch Places as he could flee unto.

Ver. 6. *So they took the king, and brought him to the king of Babylon, to Riblah,*] Where he lay, to attend the Succeſs of the Siege, and to ſend them Supplies, and intercept any Relief that might come to them.

And they gave judgment upon him.] A great Council, I ſuppoſe, was called; who paſſed a ſolemn

ſolemn Sentence upon him, in condemning him as a rebellious Subject. Thus was fulfilled the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, that he ſhould ſee the King of *Babylon*, and ſpeak with him, *Jerem.* xxxii. 4. xxxiv. 3.

Ver. 7. *And they ſlew the ſons of Zedekiah before his eyes,*] See *Jerem.* lii. 11.

And put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of braſs, and carried him to Babylon.] Thus two famous Prophecies were fulfilled, which ſeemed to contradict one the other (whereby *Zedekiah* perhaps was tempted not to believe them) one of *Jeremiah*, that he ſhould be carried to *Babylon* (xxxii. 5. xxxiv. 3.) and the other of *Ezekiel*, that he ſhould not ſee *Babylon*, xii. 13. The Event made good both; for he was carried thither blind.

Ver. 8. *And in the fifth month, on the ſeventh day of the month (which is the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon) came Nebuzaradan captain of the guard, a ſervant of the king of Babylon, unto Jeruſalem :*] It is ſaid in *Jeremiah* lii. 12. that he came on the tenth Day of this Month: That is, he came from *Riblah* upon the ſeventh, and arrived at *Jeruſalem* on the tenth: Or, if he came to *Jeruſalem* on the ſeventh, he did not burn the Temple 'till the tenth; but ſpent the Eighth and Ninth days, as the Jews ſay, in eating, drinking, and making merry. *Nebuchadnezzar* did not come himſelf to *Jeruſalem*, but he ſent this great Man to execute his Commands; who, the Jews ſay, became a Proſelyte.

Ver. 9. *And he burnt the houſe of the LORD,*] After it had ſtood four hundred Years, as Sir *John Marſham* computes it. But Primate *Uſher* makes Account it was burnt four hundred twenty-four Years, three Months and eight Days, after it began firſt to be built by *Solomon*. But neither of theſe Accounts are true, if we believe all the learned Jews (*Kimchi*, *Ralbag*, *Abarbinel*, &c.) who agree that it ſtood four hundred and thirty Years. *Joſephus* ſtands amazed at this that the ſecond Temple was burnt by the *Romans*, in this very Month, and the ſame Day of the Month, *Lib.* 6. *De Bello Judaico*, *Cap.* 27. And ſo we read in *Seder Olam Rabba*, *Cap.* 30, that the *Levites* were in their Desks ſinging the very ſame Song in both Deſtructions, which was this, *He ſhall bring upon them their own iniquity, and ſhall cut them off in their own wickedneſs : yea, the LORD our God ſhall cut them off.* Pſal. xciv. 28.

And the kings houſe, and all the houſes of Jeruſalem, and every great man's houſe burnt he with fire.] By *Col beth gadol*, which ſignifies *every great Houſe*, the *Talmudiſts* underſtand all the *Synagogues*. But *Kimchi*, *Ralbag*, and *Abarbinel* interpret the Words as we do. And ſo the *Targum*; yea, *Jarchi* himſelf, who is the moſt tenacious of the Talmudical Interpretations, after he had ſaid, *The houſe of the Synagogues, where the Law and Prayers were read*, adds theſe Words, *and the Palaces of the Princes*; not daring (as *Vitinga* obſerves) to vouch the former for a litteral Interpretation, *Lib. de Synag. P.* 2. *Cap.* 11.

Ver. 10. *And all the army of the Chaldæans that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jeruſalem round about.*] That they who were left there might not be able to make any Reſiſtance hereafter; and that it might no longer be looked upon as a City, but as an open Village.

Ver. 11. *Now the reſt of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude,*] That is, all that eſcaped the Sword and the Famine; and all that fled to the King of *Babylon*, and put themſelves under his Protection.

Did Nebuzaradan captain of the guard carry away.] Who were in all eight hundred thirty and two Perſons; as we read in *Jerem.* lii. 29. Where he ſaith in the eighteenth Year of *Nebuchadnezzar* (that is, in the End of it, and the Beginning of his nineteenth Year) he carried away this Number.

Ver. 12. *But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land, to be vinedreſſers, and huſbandmen.*] What ſhould move the *Talmudiſts* by the Hebrew Word *Ceremim* to underſtand *Gatherers of Balſam*; and by *Jogebim*, *Fiſhers for Purple*, is hard to underſtand (though *Bochartus* hath attempted ſome Account of it) when *Jeremiah* tells us expreſsly that he gave theſe poor People Vineyards and Fields; which ſhews what they were, *Jerem.* xxxix. 10.

Ver. 13. *And the pillars of braſs that were in the houſe of the LORD, and the baſes, and the brazen ſea that was in the houſe of the LORD, did the Chaldæans break in pieces, and carried the braſs of them to Babylon.*] They were too cumberſome to be carried away whole, therefore he brake them in Pieces, and ſo tranſported the Braſs of which they were made.

Ver. 14. *And the pots, and the ſhovels, and the ſnuffers, and the ſpoons, and all the veſſels of braſs wherewith they miniſtred, took they away.*]

Ver. 15. *And the fire-pans, and the bowls, and ſuch things as were of the gold, and of ſilver, in ſilver, the captain of the guard took away.*] He did not alter theſe, but carried them away as he found them; that he might give a punctual Account of them to his Maſter. And the ſingular Providence of God herein appeared, that theſe Veſſels were not embezzelled, nor employed to any common Uſe, but put into the Houſe of the King of *Babylon*'s God, *viz Belus*, where they were preſerved to be reſtored, in God's appointed Time, by *Cyrus*. So we read they were, *Ezra* i. 7, 8, &c.

Ver. 16. *And the two pillars, one ſea, and the baſes which Solomon had made for the houſe of the LORD, the braſs of all theſe veſſels were without weight.*] So we read they were, when they were firſt made, 1 *Kings* vii. 47.

Ver. 17. *And the height of one pillar was eighteen cubits, and the chapiter upon it was braſs: and the height of the chapiter three cubits : and wreathen work, and pomegranates upon the chapiter round about, all of braſs; and like unto theſe had the ſecond pillar with wreathen work.*] Theſe two Pillars are more fully deſcribed in 1 *Kings* vii. 15, &c. and in *Jerem.* lii. 21, &c.

Ver. 18. *And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief prieſt, and Zephaniah the ſecond prieſt,*] Whom the *Jews* call the *Sagan*; *who*

was the Deputy of the High Prieſt, in Caſe of Sickneſs, or any Incapacity to officiate.

And the three keepers of the door.] Of the Veſſels of the Temple, ſaith *Kimchi*; or of the Treaſury.

Ver. 19. *And out of the city he took an officer that was ſet over the men of war, and five men of them that were in the kings preſence,*] Who conſtantly attended the King's Perſon whereſoever he was.

Which were in the city,] Where at firſt they found but five of them; but afterwards ſeven, *Jerem.* lii. 26.

And the principal ſcribe of the hoſt, which muſtered the people of the land,] The Muſter-Maſter-General, as we ſpeak, or ſome ſuch great Officer.

And threeſcore people of the land, that were found in the city.] Theſe were ſome eminent Perſons who had concealed themſelves in ſome private Place; but before *Nebuzaradan* left *Jeruſalem*, were diſcovered. And the *Jews* will have it that they were the Men of the Great *Sanhedrim*; whoſe whole Number of ſeventy-one Perſons, they make a ſhift to find here, *viz.* the three Keepers of the Door, and the ſeven near Attendants upon the King, and the Scribe; which with theſe threeſcore, make ſeventy-one. See *Selden*, Lib. 2. *De Synedriis*, Cap. xvi. p. 671.

Ver. 20. *And Nebuzaradan captain of the guard took them, and brought them to the king of Babylon, at Riblah.*] That he might diſpoſe of them as he thought fit; they being not vulgar Perſons, like thoſe whom he had ordered to be carried Captive, or left in the Land.

Ver. 21. *And the king of Babylon ſmote them, and ſlew them at Riblah in the land of Hamath.*] Paſſed the ſentence of Death upon them; which was forthwith executed; becauſe he looked upon them, it is likely, as the King's principal Counſellors, who adviſed him to rebel againſt him. And the Judgment of God, *Strigelius* here obſerves, was remarkable upon impious Prieſts; whom he ſuffered not to live, becauſe they had been great Inſtruments in promoting Idolatry.

So Judah was carried away out of their land.] Four hundred ſixty and eight Years after the Beginning of the Reign of *David*; three hundred eighty and eight Years ſince the Diviſion of the Ten Tribes from *Judah* and *Benjamin*: and an hundred thirty-four Years ſince the Deſtruction of the Ten Tribes; as our *Primate of Ireland* makes Account.

Ver. 22. *And for the people that remained in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left,*] Ver. 12.

Even over them he made Gedaliah the ſon of Ahikam, the ſon of Shaphan, ruler.] His Father *Ahikam* was a great Friend of *Jeremiah*, *Jerem.* xxvi. 14. and therefore *Gedaliah* may be preſumed to have been ſo likewiſe; and by his Advice, it is likely, was one of thoſe that went out to the King of *Babylon*, ver. 11.

Ver. 23. *And when the captains of the armies, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governour,*] That is, ſuch as fled away with *Zedekiah*, ver. 5. and thoſe that fled perhaps before the Siege to the *Moabites*, and *Ammonites*, and *Edomites*, and other neighbouring Countries. See *Jerem.* xl. 7, 11, 12.

There came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Iſhmael the ſon of Nethaniah, and Johanan the ſon of Kareah, and Seraiah the ſon of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the ſon of a Maachathite, they, and their men.] He reckons up the principal Perſons that came in to him, with thoſe under their Command. *Jeremiah* alſo himſelf put himſelf under his Protection, *Jerem.* xlvi. 5, 6.

Ver. 24. *And Gedaliah ſware unto them, and to their men, and ſaid unto them, Fear not to be the ſervants of the Chaldæans: dwell in the land, and ſerve the king of Babylon, and it ſhall be well with you.*] He was ſo well aſſured of the King of *Babylon*'s Favour to him, that he ſecured them by an Oath, they ſhould be ſafe under his Government; provided they would ſerve the King of *Babylon*, which it was their Intereſt to do.

Ver. 25. *And it came to paſs in the ſeventh month,*] After he had been Governour about two Months, *ver.* 8, &c.

That Iſhmael the ſon of Nethaniah, the ſon of Eliſhamah of the ſeed royal,] His Pride (being of the Seed Royal) tempted him to conſpire againſt *Gedaliah*; though he had no Power to maintain any Authority in the Country; but was forced preſently to flee away. Nor was the King of *Moab*, who inſtigated him to this Villany, (*Jerem.* xl. 14.) able to ſupport him.

Came, and ten men with him,] Theſe Ten Men were Commanders no doubt of ſome Forces under them; for ſo few were not ſufficient to make a Slaughter of *Gedaliah*, and all the *Jews* and *Chaldæans* that were with him. See *Jerem.* xli. 1, 2, 3.

And he ſmote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.] This Story is told more largely in the xl and xli of *Jeremiah*; where we read that *Gedaliah* was admoniſhed of this intended Conſpiracy againſt him; but, like other Good Men who are commonly void of Suſpicion, becauſe they have no Deſign to hurt others, he did not believe what was told him.

Ver. 26. *And all the people ſmall and great, and the captains of the armies aroſe, aroſe came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldees.*] Contrary to the Perſwaſion of *Jeremiah* (by whom they pretended they would be adviſed) who aſſured them that they ſhould be ſafe if they would ſtay in the Land of *Judah*, but ſhould periſh if they went into *Egypt*. See *Jerem.* xlii. 9, 10, &c. Thus this populous and fertile Country was laid waſte and deſolate, Part of the People being carried Captive to *Babylon*, Part of thoſe that were left in the Land being ſlain with *Gedaliah*, the Remainder flying into *Egypt*. So that it was left to be over-run with Briars and Thorns, and to be inhabited by wild Beaſts. Only ſome of the neighbouring Nations ſeem to have ſettled themſelves in ſome Parts of it. See *Jerem.* xii. 14. *Ezek.* xxxvi. 4, 5.

Ver. 27. *And it came to paſs in the thirty-ſeventh year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the ſeven and twentieth*

twentieth day of the month,] It was reſolved on the twenty-fifth Day of the Month, and executed two Days after. So this Place is eaſily reconciled with *Jerem.* lii. 35.

In the year he began to reign, did Evil-merodach lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of priſon.] Raiſed him from his dejected Condition; for in Affliction Men hang down their Heads. By this it appears that *Nebuchadnezzar* reigned five and forty Years; for *Jeconiah* was carried Captive in the eighth Year of his Reign, xxiv. 12. and now had been Priſoner thirty-ſeven Years, when *Nebuchadnezzar* was newly dead. Which two Sums put together make forty-five. This is the Account of the *Jews*; but, according to the Canon of *Ptolemy*, he reigned but three and forty Years: And therefore Primate *Uſher* makes him to have reigned two Years with his Father.

Ver. 28. *And he ſpake kindly unto him, and ſet his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.*] He had the Kings of ſeveral Countries with him in *Babylon*, whom his Father had taken Captive, and made Priſoners: Unto whom he not only left the Name and Titles of Kings, but now gave them ſome Liberty, and beſtowed a Royal Seat upon them. But he preferred *Jehoiachin* above them all; either becauſe of the great Fame of his Royal Anceſtors *David* and *Solomon*, from whom he was deſcended; or (as the *Jews* ſay) becauſe he had made a Friendſhip in Priſon with *Evil-merodach*, who was thrown into it by his Father *Nebuchadnezzar* for his Male Adminiſtration of the Government, during the ſeven Years that he was moped.

Ver. 29. *And changed his priſon-garments:*] Beſtowed on him Royal Apparel; that he might be fit to keep him Company.

And he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.] Was frequently invited to his own Table, as *Cræſus* was to that of *Cyrus*. *Victorinus Strigelius* thinks it not unlikely that he had learned the Doctrine of the true God from the Prophet *Daniel*, as *Nebuchadnezzar* his Father had done; who in a publick Edict profeſſed as much. And upon this Account he ſhewed ſuch great Kindneſs to *Jechoniah*. For which Cauſe he got the Name of *Evil-merodach* among impious Princes; that is, *Fooliſh Merodach*.

Ver. 30. *And his allowance was a conſtant allowance given him of the king, a daily rate for every day, all the days of his life.*] The Meaning may be, that when he did not eat with the King, he lived upon a Penſion that was duly paid him every Day for Meat, Drink, Cloathing, Lodging, and other Expences. Or if the Word *continually* (in the foregoing Verſe) be underſtood literally, that he always eat with the King; then this Allowance was made for his Family and Attendants; as in the Caſe of *Mephiboſheth*, 2 Sam. ix. 10. *Jeremiah* in the Concluſion of his Book gives the ſame Account of the King's extraordinary Kindneſs to him; which continued, he ſaith, to the Day of his Death.

I

A COM-

J. Cole Sculp.

A COMMENTARY UPON THE FIRST BOOK OF THE CHRONICLES.

PREFACE.

IT is the common Opinion of the *Jews* that theſe Books were written by *Ezra:* Which is the more probable, becauſe the Book of *Ezra* begins with the ſame Words (without the leaſt Variation) wherewith theſe Books end: Which argues one and the ſame Perſon to have written both; who, to connect his Hiſtory together, makes uſe of his own Words, as *Grotius* obſerves other ancient Authors have done. Howſoever, it appears from hence, that theſe Books were written after the Captivity, ſince they mention their Reſtauration by *Cyrus:* And it is alſo evident from 2 *Chron.* xxxv. 25. that they were written after the Time of the Prophet *Jeremiah.*

Huetius, in his learned Work, *Demonſtratio Evangelica*, thus far agrees with this Opinion of the *Jews*, that he thinks *Ezra* digeſted theſe Books; and added to them the firſt *ſix Chapters* of the Book which bears his Name, which afterwards he continued: But *Nehemiah*, he thinks, had ſome Hand in this Work: Which was gathered not only out of the publick Journals, but of the Writings of the Prophets, *Shimeah*, *Iddo*, *Jehu*, *Nathan*, *Abijah*, *Iſaiah*, and others; and it is likely out of ſome *Genealogies*, (*R. Solomon* ſaith, upon the *ſeventh Chapter*, that after their Return he found *three*) and out of the other Books of holy Scripture before publiſhed, as *Kimchi* adds: And thus *Procopius Gazæus*, *Hæc ex multis prophetarum ſcriptis collegit*; he gathered theſe out of many Writings of the Prophets.

That which confirms this Opinion, is what we read in the *ſecond* Book, *ch.* v. 9. where it is ſaid of the Ark, and its Staves, which *Solomon* brought into the Temple, *there they are to this day.* Which Words are ſo far (as *Huetius* obſerves) from proving that theſe Books were written before the Captivity (after which

the Ark was no more heard of) that *Ezra* took this Paſſage, and that in 1 *Kings* viii. 8. where are almoſt the ſame Words, out of ſome other ancient Book, and ſet them down Word for Word, as he found them there. For having wrote the Books of the Kings in the Time of the Captivity, he found at their Return more ancient Regiſters, containing larger Accounts of ſeveral Tranſactions; which he thought good to add to what he had before written, to make the Hiſtory more compleat: Which Dr *Alix* (in his *Reflections upon the books of the Old Teſtament*, Vol. 2. Chap. 1.) thinks was done about *ſix and twenty* Years after the writing of the Books of the Kings, in the *eighteenth* Year after the Captivity was ended.

This ſeems to be implied in the Hebrew Title of theſe Books, which is, *Dibre hajamim*, ſignifying they contain ſuch things as were contained in the *Diaries* or *Day-Books*, wherein the Paſſages of thoſe Times were recorded, if any thing memorable happened every Day. The Word *Jamim* alſo ſignifying *Years*, theſe Books may be called *Annals*: Which the *Greeks* call Παραλειπόμενα: As much as to ſay, thoſe things are here ſupplied, which were omitted in other Books of holy Scripture, eſpecially in the Books of the Kings; as other things are here amplified and enlarged: Others explained and made more clear. For Inſtance, in the Concluſion of this firſt Book, he gives an Account of the things which *David* did in his old Age: In ordering the Courſes of the Prieſts, and of the *Levites*, the Singers, and Muſicians; and in making vaſt Preparations for the Building of the Temple by his Son; none of which had been mentioned in the foregoing Books. Thus *Xenophon* (*Strigelius* obſerves) wrote *Paralipomena* of the *Peloponneſian* War; which had been written before by *Thucydides*.

He begins theſe Books with a *Genealogy* from the Beginning of the World to his own Time; which had not been done in any Book of Scripture before: But was neceſſary to be done now, that a Diſtinction between their Tribes and Families being preſerved (which was in Danger to be loſt by their Diſperſion in the Captivity) it might clearly appear, the *Meſſiah* ſprung out of that Tribe and Family, from which he was to deſcend, according to the ancient Prophecies. For, as *Procopius Gazæus* obſerves, from theſe Books it is that we learn among other things, that *Nathan*, from whom St *Luke* derives the Genealogy of our Saviour, was the Brother of *Solomon* by *David* and *Bathſheba*.

To conclude this Preface, it may be noted, that no Book in the World ſhews the original Propagation of Mankind, but only the holy Scriptures. They who where ignorant of them having nothing of true Antiquity, deviſed ſenſleſs Fables of their Deſcent, they knew not how, nor from whom. The *Arcadians* fancied that they were before the Moon: The People of *Theſſaly*, that they ſprung from Stones. The *Athenians* took themſelves to be αὐτόχθονες, who ſprung up out of the Ground; and affirmed, they were more ancient than *Japetus*; who in Truth was the Father of the *Greeks*; *Javan*, from whom came the *Ione*s, being the Son of *Japhet*, as theſe holy Books ſhew.

See upon 2 *Chron.* xxix. 21. a little additional Proof that theſe Books were written by *Ezra*.

CHAP. I.

Verſe 1. *Adam, Seth, Enos,*] He mentions only their Names briefly: But the Meaning is, that *Adam* begat *Seth*, and *Seth* begat *Enos*: And ſo the reſt are to be underſtood. *Adam* indeed had two Sons before he begat *Seth*: But one of them was murdered without Iſſue, and the other was accurſed; ſo that all who deſcended from him periſhed in the Flood: Therefore, theſe only that came from *Seth* are remembred.

This may ſeem to be ſufficiently recorded, as much of that which follows is, in the Book of *Geneſis*: So that there was no need, ſome may imagine, to repeat it here: But there being a Genealogy to be drawn of the ſeveral Families of the *Jews*, it was fit to begin it with an Account of the Honour they had to be the ſelect People of God, whoſe Original and Deſcent was manifeſt and plain from the very firſt Man, who was the Son of God. This was the peculiar Glory of the Jewiſh Nation, that they alone were able to derive their Pedigree from the firſt Man that God created; of which no other Nation could boaſt, or make a Shadow of Pretence. Beſides, by the Recital of this, the divine Writer of this Book deſigned to keep up the Belief, that the World was not eternal, but had a Beginning, as is recorded in the Book of *Geneſis*.

Ver. 2. *Kenan,*] We tranſlate it *Cainan*, *Gen.* v. 9.

Mahaleel, Jared,] See *Gen.* v. 12, 15.

Ver. 3. *Henoch, Methuſhelah, Lamech,*] See concerning theſe, *Gen.* v. 18, 21, 25.

Ver. 4. *Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japhet.*] Theſe were the three Sons of *Noah*: Among whom *Japhet* was the eldeſt (*Gen.* x. 21.) and therefore his Genealogy is firſt mentioned. But *Shem* being the Perſon in whoſe Poſterity true Religion was preſerved, and from whom the promiſed Seed was to come, is firſt named both here and in *Gen.* v. 31. x. 1.

Ver. 5. *The ſons of Japhet, Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Meſchech, and Tiras.*] Thus they were reckoned up in the ſame Order, *Gen.* x. 2. where ſee concerning them.

Ver. 6. *The ſons of Gomer; Aſhkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.*] The ſame Account we have in *Gen.* x. 3.

Ver. 7. *And the ſons of Javan; Eliſhah, and Tarſhiſh, Kittim, and Dodanim.*] The ſame we read, *Gen.* x. 4. And neither there nor here is any mention of the reſt of *Japhet*'s Poſterity, but only of *Gomer* and *Javan*. See *Gen.* x. 5. in the latter End of my Annotations on that Verſe.

Ver. 8. *The ſons of Ham; Cuſh, and Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.*] In this Place, and in this Order, they are mentioned in *Gen.* x. 6. And the Reaſon, I ſuppoſe, why his Genealogy is mentioned before *Shem*'s, is, becauſe from *Shem* the Genealogy of *Abraham* and the Jewiſh Nation was to be derived: Which it was thought fit to ſet down without any Interruption.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *And the ſons of Cuſh; Sheba, and Havilah, and Sabta, and Rahama, and Sabteca: and the ſons of Raamah; Sheba, and Dedan.*] See *Gen.* x. 7. where an Account is given of the Sons of *Cuſh*, and of his two Grandſons by one of them.

Ver. 10. *And Cuſh begat Nimrod:*] He mentions him alone by himſelf, becauſe he was the moſt eminent among all his Sons. See upon *Gen.* x. 8. where I have given an Account of the next Words.

He began to be mighty upon earth.] That is, was the firſt that raiſed a great Kingdom.

Ver. 11. *And Mizraim begat Ludim, and Anamim, and Lehabim, and Naphtuhim,*] The very ſame Account we have in *Gen.* x. 13. where I have ſhewn in what Parts of the World their Poſterity ſettled.

Ver. 12. *And Pathruſim, and Caſluhim.*] See *Gen.* x. 14.

(*Of whom came the Philiſtines*)] Who were a Colony from the *Caſluhim*.

And Caphtorim.] See *Gen.* x. 14.

Ver. 13. *And Canaan begat Zidon his firſt-born, and Heth,*] See *Gen.* x. 15.

Ver. 14. *The Jebuſite alſo, and the Amorite, and the Girgaſhite,*

Ver. 15. *The Hivite, and the Archite, and the Sinite,*

Ver. 16. *And the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.*] In this very Order they are ſet down by *Moſes*, in *Gen.* x. 16, 17, 18. See what I have noted there.

Ver. 17. *The ſons of Shem; Elam, and Aſhur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram,*] Thus they are ſet down in *Gen.* x. 22. and *Arphaxad* is mentioned after *Elam* and *Aſhur*; juſt as *Aaron* is after *Moſes* in *Exod.* vi. 27. though he was the elder Brother. For, as the *Jews* often note, *The Scripture doth not ſtrictly obſerve the Order of Time.*

And Uz, and Hul, and Gether, and Meſhech.] Theſe were not the Sons of *Shem*, but his Grandſons by *Aram* his youngeſt Son: As appears from *Gen.* x. 22. But nothing is more uſual in Scripture, than to call Grandſons by the Name of Sons. As *Laban* is called the Son of *Nahor* (*Gen.* xxix. 5.) being his Grandchild by *Bethel*. And *Mephiboſheth* is called the Son of *Saul*, 2 *Sam.* xix. 24. becauſe he was deſcended from him by his Son *Jonathan*. *Meſhech* had two Names; for he is called *Mas*, *Gen.* x. 23. and poſſeſſed the Mountain *Maſius* in *Meſopotamia*; as *Bochart* thinks in his *Phaleg. L.* ii. *cap.* 11. Though *Mas* may very well be thought not to be another Name, but only by the Contraction of *Meſhech*: Who ſome think was the Father of the *Cappadocians*.

Ver. 18. *And Arphaxad begat Shelah, and Shelah begat Eber.*] He follows *Moſes* exactly; who gives no Account of the Poſterity of the two Sons of *Shem* firſt mentioned, but only of the third *Arphaxad*: That he might the ſooner come to him from whom the *Iſraelites* deſcended. Here the LXX interpoſe *Cainan* between *Arphaxad* and *Shelah*: But it is not in the *Greek Muſcovite* Tranſlation; as is obſerved by Primate *Uſher*, in his Letters CCXCVI. And ſee *Bochart* in his *Phaleg*, *L.* 2. *c.* 13.

Ver. 19. *And unto Eber were born two ſons:*] See *Gen.* x. 25.

The name of the one was Peleg (becauſe in his days the earth was divided)] That is, the Inhabitants of the Earth were divided, and diſperſed; according to the Diviſion of their Languages. See my Annotations there.

And his brothers name was Joktan.] Who had a more numerous Iſſue than any hitherto mentioned.

Ver. 20. *And Joktan begat Almodad, and Sheleph, and Hazarmaveth, and Jerah,*] See concerning theſe, *Gen.* x. 26.

Ver. 21. *Hadoram alſo, and Uzal, and Diklah,*] See *Gen.* x. 27.

Ver. 22. *And Ebal, and Abimael, and Sheba,*] See *Gen.* x. 28. where the firſt of theſe is called *Obal*: From whence ſome have argued, that the Name in this Place is corrupted. As if in Proceſs of Time, there might not be a Variation in the Vowel: *Moſes* pronouncing the Name as they ſpake it in his Time, and this Author as they ſpake in his.

Ver. 23. *And Ophir, and Havilah, and Jobab: All theſe were the ſons of Joktan.*] Who were *thirteen* in all: And all but one ſettled their Habitation in *Arabia*. See *Gen.* x. 29.

Ver. 24. *Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah,*] Theſe are repeated from *ver.* 17 and 18, to ſhew how *Abraham* was deſcended from *Shem*: Who was the moſt eminent of all *Noah*'s Sons; whom he ſolemnly bleſſed: The *Meſſiah* being to ſpring from him (*Gen.* ix. 26.) For from *Adam* the Promiſe of the *Meſſiah* was tranſlated to *Seth*; and from *Seth* to *Shem*; from *Shem* to *Eber*; from whom the *Hebrew* Nation, ſome think, derived their Name; and had this precious Promiſe committed to their Truſt, above all other Nations in the World.

Ver. 25. *Eber, Peleg, Reu,*

Ver. 26. *Serug, Nahor, and Terah,*] This Genealogy from *Eber*, is recorded by *Moſes*, in *Gen.* xi. 16, 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 27. *Abram, the ſame is Abraham.*] God changed his Name from *Abram* to *Abraham*, when he eſtabliſhed his Covenant with him (*Gen.* xvii. 5, &c.) and made him the Father of many Nations.

Ver. 28. *The ſons of Abraham; Iſaac, and Iſhmael.*] *Iſaac* is firſt mentioned, being the Son of a Free-Woman, and the Heir of the Promiſe: Though *Iſhmael* was elder than he, but born of a bond-Woman,

Ver. 29. *Theſe are their generations: The firſt born of Iſhmael, Nebaioth;*] To ſhew how God made *Abraham* the Father of many Nations, he reckons up twelve great Perſons deſcended from his Son *Iſhmael*; the firſt of which was *Nebaioth*: Concerning whom, and the reſt that follow, ſee *Gen.* xxv. 13, 14, &c.

Then Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibſam,] I ſhall only obſerve here, that as from *Nebaioth* came the People called *Nabatæi*; ſo from *Kedar* came the *Cedreni*, whom Geographers call *Cedrei*, and *Cedranitæ*, as *Bochart* obſerves.

Ver. 30. *Miſhma, and Dumah, Maſſah, Hadad, and Tema,*

Ver. 31. *Jetur, Naphiſh, and Kedemah.*] Theſe are the Sons of *Iſhmael*. In what Country they dwelt, ſee *Gen.* xxv. 18.

Ver. 32. *Now the ſons of Keturah, Abrahams concubine:*] After the Death of *Sarah*, *Abraham*

married *Keturah:* And having many Children by her, this holy Writer names them, to ſhew how faithfully God made good the Name he gave him, by making *Abraham* the Father of many more Nations.

She bare Zimran, and Jokſhan, and Medan, and Midian, and Iſhbak, and Shuah.] See *Gen.* xxv. 2.

The ſons of Jokſhan; Sheba, and Dedan.] There were four *Sheba*'s, as I there obſerved; and one more of the Name of *Dedan:* And this Man's Sons are there mentioned, though here omitted.

Ver. 33. *And the ſons of Midian; Ephah, and Epher, and Henoch, and Abida, and Eldaah.*] See *Gen.* xxv. 4. The firſt of theſe, as *Bochart* thinks, was the ſame with the Greek *Hippos*, a Mountain and a Village of which Name *Ptolemy* deſcribes on the ſame Shore, a little below *Madian*, which he calls *Modiana.* In his *Hieroz. P.* i. *L.* ii. *cap.* 3.

All theſe are the ſons of Keturah.] Her Sons, or Grandſons.

Ver. 34. *And Abraham begat Iſaac. The Sons of Iſaac; Eſau and Iſrael.*

Ver. 35. *The ſons of Eſau; Eliphaz, Reuel, and Jeuſh, and Jaalam, and Korah.*] Theſe were by ſeveral Wives, as we read *Gen.* xxxvi. 10, 14.

Ver. 36. *The ſons of Eliphaz; Teman, and Omar, Zephi, and Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek.*] It is plain from *Gen.* xxxvi. 12. that *Timna* was not one of his Sons, but his Concubine; by whom he begat *Amalek.* This therefore is a ſhort Form of Speech, as much as if he had ſaid, *Of Timna Amalek.* Who was not equal to the reſt of his Sons, and therefore he mentions his Mother's Name. *Kimchi* hath expreſſed this ſo well, that it may be for the Reader's Uſe to tranſcribe ſome of his Words: Which may ſerve for a Rule in ſuch like Caſes. *In my Judgment,* ſaith he, *the Scripture uſes here a conciſe and compendious way of ſpeaking: For there was no need that Ezra ſhould recount all theſe things exactly and accurately, which had been done before in the Law* (he means in the Book of *Geneſis*) *therefore he deſcribes theſe Genealogies briefly.* Thus he doth in the *ſeventeenth Verſe* of this *Chapter*, mentioning *Uz* and *Hull* after *Aram:* Who were not his Sons but his Grandſons. *R. Solomon* hath the ſame Obſervation. See *Buxtorf*'s *Anticritica, P.* 2. *cap.* 2.

Ver. 37. *The ſons of Reuel; Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.*] Who are called *Dukes*, as the Sons of *Eliphaz* alſo are (ſee *Gen.* xxxvi. 15, 17.) that is, Rulers, or Governors of the Country, but not with Kingly Authority.

Ver. 38. *The ſons of Seir; Lotan, and Shobal, and Zibeon, and Anah, and Diſhon, and Ezer, and Diſhan.*] This *Seir* was not *Eſau*, nor of his Poſterity, but the ancient Lord of this Country, from whom it had its Name, (See *Gen.* xxxvi. 20.) whoſe Genealogy is here ſet down, that it may be underſtood from whom *Timna* and *Amalek* ſprung.

Ver. 39. *And the ſons of Lotan; Hori, and Homam: and Timna was Lotan's Siſter.*] This Woman was *Eliphaz* his Concubine, and bare him *Amalek* (ver. 36.) who by his Mother's Side was *Seir*'s Grandſon.

Ver. 40. *And of the ſons of Shobal; Alian* (or *Abian*) *and Manahath, and Ebal, Shephi, and Onam.*] See *Gen.* xxxvi. 23.

And the ſons of Zibeon; Aiah, and Anah.] The latter of which was a Perſon of great Note. See *Gen.* xxxvi. 24.

Ver. 41. *The ſons of Anah; Diſhon. And the ſons of Diſhon; Amram, and Eſhban, and Ithran, and Cheran.*] The Firſt-born of theſe was otherwiſe called *Hemdan, Gen.* xxxvi. 26. which was the Name, it is poſſible, whereby he was known among *Eſau*'s Poſterity: Though anciently his Name was *Amram.*

Ver. 42. *The ſons of Ezer; Bilhan, and Zavan, and Jakan. The ſons of Diſhan; Uz, and Aaron.*] Among all theſe Perſons deſcended from *Seir*, ſeven of them were *Dukes:* Who reigned perhaps at the ſame Time in ſeveral Parts of the Country, *Gen.* xxxvi. 29, 30. By which it appears, that this was the ancient Form of Government before *Eſau* conquered this Country: Which his Poſterity at the firſt followed; but afterward was changed into Kingly, as it here follows.

Ver. 43. *Now theſe are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the children of Iſrael;*] See this explained in *Gen.* xxxvi. 31.

Bela the ſon of Beor:] This *Beor* was not *Balaam*'s Father, for he was a *Meſopotamian*, not an *Edomite*; but one of the ſame Name, as *Aben Ezra* well obſerves.

And the name of his city was Dinhabah.] Of which he was Governor, perhaps, before he was made King: And therefore therein he reigned, and made it the Seat of his Kingdom.

Ver. 44. *And when Bela was dead, Jobab the ſon of Zerah of Bozrah reigned in his ſtead.*] See concerning this Succeſſion, *Gen.* xxxvi. 33. *Bozrah* was a City in *Edom*, as three Prophets plainly deſcribe it, *Iſa.* xxxiv. 6. *Jer.* xlix. 13. *Amos* i. 12. And one of theſe repreſents it alſo as a City of *Moab:* Becauſe, as ſome think, it was in the Confines of both Countries: Or, rather, in the Opinion of *Bochartus*, there were two *Bozrah*'s; the one in *Idumæa*, the other in *Moab.*

Ver. 45. *And when Jobab was dead, Huſham of the land of the Temanites, reigned in his ſtead.*] We know nothing of *Huſham*, but he ſeems not to have been the Son of *Jobab*; but one of another Family, in another Part of the Country. Some take this *Jobab* to have been *Job:* Which Opinion is exploded by *Aben Ezra.*

Ver. 46. *And when Huſham was dead, Hadad the ſon of Bedad (which ſmote Midian in the Field of Moab) reigned in his ſtead: and the name of his city was Avith.*] See *Gen.* xxxvi. 35. where *R. Solomon* ſaith, the *Midianites* making War againſt the *Moabites*, this King of *Edom* came to help the *Moabites.*

Ver. 47. *And when Hadad was dead, Samlah of Maſrekah reigned in his ſtead.*

Ver. 48. *And when Samlah was dead, Shaul of Rehoboth by the river, reigned in his ſtead.*] See *Gen.* xxxvi. 37.

Ver. 49. *And when Shaul was dead, Baal-hanan the ſon of Achbor reigned in his ſtead.*

Ver. 50. *And when Baal-hanan was dead, Hadad* (or *Hadar*) *reigned in his ſtead: and the*

name of his city was Pai (or *Pau*) *and his wifes name Mehetabel,*] See *Gen.* xxxvi. 39.

The daughter of Matred, the daughter of Mezahab.] Some of the *Jews* fancy this *Mezahab* to have been a very ingenious Woman, being the firſt that found out the Art of drawing Gold out into Wires or Threads: For *Zahab* ſignifies Gold in *Hebrew*. But the LXX take this for the Name of a Man, and tranſlate it ὑὸς Μαιζοώς.

Ver. 51. *Hadad died alſo. And the dukes of Edom were duke Timna, duke Alia, duke Jetheth,*

Ver. 52. *Duke Aholibamah, duke Elah, duke Pinon,*

Ver. 53. *Duke Kenaz, duke Teman, duke Mibzar,*

Ver. 54. *Duke Magdiel, duke Iram: Theſe are the dukes of Edom.*] After the Death of *Hadad*, the Form of Government was altered again: For there were no more Kings for a long Time; but they returned to the firſt Conſtitution, which they found, when they conquered the Country; which was governed by Dukes. See *Gen.* xxxvi. 40. And thus it was in *Iſrael* after they came into the Land of *Canaan*. They were firſt governed by *Judges* who had not kingly Power. After which from the Time of *Saul* they were governed by *Kings* till their Captivity. At their Return they had no more Kings, but only ſuch Governors as *Zerobabel* was. Some have imagined that *Eſau* was the firſt King of this Country: But in all Likelihood, if he was, he would have left his Son *Eliphaz* in the ſame Authority; who was but a Duke, *Gen.* xxxvi. 15, 16. Therefore *Eſau* contented himſelf with that Form of Government which he found among the *Horites:* Which continued till *Bela* made himſelf King; *ver.* 43. The Difference between their Kings and Dukes was (as *Eſthius* obſerves) that the former ruled abſolutely, according to their Pleaſure: The Power of the other was limited and bounded by certain preſcribed Laws.

CHAP. II.

Verſe 1. THeſe *are the ſons of Iſrael; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Iſſachar, and Zebulun.*

Ver. 2. *Dan, Joſeph, and Benjamin, Napthali, Gad, and Aſher.*] He reckons up his firſt four Sons in the Order wherein they were born (*Gen.* xxix. 32, *&c.*) and next to them their two Brethren by the ſame Mother *Leah*, *Gen.* xxx. 18, 20. Afterward, I can give no Reaſon why *Dan* and *Napthali* (the two Sons of *Bilhah*) are not mentioned together, and *Joſeph* and *Benjamin* the two Sons of *Rachel*, and *Gad* and *Aſher* the two Sons of *Zilpah*.

Ver. 3. *The ſons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah:*] There is a plain Reaſon why the Genealogy of *Judah* is ſet down in the firſt Place; becauſe this Tribe had obtained a Superiority and Preheminence among the reſt, before the Time of *David*; ever ſince the Prophecy of *Jacob* in the Bleſſing he pronounced upon him, *Gen.* xlix. 10. For *Judah*, when they came into the Wilderneſs, was ordered to march firſt, *Numb.* ii. 3. and accordingly we find they did, when they removed from Mount *Sinai*, *Numb.* x. 14. And when the Princes of the Tribes offered at the Dedication of the Altar, the Prince of the Tribe of *Judah* offered on the firſt Day, *Numb.* vii. 12. When they came into *Canaan*, they obtained of *Joſhua* a Portion for *Caleb* without caſting of any Lot, as there was in the dividing of the Land, *Joſh.* xiv. 6. And when *Joſhua* was dead, they were appointed by God to go up firſt againſt the *Canaanites*, to take from them what remained unconquered, *Judg.* i. 2. From *David*'s Time every one knows, till the Captivity of *Babylon*, a kingly Power continued in this Tribe: And *Zerobabel* was of the ſame, who was their Leader when they returned to their own Land.

Which were born unto him of the daughter of Shuah the Canaaniteſs.] See an Account of this in *Gen.* xxxviii. 2.

And Er the firſt-born of Judah was evil in the ſight of the LORD, and he ſlew him.] See *ver.* 7. of the ſame Chapter. His ſecond Son alſo, though he be not repreſented under ſo bad a Character, yet diſpleaſed God ſo much, that he ſlew him alſo, *ver.* 9, 10.

Ver. 4. *And Tamar his daughter-in-law bare him Pharez and Zerah. All the ſons of Judah were five.*] See there, *ver.* 29, 50.

Ver. 5. *And the ſons of Pharez; Hezron, and Hamul.*] Who were born unto him before they went into *Egypt*; *Gen.* xlvi. 12.

Ver. 6. *And the ſons of Zerah; Zimri, and Ethan, and Heman, and Calcol, and Dara: five of them in all.*] Theſe were born after they came into *Egypt*; for there is no Mention of them in the Book of *Geneſis*. And the *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba*, and in *Jalkut* ſay, theſe Men propheſied when they were in *Egypt:* For they ſuppoſe them to be the ſame with thoſe mentioned 1 *Kings* iv. 31. If they were, then *Zerah* had two Names, and was alſo called *Mahol:* But there is great Reaſon to think they were not the ſame, as I have ſhown in my *Annotations* there.

Ver. 7. *The ſons of Carmi;*] This Man was the Son of *Zimri:* Who in *Joſh.* vii. 18. is called *Zabdi*; for by Length of Time his Name might eaſily be thus altered. And, indeed, in copying proper Names, one might eaſily miſtake.

Achar, the troubler of Iſrael, who tranſgreſſed in the thing accurſed.] He who is there called *Achan*, is here elegantly called *Achar*; which ſignifies *Troubler:* Becauſe he had brought *Iſrael* into great Danger, by the Sin he committed in the accurſed Thing. The Remembrance of this ſome thought fit he ſhould carry in his Name: Which in Proceſs of Time was changed, by common Uſe and Cuſtom, from *Achan* into *Achar*. Which is more likely, than that there ſhould be an Error here in the Tranſcriber. See *Bochart* in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *L.* 2. *cap.* 31.

Ver. 8. *And the ſons of Ethan; Azariah.*] Here is but one Son mentioned: But it is uſual in Scripture to ſpeak of a ſingular Perſon in the plural Number (*Gen.* xlvi. 23.) to include all his Deſcendants.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *The ſons of Hezron, that were born unto him; Jerahmeel, and Ram, and Chelubai.*] This *Ram* is mentioned in the Genealogy of our Saviour, *Matth.* i. 3, 4. and called *Aram.*

Ver. 10. *And Ram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Nahſhon, the prince of the children of Judah;*] When they came out of *Egypt*, and pitched under their ſeveral Standards, *Numb.* ii. 3.

Ver. 11. *And Nahſhon begat Salma, and Salma begat Boaz,*

Ver. 12. *And Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jeſſe.*] Theſe three are the principal Perſons in all this Genealogy, as *Pellicanus* obſerves; being put into the Genealogy of our Saviour, who was deſcended from *David* by theſe three great Anceſtors.

Ver. 13. *And Jeſſe begat his firſt-born Eliab, and Abinadab the ſecond, and Shammah the third,*

Ver. 14. *Nathaneel the fourth, Raddai the fifth.*]

Ver. 15. *Ozem the ſixth, David the ſeventh.*] It is manifeſt from 1 *Sam.* xvi. 10, 11. that *Jeſſe* had eight Sons: But ſome think one of them was only an adopted Son, and therefore not here mentioned: And they gather from 2 *Sam.* xxi. 2. that his Name was *Jonathan*, by a Miſtake; for that *Jonathan* was *David*'s Nephew by his Brother *Shammah.* The trueſt Account therefore is, that one of *Jeſſe*'s Sons was dead, before *David* came to the Kingdom. So *Raſi.*

Ver. 16. *Whoſe ſiſters were Zeruiah, and Abigail.*] Who were the Siſters of *David* laſt mentioned.

And the ſons of Zeruiah; Abiſhai, and Joab, and Aſahel, three.] Who were all eminent Commanders under *David.*

Ver. 17. *And Abigail bare Amaſa:*] Another valiant Man, who was murdered by *Joab.*

And the father of Amaſa was Jether the Iſhmeelite.] He was an *Iſhmeelite* by Birth, but by Religion an *Iſraelite:* Or, as others will have it, he was born an *Iſraelite*, but bred ſo long among the *Iſhmeelites*, that many called him by that Name. See 2 *Sam.* xvii. 25. The Father of *Abiſhai*, *Joab* and *Aſahel*, is no where mentioned; being not eminent, it ſeems, as this *Jether* was; but their Glory was by their Mother's Side.

Ver. 18. *And Caleb the ſon of Hezron begat children*] It is plain, this is not *Caleb*, whom *Moſes* ſent to ſearch out the Land of *Canaan*; for he was the Son of *Jephunneh*, of whom he gives an Account below, iv. 15. This Man is called *Chelubai*, *ver.* 9. of this Chapter.

Of Azubah his wife,] It is an ungrounded Fancy of the *Talmudiſts*, in *Sota*; who ſay ſhe was called *Azubah* (which ſignifies *forſaken*) becauſe *Caleb* married her for the Love of God, when no body would have her.

And of Jerioth:] This is underſtood by *Conradus Pellicanus*, as if he had ſaid, *that of his Wife Azubah he begat Jerioth:* For there is nothing in the *Hebrew* that anſwers to the Word *Children.*

Her ſons are theſe; Jeſher, and Shobab, and Ardon.] That is, Theſe were the Sons of *Jerioth.*

Ver. 19. *And when Azubah was dead, Caleb took unto him Ephrath, which bare him Hur.*] This was a very continent Man, who had but one Wife at a Time; and loved *Azubah* ſo well, that he married no other while ſhe lived. His ſecond Wife alſo was of ſuch Note, that gave Name to a Place in the Country of *Judah*, *ver.* 24.

Ver. 20. *And Hur begat Uri, and Uri begat Bezaleel.*

Ver. 21. *And afterwards Hezron went in to the daughter of Machir,*] After the Death of *Ephrath*, I ſuppoſe, he married another Woman of an eminent Family.

The father of Gilead,] The Prince of the Country of *Gilead*; as the Word *Father* often ſignifies.

Whom he married when he was ſixty years old, and ſhe bare him Segub.

Ver. 22. *And Segub begat Jair,*] Who is called the Son of *Manaſſeh* in *Numb.* xxxii. 41. becauſe his Grandmother was of that Tribe, the Daughter of *Machir*, the Son of *Manaſſeh*, *Numb.* xx. 29.

Who had three and twenty cities in the land of Gilead.] In the Right of his Wife, as the common Opinon of the *Jewiſh* Doctors is: Who obſerve in Scripture two Inſtances of Huſbands that inherited the Eſtate of their Wives, though in another Tribe. The firſt is in *Joſhua* xxiv. 33. and the other in this Place. Where *Kimchi* notes, That this *Jair the Son of Segub, took a Wife in the Land of Gilead, unto whom he ſucceeded as her Heir in her Poſſeſſions, when ſhe was dead: Theſe twenty-three Cities being her Inheritance.* See *Selden De Succeſſionibus ad Leges Hebr.* cap. 18.

Ver. 23. *And he took Geſhur, and Aram, with the towns of Jair, from them,*] They were afterwards called by his Name, who conquered them, and took them from the neighbouring *Geſhurites* and *Syrians.*

With Kenath, and the towns thereof, even threeſcore cities:] The Metropolis of which was *Kenath*: In the taking of which he employed a great Commander called *Nobah*, *Numb.* xxxii. 42. who, I ſuppoſe, was of the ſame Tribe and Family.

All theſe belonged to the ſons of Machir, the father of Gilead.] His Poſterity poſſeſſed theſe Towns.

Ver. 24. *And after that Hezron was dead in Caleb-ephratah,*] This City was called after the Name of both Huſband and Wife (*ver.* 19.) they being both famous Perſons. And it was alſo called *Bethlehem*, from the Fruitfulneſs of the Place.

Then Abiah Hezrons wife bare him Aſhur] He married her when he was very old (for he was threeſcore when he took his former Wife, *ver.* 21.) and died before the Child was born, whom he begat of her. The *Jews* look upon his marrying when he was ſo old, as proceeding from a great Deſire of Poſterity in the Family of *Pharez*, from whom the *Meſſiah* was to deſcend. The ſame we ſee in *Boaz*, who married *Ruth* when he was old.

The father of Tekoa.] Who gave Name to a famous Town in this Country, 2 *Sam.* xiv. 2. *Jerem.* iii. 6.

Ver. 25. *And the ſons of Jerahmeel, the firſt-born of Hezron, were, Ram the firſt-born, and Bunah, and Oren, and Ozem, and Ahijah.*

Ver. 26.

Ver. 26. *Jerahmeel had also another wife, whose name was Atarah, she was the mother of Onam.*] There being (according to our Translation of the foregoing Verse) Mention of his former Wife, it seems not to be unreasonable to take *Abijah* to have been the Mother of *Ram*, and the rest, which he had by *Abijah*. So the Words may be understood, supposing the Particle *Mem* to be wanting before *Abijah*.

Ver. 27. *And the sons of Ram, the first-born of Jerahmeel were Maaz, and Jamin, and Eker.*

Ver. 28. *And the sons of Onam were, Shammai, and Jada. And the sons of Shammai; Nadab, and Abishur.*] He set not down the Names of the Children of *Jerahmeel*'s eldest Son, by his first Wife: But of both those he had by his second. The rest perhaps had no Children, as is noted afterwards of one of his Grandsons, *ver.* 30.

Ver. 29. *And the name of the wife of Abishur was Abihail, and she bare him Ahban, and Molid.*] This, though the second Son, it seems, married first: And therefore his Children are mentioned before the other.

Ver. 30. *And the sons of Nadab; Seled, and Appaim: but Seled died without children.*

Ver. 31. *And the sons of Appaim; Ishi.*] The plural Number is often used when one Son or Daughter only is spoken of (as I obsereved *ver.* 8.) for in that one all the Posterity are comprehended. The next Words are another Example of this.

And the sons of Ishi, Sheshan. And the children of Sheshan; Ahlai.] It is plain from *ver.* 34, and 35, that this *Ahlai* was not a Son, but a Daughter.

Ver. 32. *And the sons of Jada the brother of Shammai;*] Mentioned in *ver.* 28.

Jether, and Jonathan: and Jether died without children.] He had neither Son nor Daughter.

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Jonathan; Pelez, and Zara. These were the sons of Jerahmeel.*] Whose Male Line he carries no farther: Because perhaps it failed in their last named.

Ver. 34. *Now Sheshan had no sons, but daughters:*] We read of no more than one Daughter that he had: But he speaks in the plural Number, as before, *ver.* 31.

And Sheshan had a servant, an Egyptian, whose name was Jarha.] Who being a Proselyte, it is probable, to the *Jewish* Religion, and a faithful Servant to his Master, he gave him his Freedom, and married his Daughter to him.

Ver. 35. *And Sheshan gave his daughter to Jarha his servant to wife, and she bare him Attai.*] This Servant was very dear to him, and perhaps Ruler of his House, as *Eliezer* of *Damascus* was to *Abraham:* Who, if he had not had a Son, he looked upon as his Heir to all his Estate, *Gen.* xv. 23.

Ver. 36. *And Attai begat Nathan, and Nathan begat Zabad,*

Ver. 37. *And Zabad begat Ephlal, and Ephlal begat Obed,*

Ver. 38. *And Obed begat Jehu, and Jehu begat Azariah,*

Ver. 39. *And Azariah begat Helez, and Helez begat Eleasah,*

Ver. 40. *And Eleasah begat Sisamai, and Sisamai begat Shallum,*

Ver. 41. *And Shallum begat Jekamiah, and Jekamiah begat Elishama.*

We cannot now understand, why so long a Genealogy should be inserted here of the Descendants of *Sheshan*'s Daughter by an *Egyptian*. The *Jews* imagine it is the Genealogy of *Ishmael* (who slew *Gedaliah*, whom the King of *Babylon* left the Governor of the Land after he had taken *Jerusalem*) who they fancy was *the Son of Nethaniah the Son of Elishama, last mentioned* (as *Jeremiah* describes him, *ch.* xli. 1.) which we might have believed, if this Genealogy had so concluded: In which, as there is no Mention of *Nethaniah*, as the Son of *Elishama* (but the Genealogy ends with *Elishama*, and goes no further) so it is not probable, that the Descent of so infamous a Person, though of the Seed-Royal, should be deduced thus largely.

Ver. 42. *Now the sons of Caleb*] Called *Chelubai*, ver. 9.

The brother of Jerahmeel] This is added to shew he speaks of the same *Caleb* there mentioned, and *ver.* 18.

Was Mesha his first-born,] By a third Wife; for his Children by *Azubah* and *Ephrath* are named before.

The father of Ziph:] The Prince of *Ziph*, as some understand it. There were two Places of this Name, in the Tribe of *Judah*. See *Josh.* xv. 24, 25.

And the sons of Mareshah, the father of Hebron.] *Hebron* here is the Name of a Man, not of a Place: For his Posterity are immediately mentioned: But *Kimchi* makes this to be the Sense of these and the foregoing Words; *the Sons of Ziph were Mareshah, the father of Hebron.* Which is very natural.

Ver. 43. *The sons of Hebron; Korah, and Tappuah, and Rekem, and Shema.*

Ver. 44. *And Shema begat Raham, the father of Jorkoam: and Rekem begat Shammai.*

Ver. 45. *And the son of Shammai was Maon: and Maon was the father of Beth-zur.*] Who gave Name to a Place in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Josh.* xv. 58. Which *Josephus* saith was in the mountainous Part of it, as the Word imports. *Maon* also is a well known Name to a Wilderness in this Tribe.

Ver. 46. *And Ephah Calebs concubine bare Haram, and Mosa, and Gazez:*] Besides his forenamed Wives, he married a Concubine: Which was an inferior Sort of Wife, as I have shewn upon *Gen.* xxv. 6.

And Haran begat Gazez.] This is another *Gazez*; to whom *Haran* gave the Name of his younger Brother.

Ver. 47. *And the sons of Jahdai; Regem, and Jotham, and Geshan, and Pelet, and Ephah, and Shaaph.*] We read nothing of *Jahdai* in the foregoing Genealogy: But the *Jews* take him for one of the Sons of *Epha* before named; and most probably *Mosa*, next Brother to *Haran:* Whose Posterity is here set down, as *Haran*'s was before. *Mosa* therefore had two Names; which was not unusual among the *Jews*.

Ver. 48. *Maachah Caleb's concubine bare Sheber, and Tirhanah,*] This *Caleb* was a great Man, and could maintain many Wives; which he took, and had a numerous Issue by them.

Ver. 49.

Ver. 49. *She bare alſo Shaaph, the father of Madmannah, Shevah, the father of Machbenah, and the father of Gibeah :*] By the Word *Father* in this Verſe, in all Likelihood, is meant the Prince or Ruler of theſe Places. For *Gibeah* was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*; and ſo was *Madmannah*, *Joſh.* xv. 31, 57.

And the daughter of Caleb was Achſa.] Who is mentioned in the Books of *Joſhua* and *Judges*: But it is not ſaid by what Wife he had her. She was married to a great Man, *Othniel*, *Joſh.* xv. 17. *Judges* i. 12.

Ver. 50. *Theſe were the ſons of Caleb, the ſon of Hur, the firſt-born of Ephratah*;] This was another *Caleb*, deſcended from the foregoing, by *Hur* his Son by *Ephrath*, ver. 19. who had this Son, whom he called *Caleb*, after the Name of his Grandfather.

Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim,] The *Targum* tranſlates it the Prince of *Kirjath-jearim*: Which is a Place, as *Bethlehem*, and *Beth-gaddar* were, of which two other Perſons are preſently after ſaid to be the Father. But *Kimchi* takes the Word *Father* in the proper Senſe, and thinks *Shobal*'s Poſterity poſſeſſed the City of *Kirjath-jearim*.

Ver. 51. *Salma the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph the father of Beth-gadder.*] It is not material which Way we underſtand this; either as the *Targum*, or as *Kimchi* expounds the Word Father in the foregoing *Verſe*.

Ver. 52. *Shobal the father of Kirjath-jearim had ſons; Haroeh, and half of the Manahethites.*] The *Hebrew* Words being, *Haroeh, hatzi, hammenioth*, the LXX expound them, as if *Shobal* had three Sons, *Araa*, and *Aiſi*, and *Ammanith*. But *Kimchi* takes the laſt Word for the Name of a Place; which is evident from *ver.* 54. where the other Half of it is mentioned: And of one Half he thinks *Haroeh* was the Lord and Governour. But *Jacchiades* follows the LXX, and leaves *Kimchi*'s Explication.

Ver. 53. *And the families of Kirjath-jearim; the Ithrites, and the Puhites, and the Shumathites, and the Miſhraites :*] The Inhabitants of *Kirjath-jearim* were divided into ſeveral Families (as *Kimchi* interprets it) and theſe here mentioned were the Heads of Families, denominated from *Ithra* or *Jether*, and *Puhah*, &c. as from *Jimna* came the Family of the *Jimnites*, and from *Beriah* the Family of the *Berites*, in *Numb.* xxvi. 44.

Of them came the Zareathites, and the Eſhtaulites.] The ſame *Kimchi* obſerves, that *Zarah* and *Eſhtaol* were two Cities in the Tribe of *Judah*; which were built by two of *Kirjath-jearim* of this Name. Who inhabited theſe Places, and left two great Families, who were from them called *Zaraethites*, and *Eſhtaulites*.

Ver. 54. *And the ſons of Salmah, Beth-lehem, and the Netophathites, Ataroth, and the houſe of Joab, and half of the Manahethites, and the Zorites.*] This *Salma* the Son of *Caleb* the younger (*ver.* 51.) had a numerous Poſterity. For from him deſcended the Inhabitants of *Bethlehem* (ſo we are to underſtand this Word, for *Bethlehem* was the Name of a Place, not of a Man) the *Netophathites*, and thoſe of *Ataroth*, and *Beth-joab* (ſo theſe Words we tranſlate *the Houſe of Joab*, ſhould be rendered; for he is not ſpeaking of *Joab*'s Family, but of *Caleb*'s) and Half of the *Manahethites*, and the *Zorites*, who were a People poſſeſſed of a Town called *Zorah*: Where the other Half dwelt.

Ver. 55. *And the families of the ſcribes which dwelt at Jabez;*] This Place, *Kimchi* thinks, might poſſibly be built by *Jabez* (an honourable Perſon, mentioned *ch.* iv. 9.) in which ſome Doctors of the Law dwelt, who were of the Family of *Salma*; for of theſe he is ſtill ſpeaking.

The Tirathites, the Shimeathites, and Suchathites. Theſe are the Kenites that came of Hemath, the father of the houſe of Rechab.] Theſe *Kenites*, as *R. Solomon* thinks, were the Inhabitants of a Place called *Cani* in the Tribe of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 57. Though it muſt be acknowledged alſo, ſome of the *Kenites*, the Poſterity of *Jethro*, did ſettle in the ſame Tribe (*Judges* i. 16.) of whom ſome think *Ezra* here ſpeaks. And then *Hemath* deſcended from *Jethro*, who was the *Father*; that is, the Prince of *Beth-Rechab*: So the laſt Words may be underſtood. There were other *Kenites* deſcended from *Heber*, who dwelt in the Tribe of *Naphthali*, or *Manaſſeh*, *Judges* iv. 11.

CHAP. III.

Verſe 1. NOW *theſe were the ſons of David,*] Having given a large Account of the Poſterity of *Hezron*, he returns to *David* before-mentioned, *ch.* ii. 15.

Which were born unto him in Hebron;] Before he was King of all *Iſrael*.

The firſt-born Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jeſreeliteſs: The ſecond Daniel, of Abigail the Carmeliteſs:] This ſecond Son is called *Chileab*, in 2 *Sam.* iii. 3. where I have given an Account of it. And here it may be noted, once for all, that it was a frequent Thing among the *Jews* for Men to have two Names; eſpecially when they lived ſometimes in one Country, and ſometimes in another. This appears from a famous Caſe mentioned in the *Gemara* of *Codex Gittim*, where it is reſolved, that if a Man have two Wives, one in *Judæa*, and another in *Galilee*; and he gave a Bill of Divorce to her in *Judæa*, ſubſcribing to it his Name whereby he is known in *Galilee*, the Bill is void. And in like Manner, if he write his Name whereby he goes in *Judæa*, unto a Bill of Divorce to his Wife in *Galilee*, it is of no Effect.

Ver. 2. *The third, Abſolom the ſon of Maachah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geſhur: the fourth, Adonijah, the ſon of Haggith:*

Ver. 3. *The fifth, Shephatiah of Abital: the ſixth, Ithream of Eglah his wife.*] This *Eglah* is generally thought by the *Jews* to be *Michal* Daughter of *Saul* (ſee my Notes upon 2 *Sam.* iii. 5.) who, ſome think, is peculiarly called *his Wife*; becauſe ſhe was his only legal Wife, according to the Divine Inſtitution: All the reſt he took by Cuſtom them reigning.

Ver. 4. *Theſe ſix were born to him in Hebron, and there he reigned ſeven years and ſix months: and in Jeruſalem he reigned thirty three years.*] This hath been explained in 2 *Sam.* 5.

Ver. 5. *And theſe were born to him in Jeruſalem, Shimeah, and Shobab, and Nathan, and Solomon,*

mon, four, of Bathſhua daughter of Ammiel:] In 2 *Sam.* xi. 3. ſhe is called *Bathſheba* (as ſhe is through the whole Scripture) and her Father *Eliam.* But I obſerved juſt now, it was uſual among the *Jews* to have two Names: Though there is no great Difference in this firſt of theſe, no more than there is between *Shammah* and *Shimea*; the Vowels being only changed, not the Conſonants, of which the Names conſiſt. *Solomon* was the eldeſt of theſe four Sons: But he is mentioned laſt, becauſe the Diſcourſe was to return to his Genealogy, *ver.* 10.

Ver. 6. *Ibhar alſo, and Eliſhama, and Eliphelet,*] There is a ſmall Difference in the Name of the ſecond of theſe, as he is mentioned 2 *Sam.* v. 15. where he is called *Eliſhua.*

Ver. 7. *And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,*

Ver. 8. *And Eliſhama, and Eliada, and Eliphelet,*] Two of theſe Names are mentioned before; who, it is ſuppoſed, died in their Infancy: And therefore he preſerved their Memory, by giving their Names unto two others, who were born afterwards, and lived longer. So *Kimchi.*

Nine.] Beſides the four born of *Bathſheba* (*ver.* 5.) but there are only *ſeven* mentioned in 2 *Sam.* v. 16. thoſe two who died early being there omitted. See my Notes on that Place.

Ver. 9. *Theſe were all the ſons of David, beſides the ſons of the concubines,*] Who are not mentioned, either here or in *Samuel.*

And Tamar their ſiſter.] See 2 *Sam.* xiii. 1.

Ver. 10. *And Solomons ſon was Rehoboam, Abia his ſon, Aſa his ſon, Jehoſaphat his ſon,*

Ver. 11. *Joram his ſon, Ahaziah his ſon, Joaſh his ſon,*

Ver. 12. *Amaziah his ſon, Azariah his ſon, Jotham his ſon,*

Ver. 13. *Ahaz his ſon, Hezekiah his ſon, Manaſſeh his ſon,*

Ver. 14. *Amon his ſon, Joſiah his ſon.*

Ver. 15. *And the ſons of Joſiah were, the firſt-born Johanan,*] There is nothing needs explaining in the foregoing Genealogy down from *Solomon* to this Time: But here is ſome Difficulty: For this *Johanan* is thought by many to be the ſame with *Jehoahaz*, who ſucceeded *Joſiah* in the Throne. But he was not his firſt-born; being but twenty-three Years old when the People made him King, and after three Months Time his Brother being put in his Place, is ſaid to be twenty-five Years old, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 31, 36. *Petavius* hath ſaid a great deal about this, in his *Annotations* upon *Epiphanius ad Hereſ. Epicur.* p. 18. But after all, I take the Truth to be, that *Johanan* was his eldeſt Son, but died before his Father: And therefore is not mentioned in the Book of the *Kings:* As *Jehoahaz* is not mentioned here, being made King by the People of the Land, and preſently dethroned.

The ſecond Jehoiakim,] Who was next to him, to whom by Right of Succeſſion the Kingdom belonged: He being the eldeſt now *Johanan* was dead. He was called by his Father *Eliakim:* But had this other Name impoſed on him by the King of *Egypt*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 34.

The third Zedekiah,] Who was the youngeſt of all *Joſiah*'s Sons, as appears by his Age, when he was made King after *Jehoiakim* was carried captive. The ſame *Petavius* thinks there were two *Zedekiahs:* One the Son of *Joſiah*, who was their laſt King; the other the Son of *Jeconiah* (mentioned in the next *Verſe*) who never came to be King.

The fourth Shallum.] This was the next Son to *Jehoiakim*; and the ſame with *Jehoahaz*, as is plain from *Jerem.* xxii. 11. See my Notes upon 2 *Kings* xxii. 30, 31. He is put laſt, becauſe he was not at all conſiderable; being made King by a popular Faction; and in three Months Time thruſt out of his Throne by the King of *Egypt*, who carried him thither, and there he died.

Ver. 16. *And the ſons of Jehoiakim; Jeconiah his ſon, Zedekiah his ſon.*] The Poſterity of *Jeconiah* are ſet down in the next *Verſe:* And therefore here by the Word *Son* we muſt underſtand his Succeſſor in the Kingdom. Thus *Seneca* makes *Atreus* and *Tantalus* to be Deſcendants of *Inachus*; becauſe they ſucceeded him in the Kingdom of *Argos.* And in like manner *Jacobus Capellus* here obſerves (in his *Hiſtor. Sacra & exotica, ad A. M.* 3424.) that *Multi filii dicuntur, qui legaliter tantum erant filii, id eſt, hæredes:* Many are called Sons, who were only Sons legally, that is, Heirs. Of which he makes *Zedekiah* an Example, who is here called the Son of *Jeconiah* (who was his Uncle, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 17.) becauſe he ſucceeded him.

Ver. 17. *And the ſons of Jeconiah; Aſſir, Salathiel his ſon,*] Some think *Aſſir* is not the Name of his Son, but ſignifies *Captive:* To denote, that his Son *Salathiel* was born when he was a Captive in *Babylon*, as St *Matthew* notes, *ch.* i. 12. which doth not contradict the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, who ſaid he ſhould die childleſs, *Jer.* xxii. 30. for his Meaning is no more, but that he ſhould have no Child ſitting on the Throne after him. But *Jacobus Capellus*, in the Place forenamed, makes *Salathiel* another Inſtance of an Heir being called a *Son.* For he thinks he ſucceeded *Jeconiah* in the Dignity to which he was reſtored by *Evilmerodach:* But was the Son of *Neri*, who ſprung from *Nathan.*

Ver. 18. *Malchiram alſo, and Pedaiah, and Shenazar, Jecamiah, Hoſhama, and Nedabiah.*] Theſe were not all the immediate Sons of *Jeconiah*, but the Sons of *Salathiel*; as may be gathered from hence; that in the next Verſe *Zerubbabel* is ſaid to be the Son of *Pedaiah*, and in St *Matthew* (*ch.* i. 12.) to be the Son of *Salathiel*; that is, his Grandſon. So there is ſomething to be ſupplied, to make out the Senſe of this Verſe, *viz. The ſons alſo of Salathiel were Malchiram, and Jedaiah,* &c. But *Grotius* (on *Matth.* i. 23.) thinks, that *Zerubbabel* here mentioned is not he, who was the Leader of God's People when they returned from their Captivity in *Babylon*: With whom *Huetius* alſo agrees But others think, this may better be ſolved by ſuppoſing, that *Salathiel* dying without Children, *Pedaiah* raiſed up Seed to his Brother, as the Scripture ſpeaks, and begat *Zerubbabel* of *Salathiel*'s Wife. Who therefore was the Son of *Pedaiah*, becauſe begotten by him: And yet the Son of *Salathiel*, becauſe begotten of his Wife; who had no Son by *Salathiel*, but by *Pedaiah*; who begat him not to be his Heir, but the Heir of his Brother who was dead.

Ver. 19. *And the ſons of Hodaiah were, Zerubbabel, and Shimei: and the ſons of Zerubbabel; Meſhullam, and Hananiah, and Shelomith their ſiſter:*] That is, Siſter to the two Sons before-named; ſhe having the ſame Father and Mother that they had: Which the other five mentioned in the next *Verſe*, it is ſuppoſed, had not; but were by another Mother, though they had the ſame Father.

Ver. 20. *And Haſhubah, and Obel, and Berechiah, and Haſadiah, Juſhab-heſed, five.*] Upon this they ground their Opinion, who think the *Zerubbabel* here mentioned, is not he that was the Governour of the People after the Captivity: For his Son's Name was *Rheſa*, *Luke* iii. 27. who is not found among the eight Children, that are here reckoned up.

Ver. 21. *And the ſons of Hananiah; Pelatiah, and Jeſaiah:*] Theſe are the Sons of the ſecond ſon of *Zerubbabel*, ver. 19.

The ſons of Rephaiah, the ſons of Arnan, the ſons of Obadiah, the ſons of Shecaniah.] Theſe four (and their Sons) ſeem to have been likewiſe the Children of *Hananiah*.

Ver. 22. *And the ſons of Shecaniah; Shemaiah: and the ſons of Shemaiah; Hattuſh, and Igeal, and Bariah, and Neariah, and Shaphat, ſix.*] Here are but five Sons of *Shemaiah*: And therefore the *Hebrew* Word *Shiſhah* (which we tranſlate *ſix*) is rather the Name of his laſt Son: Who might poſſibly be ſo called, becauſe he was his ſixth Son.

Ver. 23. *And the ſons of Neariah; Elioenai, and Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three.*] The reſt of *Shemaiah*'s Sons had no Iſſue.

Ver. 24. *And the ſons of Elioenai were Hodaiah, and Eliaſhib, and Pelaiah, and Akkub, and Johanan, and Dalaiah, and Anani, ſeven.*] The *Targum* here hath a very ſtrange Obſervation: For after the Word *Anani*, he ſaith, *He is the king* MESSIAH, *who is to be revealed.* The Reaſon of which is given in the famous Book *Tanchuma* (as *Beckius* here notes) becauſe it is ſaid in *Dan.* vii. 13. he ſaw in a Viſion, and behold one like the Son of Man, *im anani (in the Clouds)* which certainly was a Viſion of the *Meſſiah*, as *Saadis Gaon* acknowledges. And this Uſe is to be made of this Paſſage, that their Minds were always full of the Thoughts of the *Meſſiah*, and that they expected he ſhould be revealed (as they ſpeak) ſo many Generations after *Zerubbabel*: Which is an Argument he came long ago. St *Matthew* indeed counts more Generations from *Zerubbabel* to our Saviour's Birth than are here mentioned, and hath quite different Names in this Succeſſion: Which is another Argument, that this *Zerubbabel* in the *Chronicles* is not the ſame with him in St *Matthew*. And, indeed though ſome Perſons in Scripture have two Names, yet it is not likely that ſo many Perſons as are reckoned in this Succeſſion, ſhould all have quite different Names. Therefore St *Matthew*'s Genealogy is not here recorded: But he had it out of the publick Tables, which were kept by the Prieſts of all the great Families of *Judah*; particularly that of *David*'s, out of whoſe Family they expected the *Meſſiah* ſhould come, would not fail to keep a punctual Account of his Succeſſors in every Generation.

CHAP. IV.

Verſe 1. *THE ſons of Judah; Pharez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.*] By the Sons of *Judah* are meant his Poſterity: For here is only one of his Sons mentioned in this Place; *viz. Pharez*: Whoſe Son *Hezron* begat *Carmi* (the ſame with *Calubai* and *Caleb* (*ch.* ii. 9, 18.) whoſe Sons were *Hur*, and *Shobab*: Who is the ſame, I ſuppoſe, with *Shobal*; of whoſe Poſterity he intends here to give an Account.

Ver. 2. *And Reaiah the ſon of Shobal begat Jahath, and Jahath begat Ahumai, and Lahad. Theſe are the families of the Zorathites.*] *Zora* is not the Name of a Man, but of a Place in the Tribe of *Judah*: Where ſeveral Families of that Tribe ſettled themſelves, who were deſcended from *Jahath*, *Shumai*, and *Lahad*, the Sons and Grandſons of *Shobal*; by whom this City was built and inhabited. Thus *Kimchi* explains this Place.

Ver. 3. *And theſe were of the father of Etam;*] Deſcended from the Lord of a Place called *Etam*: Which was in this Tribe, *ver.* 32.

Jezreel, and Iſhma and Idbaſh:] Theſe were the Sons of the Lord of *Etam*: Whoſe Name is not here recorded.

And the name of their ſiſter was Hazelelponi.] Who it is likely was a very eminent Woman: And therefore her Name is remembred; though now we are ignorant of the particular Reaſon there was then for it.

Ver. 4. *And Penuel the father of Gedor,*] In the *eighteenth Verſe* of this *Chapter*, *Jered* is ſaid to be the Father, that is the Lord of *Gedor*. But there might be then two Lords of the ſame City; as there are now among us ſeveral Lordſhips in the ſame Town.

And Ezer the father of Huſhah. Theſe are the ſons of Hur,] By ſome other Wife than her, by whom he had the Children mentioned *Chapter* the *ſecond*, *ver.* 20.

The firſt-born of Ephratah,] See there, *ver.* 19.

The father of Bethlehem.] In the *ſecond Chapter*, *ver.* 52. *Salma* is ſaid to be the Father of *Bethlehem*: But that doth not contradict this: For they might both be Lords of the ſame Place, eſpecially one being the Gandfather, the other the Son.

Ver. 5. *And Aſhur the father of Tekoa, had two wives, Helah and Naarah.* See *Chapter* the *ſecond*, *ver.* 24.

Ver. 6. *And Naarah bare him Ahuzam, and Hepher, and Temeni, and Haahaſhtari. Theſe were the ſons of Naarah.*] His firſt Wife being barren for ſome Time, it moved him to take another: Who bare him theſe Sons.

Ver. 7. *And the ſons of Helah were Zereth, and Jezoar, and Ethnan.*] Afterwards his firſt Wife grew fruitful, and bare him as many Sons as the other. For it is probable that *Coz* (mentioned in the next Words) was her Son.

Ver. 8. *And Coz begat Anub, and Zobebah, and the families of Aharhel, the ſon of Harum.*] I ſuppoſe ſeveral Families ſprung from *Aharhel*, who was the Son of *Coz* by his Wife *Harum*.

Ver. 9.

Ver. 9. *And Jabez*] It is very uncertain who *Jabez* was. Perhaps the Founder of one of the Families of *Aharhel*. But the *Targum* both here and upon *ch.* ii. 55. ſaith, he was the ſame with *Othniel*. But this is a Jewiſh Fancy, confuted by *ver.* 13.

Was more honourable than his brethren:] Wiſer in the Law, as the *Targum* expounds it: Who had reſpect, it is likely, to his Piety and Devotion expreſſed in the next *Verſe*. Others think he was a Perſon of greater Courage and Valour, for which *Othniel* was famous.

And his mother called his name Jabez, ſaying, becauſe I bare him with ſorrow.] She had a very hard Labour, when ſhe was in Travail with him.

Ver. 10. *And Jabez called on the God of Iſrael, ſaying, O that thou wouldeſt bleſs me indeed, and enlarge my coaſt,*] He prayed for the Help of God, to drive out the *Canaanites*, and make room for his Family; that they might dwell more commodiouſly.

And that thy hand might be with me,] As it was with *Othniel*, to enable him to take *Kirjath-ſepher*, as we read in the firſt of *Judges*.

And that thou wouldeſt keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me.] Preſerve him in Health, and proſper him, when he had enlarged his Border: That he might not live in ſuch Miſery, as that wherewith his Mother brought him forth. For in the Word *grieve*, moſt think he alludes to the Pains of his Mother in her Travail.

And God granted him that which he requeſted.] And the rather, becauſe he had hereby greater Leiſure for the Study of the Law, and inſtructing others in Piety, as many underſtand it. For the *Jews* think this *Jabez* was an eminent Doctor of the Law, and left behind him a great many Diſciples, who are mentioned, they ſuppoſe, in the laſt *Verſe* of the *ſecond Chapter* of this Book; where we read of *the Family of the Scribes that dwelt at Jabez.*

Ver. 11. *And Chelub the brother of Shuah, begat Mehir, which was the father of Eſhton.*

Ver. 12. *And Eſhton begat Beth-rapha, and Paſeah, and Tehinnah the father of Ir-nahaſh. Theſe are the men of Rechah.*] The Perſons whoſe Poſterity poſſeſſed the City of *Rechah*: Of which we have no mention elſewhere.

Ver. 13. *The ſons of Kenaz;*] It is not ſaid whoſe Son he was: It is likely of *Chelub*, mentioned *ver.* 11.

Othniel, and Seraiah: and the ſons of Othniel; Hathath.] And likewiſe *Meonothai*, mentioned in the next *Verſe*: For after his Sons follow the Sons of *Othniel*'s younger Brother.

Ver. 14. *And Meonothai begat Ophrah: and Seraiah begat Joab, the father of the valley of Charaſhim,*] Or, of thoſe that dwelt in *Gecharaſhim*: Which was a City in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, mentioned in *Nehem.* xi. 35.

For they were craftſmen.] The Smiths that dwelt and wrought there, gave it the Name of *Charaſhim*: By which Word ſome underſtand *Carpenters*. For in this Catalogue ſeveral ſuch like Sort of Perſons are mentioned: Such as Porters, and Weavers, and Gardiners, *ver.* 21, 23. For Societies cannot conſiſt only of one Sort of Perſons: but muſt be compoſed of Men of different and various Employments. As *Strigelius* obſerves out of *Ariſtotle*, *A City is not compoſed of Phyſicians and Phyſicians; but of Phyſicians and Ploughmen.* So the Son of *Sirach* diſcourſes, that though ſuch kind of Men are not fit to be admitted to Counſel, *yet they maintain the State of the World*, Eccluſ. xxxviii. 34. When *Solomon* indeed began to reign, there were not many Craftſmen in *Iſrael*; but afterwards they increaſed: And ſuch Honour was paid unto Arts, that they took Care to preſerve the Memory of ſuch Perſons and Families as applied themſelves that Way; as appears by this very *Verſe*, and *ver.* 21, 23, of this *Chapter*. Whence the Prophet *Iſaiah* foretels this as a Judgment God would ſend upon them, that he would take away their *Artificers*; *ch.* iii. 5. And when *Jeruſalem* was taken by the *Babylonians*, it is ſaid, they carried away all the *craftſmen*, 2 Kings xxiv. 14.

Ver. 15. *And the ſons of Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh; Iru, Elah, and Naam:*] Some take this *Jephunneh* to be the ſame with *Hezrom*, whoſe Son *Caleb* was: And had this Son by a different Wife from her mentioned, *ch.* ii. 18.

And the ſons of Elah, even Kenaz.] Or rather *Uknaz* was the Son of *Elah*: As ſome of the *Jews* underſtand it.

Ver. 16. *And the ſons of Jehaleleel;*] Who was the Son of *Uknaz* laſt mentioned.

Ziph, and Ziphah, Tiria, and Aſareel.

Ver. 17. *And the ſons of Ezra*] Who was the Son of *Aſareel* laſt named.

Were Jether, and Mered, and Epher, and Jalon: and ſhe bare] That is, *Bithiah* the Wife of *Mered* (mentioned in the next *Verſe*) bare the Sons following.

Miriam, and Shammai,] *Miriam* was the Name of a Man, as well as of a Woman: And there are ſeveral ſuch inſtances in Scripture, as *Kimchi* obſerves on this place.

And Iſhbah the father of Eſhtemoa.] It is uncertain whether *Eſhtemoa* be the Name of a Perſon, or of a Place whereof he was Lord.

Ver. 18. *And his wife Jehudijah bare Jered*] *Mered* had this Son by another Wife called *Jehudijah.*

The father of Geder, and Heber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah.] The *Targum*, and *Jarchi*, with others, by *Father*, in all theſe three Inſtances, underſtand the Lord or Ruler of thoſe cities, which were in the Tribe of *Judah*. See *Joſh.* xv. 34, 35.

And theſe are the ſons of Bithiah,] Mentioned in the foregoing *Verſe.*

The daughter of Pharaoh, which Mered took.] That is married. But it is not likely he married the Daughter of the Kings of *Egypt*, unleſs ſome natural Daughter: But rather of ſome other Perſon, called by the Name of *Pharaoh*; who might be an *Iſraelite* as well as an *Egyptian*: Names being, upon ſeveral Occaſions, given from other Countries.

Ver. 19. *And the ſons of his wife Hodiah,*] This was his third Wife.

The ſiſter of Naham,] It ſeems to me more reaſonable to tranſlate it *Achotnaam*: Who was his Son by *Hodiah.*

The father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eſhtemoa the Maachathite.] Theſe were his Grandſons, who are frequently in Scripture called Sons.

Ver. 20. *And the ſons of Shimon*] Who is ſuppoſed to be another Son of *Mered* by his laſt Wife.

Were Amnon, and Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon.

And the ſons of Iſhi] Who is thought to be the Son of *Tilon* laſt mentioned.

Were Zoheth, and Ben-zoheth.

Ver. 21. *The ſons of Shelah, the ſon of Judah, were Er.*] Having given an account of thoſe deſcended from *Pharez* the eldeſt Son of *Judah*, and *Zerah* whom *Judah* had by *Tamar*, (*ch.* ii. 4, 5.) he now relates the Poſterity of *Shelah*, whom he had by his Wife *Shuah*, *Gen.* xxxviii. 5.

The father of Lecah,] This was a City in the Tribe of *Judah*, of which *Er* was the Lord.

And Laadah the father of Mareſhah,] Another City in the ſame Tribe.

And the families of the houſe of them that wrought fine linen,] From him came all thoſe Families that were famous for this Sort of Workmanſhip in fine Linen: Wherewith their Kings and Prieſts were clothed, as the *Targum* notes.

Of the houſe of Aſhbea,] The Principal of which, I ſuppoſe, were thoſe of this Man's Poſterity.

Ver. 22. *And Jokim,*] This was either a Perſon, or a Family deſcended from *Shelah*.

And the men of Chozeba,] They were another Family ſprung from the ſame Root: Who ſettled in this Place.

And Joaſh, and Saraph, who had the dominion in Moab,] Conquered ſeveral Places there, in the Time of *David*: Or had the Government of them given by him. The *Targum* takes the *Hebrew* Word *Baalu*, as if it ſignified that they married Wives in the Country of *Moab*.

And Jaſhubi-lehem.] Or rather, *The Inhabitants of Lehem*: A Place were ſome of *Shelah*'s Poſterity ſettled.

And theſe are antient things.] That is, theſe things which have been related concerning *Joaſh* and *Saraph* (as *Kimchi* interprets it) who had Dominion in *Moab*, ſhew that they were long ago: But now, as it follows, their condition was altered.

Ver. 23. *Theſe were the potters, and thoſe that dwelt among plants and hedges:*] Or rather, *theſe now are potters*, &c. being fallen from the Glory and Splendor wherein they formerly lived, to common and mean Employments.

There they dwelt with the king for his work.] This is commonly underſtood, as if they ſtayed in *Babylon* (for there was no King now in *Judea*) to be Vine-dreſſers, Gardeners, and Husbandmen, under that Monarch: Whoſe ſervice they liked ſo well, that they choſe to continue in it, rather than return to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 24. *The ſons of Simeon were Nemuel, and Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, and Shaul:*] This Tribe is mentioned next to *Judah*, becauſe they were Neighbours to them: Part of their Poſſeſſions being taken out of the Tribe of *Judah*, Joſh. xix. 1, *&c.* But the Names of ſome of *Simeon*'s Sons were much altered, by length of Time, from what they were when they went down into *Egypt*, *Gen.* xlvi. 10. And *Ohad*, there mentioned, is not here remembred: Becauſe it is likely, he had no Iſſue.

Ver. 25. *Shallum his ſon,*] That is, he was the Son of *Shaul*, laſt mentioned.

Mibſam his ſon, Miſhma his ſon.

Ver. 26. *And the ſons of Miſhma; Hamuel his ſon, Zacchur his ſon, Shimei his ſon.*] It ſeems *Mibſam* had no Son.

Ver. 27. *And Shimei had ſixteen ſons, and ſix daughters;*] The Poſterity of his eldeſt Sons are taken Notice of: But only, as it follows, that they had not many.

But his brethren had not many children, neither did all their family multiply, like to the children of Judah.] Which evidently appears by the Number that was taken of them at their firſt Muſter, *Numb.* i. 23. where we find that they were but fifty-nine thouſand and three hundred: When the Children of *Judah* were threeſcore and fourteen thouſand and ſix hundred, *ver.* 26. And at the next Muſter there was a far greater inequality, *Numb.* xxvi. 14, 22.

Ver. 28. *And they dwelt at Beerſheba, and Moladah, and Hazar-Shual,* Theſe Places are mentioned in *Joſh.* xix. 2, 3.

Ver. 29. *And at Bilhah,*] Called *Balah*, in the Place above-named.

And at Ezem, and at Tolad,] Theſe are called *Azem*, and *Eſhtolad*, the former Part of Names being oft cut off; as *Hermon* for *Baal-Hermon*, *Judg.* iii. 3. *Sittim*, *Numb.* xxv. 1. for *Abel-Sittim*, *Numb.* xxvi. 49, &c.

Ver. 30. *And at Bethuel, and at Hormah, and at Ziklag,*] See there, *ver.* 4, 5.

Ver. 31. *And at Beth-marcaboth, and at Hazar-ſuſim,*] Called there (*Joſh.* xix. 5.) *Hazar-Suſah.*

And at Beth-birei, and at Shaaraim:] The Names are different in *Joſh.* xix. 6.

Theſe were their cities, unto the reign of David.] Who, the *Jews* fancy, took theſe cities from them, and gave them again to *Judah*. Which is not likely, nor doth the Word *unto* denote that they held them no longer, than till the Reign of *David*: But that when he came to the Crown their Families dwelt here; though *Ziklag* had been in the Poſſeſſion of the *Philiſtines*, who gave it to *David*, as his own Town.

Ver. 32. *And their villages were Etam, and Ain, Rimmon, and Tochen, and Aſhan,*] Here is one Place mentioned, more than is in *Joſh.* xix. 7. which they had ſome way acquired ſince his days.

Ver. 33. *And all their villages that were round about the ſame cities, unto Baal.*] Called *Baalath-Beer*, Joſh. xix. 8.

Theſe were their habitations, and their genealogy.] Or, as it is in the Margin, *they divided themſelves by nations among them*; i. e. among theſe Places.

Ver. 34. *And Meſhobab, and Jamlech, and Joſhah the ſon of Amaziah.*] Theſe, and the reſt that follow, ſeem to have been very eminent Perſons in this tribe: By whoſe Valour theſe great Things were performed, which are mentioned, *ver.* 38, 39, &c. There is ſo great a reſemblance in the Name, that ſome fancy the Name Ἰάμβλιχος among the *Greeks* came from this Name *Jamlech*.

Ver. 35. *And Joel, and Jehu the ſon of Joſibiah, the ſon of Seraiah, the ſon of Aſiel.*

Ver. 36. *And Elioenai, and Jaakobah, and Geſhohiah, and Aſaiah, and Adiel, and Jeſimiel, and Benaiah.*

Ver. 37. *And Ziza the ſon of Shiphi, the ſon of Allon, the ſon of Jedaiah, the ſon of Shimri, the ſon of Shemaiah.*

Ver. 38. *Theſe mentioned by their names*] Whoſe Names are mentioned in the four foregoing Verſes.

Were princes in their families :] Great Perſons of chief authority in their ſeveral Families.

And the houſe of their fathers increaſed exceedingly ;] By their Valour they enlarged the Habitations ; which were too ſtrait for them.

Ver. 39. *And they went to the entrance of Gedor,*] There was a Place of this Name belonging unto *Judah*, Joſh. xv. 58. and another called *Gederah*, appertaining to the ſame Tribe, *ver.* 36. out of which perhaps *Judah* had not driven the old Inhabitants : And therefore the *Simeonites* wanting Room, went thither, and by diſpoſſeſſing them, enlarged their Border. But ſee the next *Verſe*, which places *Geder* elſewhere.

Even unto the eaſt ſide of the valley, to ſeek paſture for their flocks.] For their Sheep and their Goats : Which are properly meant by *Flocks*.

Ver. 40. *And they found fat paſture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable :*] So that they might feed their Flocks ſecurely.

For they of Ham had dwelt there of old.] This had inclined *Bochart* to think, that *Gedor* was ſome Place in *Arabia* ; where ſome of the Poſterity of *Ham* ſettled, as he hath demonſtrated. And the *Arabians* being wholly addicted to Paſturage, ſought out the beſt Ground they could find for the Feeding their Flocks. Whoſe Country the *Simeonites* made no ſcruple to invade ; the Poſterity of *Ham* being accurſed by *Noah*. See his *Phaleg. L.* 4. *Cap.* 1.

Ver. 41. *And theſe written by name, came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah,*] Their Names are ſet down before, (*ver.* 34, 35, 36, 37.) now the Time is recorded wherein they performed ſuch memorable Exploits ; which was in the Reign of *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*. That is, as ſome take it, a little before the ten Tribes were carried captive : Or, rather, ſome Time after it, when theſe *Simeonites* who were mixed with *Judah*, finding themſelves very much ſtraitned, made this expedition.

And ſmote their tents, and the habitations that were found there,] If they ſmote their Tents, then it was ſufficiently evident, they ſmote their Habitations ; for they dwelt in Tents. Therefore the Word *Meunim*, I have ſhewn upon *Judges* x. 12. (ſee my *Notes* there) doth not ſignify *Habitations*, but a People in *Arabia*, who dwelt in Tents : Which the *Simeonites* ſmote, as it here follows, and ſettled themſelves in their Place.

And deſtroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms :] There was none remained to attempt the Recovery of their Country any more : But the *Simeonites* poſſeſſed it whom this Book was written, after the Captivity of *Babylon*.

Becauſe there was paſture there for their flocks.] Which made them ſeek for no other Settlement.

Ver. 42. *And ſome of them, even of the ſons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to mount Seir, having for their captain Pelatiah, and Neariah, and Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the ſons of Iſhi.*] Another Body of them under theſe four great Commanders, who were Brethren, ſettled themſelves in ſome Part of the Country of the *Edomites* : Being forced to ſeek for ſubſiſtence abroad ; either when the *Aſſyrians* invaded their Country, or afterwards when it was deſtroyed, and there was not room enough for them among the *Jews* ; whither many of them fled.

Ver. 43. *And they ſmote the reſt of the Amalekites that were eſcaped,*] Who eſcaped the Hands of *Saul*, and of *David*.

And dwelt there unto this day.] The King of *Babylon* did not diſturb them in theſe new Poſſeſſions : Which were ſmall, and not worth his regard.

CHAP. V.

Verſe 1. *NOW the ſons of Reuben the firſt-born of Iſrael (for he was the firſt-born ; but foraſmuch as he defiled his fathers bed, his birthright was given unto Joſeph the ſon of Iſrael :*] The double Portion, which was the Right of the Firſt-born, (*Deut.* xxi. 16, 17.) was given to *Joſeph* : Whoſe two ſons had each of them a Lot in the land of *Canaan* ; as if they had been the Sons of *Iſrael*. The Jewiſh Doctors ſay there were two other Prerogatives belonging to the Firſt-born, *viz.* the *Principality* and the *Prieſthood* : The former of which was given to *Judah*, the latter to *Levi*. But I ſee no Ground to think the Prieſthood was annexed to it : And as for the other, it is taken notice of in the following *Verſe*.

And the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birth-right.] This is the reaſon why neither *Reuben*'s, nor *Joſeph*'s Genealogy is firſt ſet down : For though the double Portion belonged to the Firſt-born ; yet he had not therefore the Preheminence in other things, as it here follows.

Ver. 2. *For Judah prevailed above his brethren,*] That is, the Tribe of *Judah*, (not his Perſon) which was the moſt powerful, and in all things, as I before ſhewed, preferred to the reſt.

And of him came the chief ruler,] This is the principal Reaſon, why he prevailed, becauſe the great Prince of the People was to ariſe out of this Tribe : Firſt *David*, and at laſt the MESSIAH.

But the birth-right was Joſephs)] Or though the Birth-right was *Joſeph*'s ; yet, for the Reaſon before-mentioned, *Judah*'s Genealogy is firſt ſet down.

Ver. 3. *The ſons of Reuben the firſt-born of Iſrael, were Hanoch, and Pallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.*] See *Gen.* xlvi. 19.

Ver. 4. *The ſons of Joel ;*] Who, it is likely, was the Son of *Hanoch* the eldeſt Son of *Reuben* :

Becauſe

Becauſe it appears from *ver.* 6. that he here gives an account of the chief Perſons of this Tribe; and conſequently thoſe who were deſcended from the Firſt-born.

Shemaiah his ſon, Gog his ſon, Shimei his ſon,

Ver. 5. *Micah his ſon, Reaia his ſon, Baal his ſon,*

Ver. 6. *Beerah his ſon,*] Whom the *Targum* takes for a Prophet, the Father of *Hoſea*, who is called *Beeri*, Hoſea i. 1. But that is a meer Fancy; for that Prophet was of the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, but this *Beerah* of the Tribe of *Reuben.*

Whom Tilgath-Pilneſer king of Aſſyria, carried away captive out of their own land:] He is called *Tiglath-Pileſer*, 2 Kings xv. 29.

He was prince of the Reubenites.] When the two Tribes and half were carried away captive out of their own Country beyond *Jordan*, by the King of *Aſſyria*, viz. *Tiglath* before mentioned. The reſt were carried away by *Salmaneſſer.*

Ver. 7. *And his brethren by their families (when the genealogy of their generations was reckoned) were the chief, Jeiel, and Zechariah,*] The Genealogies of thoſe deſcended from the reſt of *Reuben*'s Sons, were preſerved: But he thought fit to mention only the chief of them, who were theſe two, and thoſe that follow.

Ver. 8. *And Bela the ſon of Azah, the ſon of Shema, the ſon of Joel,*] This was another *Joel*, different from him mentioned *ver.* 4.

Who dwelt in Aroer, even unto Nebo, and Baal-meon.] All theſe were ſeated on the other Side of *Jordan*, ſee *Numb.* xxxii. 37. *Joſh.* xiii. 15, 16, *&c.* where we read of this City *Baal-meon.*

Ver. 9. *And eaſtward he inhabited*] That is the Poſterity of *Reuben.*

Unto the entring in of the wilderneſs] This is the Wilderneſs of *Kedemoth*, mentioned *Deut.* ii. 28. upon which the Country of *Sihon* (which *Reuben* poſſeſſed) bordered.

From the river Euphrates:] Their Territory did not reach ſo far as *Euphrates:* But only to the Entrance of that Wilderneſs, which extended itſelf to that River.

Becauſe their cattle were multiplied in the land of Gilead.] When their Stock very much increaſed, ſo that they had not Paſturage enough for them, they enlarged their Border, as far as they were able, Eaſtward toward the River *Euphrates.*

Ver. 10. *And in the days of Saul they made war*] With the Aſſiſtance of other Tribes that dwelt on that ſide *Jordan*, ver. 18, 19.

With the Hagarites,] That is, the *Iſhmaelites* deſcended from *Hagar*; who were ſettled in *Arabia Deſerta.* See *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg. L.* 4. *cap.* 11.

Who fell by their hands:] Were conquered by them in that War: So that, as it here follows, they poſſeſſed their Country.

And they dwelt in their tents] This ſhews they were *Arabians*; or near Neighbours to them.

Throughout all the eaſt-land of Gilead.] They poſſeſſed all that Country, which lay Eaſt of *Gilead:* Which chiefly belonged to the *Gadites* and *Manaſſites*, though the *Reubenites* had ſome of it, *Deut.* iii. 12, 13. A very learned Man of our own is of opinion, that theſe *Hagarenes* inhabited the Country called *Petra Nabatæa.* See Dr *Fuller*'s *Miſcellanea Sacra, L.* ii. *cap.* 13. where he obſerves, that all the reſt, who were called *Iſhmaelites* or *Kedar*, were afterwards comprehended under the Name of *Saracens.*

Ver. 11. *And the children of Gad dwelt over againſt them, in the land of Baſhan, unto Salcah:*] See *Joſh.* xiii. 24, 25, &c. He next mentions the *Gadites*, becauſe they were Neighbours to the *Reubenites.*

Ver. 12. *Joel the chief, and Shapham next, and Jaanai, and Shaphat in Baſhan.*] He doth not give us the Genealogy of this whole tribe, but only the names of the principal Perſons; among whom theſe were the moſt eminent, when their Genealogy was examined: Which ſeems to have been in the Reign of *Joſham*, ver. 17. All theſe dwelt, I ſuppoſe, in the *Metropolis* of the Country called *Baſhan:* Where the chief City was called by the ſame name: And afterwards called *Batanæa.*

Ver. 13. *And their brethren of the houſe of their fathers were, Michael, and Meſhullam, and Sheba, and Jorai, and Jachan, and Zia, and Heber, ſeven.*] Theſe ſeven were eminent Perſons deſcended from other great men of the ſame Family with thoſe before-named: And therefore are called their *Brethren.*

Ver. 14. *Theſe are the children of Abihail the ſon of Huri,*] That is, the ſeven before-mentioned, came from *Abihail*; whoſe Pedigree here follows.

The ſon of Jeraoh, the ſon of Gilead, the ſon of Michael, the ſon of Jeſhiſhai, the ſon of Jahdo, the ſon of Buz;

Ver. 15. *Ahi the ſon of Abdiel, the ſon of Guni, chief of the houſe of their fathers.*] Beſides the foregoing, there was another great Perſon who was of chief Authority, in the Family of *Abdiel* and *Guni*, and their Fathers.

Ver. 16. *And they dwelt in Gilead in Baſhan,*] In a Part of it; the reſt being given to the *Reubenites* and the half Tribe of *Manaſſeh.* See *Joſh.* xiii. 25. xvii. 1. *Deut.* iii. 13. where it is ſaid *Moſes* gave all *Baſhan* to the *Manaſſites:* But the Meaning is, all that was not given to the other two Tribes who had a Share therein. See what I have noted upon *Deut.* iii. 13.

And in her towns,] That is, ſuch Towns as belonged to that Portion of the Country which they poſſeſſed.

And in all the ſuburbs of Sharon,] A Country where there was excellent Paſturage, and which produced the moſt generous Wine. There was two *Sharon*'s, one in the Eaſt inhabited by the *Gadites*, Deut. iii. 12, 13. another in the Weſt, *Joſh.* xii. 17, 18. not far from the famous Port called *Joppa*, Acts ix. 35.

Upon their borders.] Unto the utmoſt Bound (as the *Hebrew* Words ſignify) of that Country.

Ver. 17. *All theſe were reckoned by genealogies, in the days of Jotham king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam king of Iſrael.*] This doth not imply that *Jotham* and *Jeroboam reigned* in the ſame Time: But that in their ſeveral Reigns this Account was taken. *Kimchi* thinks

that *all these* (*i. e.* the Children of *Reuben*, the Children of *Gad*, and half Tribe of *Manasseh*) *were reckoned*, that were listed to undertake the War afterward mentioned, with the *Hagarens*: So that it may not concern the Genealogy.

Ver. 18. *The sons of Reuben, and the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh, of valiant men, men able to bear buckler and sword, and to shoot with bow, and skilful in war, were four and forty thousand seven hundred and threescore, that went out to the war.*] These three Tribes, or at least so many of them as made a great Army, joined their Forces together, consisting of their best Soldiers, to invade the Country of the *Hagarites*. This seems to be a distinct War from that in the Days of *Saul*, ver. 10. See 1 *Sam.* xiv. 47.

Ver. 19. *And they made war with the Hagarites, with Jetur, and Nephish, and Nodab.*] There was mention of the *Hagarites* before, but now he shews how they were utterly expelled their Country, though their Neighbours came to their Assistance; *viz.* those of *Jetur*, *Nephish*, and *Nodab*: Who were all *Ishmaelites*; the two first being expressly mentioned as the Sons of *Ishmael*, *Gen.* xxv. 15. from whom these People took their Name. But, as Dr *Jackson* observes, there are no People mentioned in Scripture, who took their Name from *Nebaioth* his eldest Son. Which makes it probable, that they who in Heathen Writers are called *Nabathæi*, were in Scripture called *Ishmaelites*, as sole Heirs to their first Progenitor's Name. Their Seat was in the best Part of *Arabia Petræa*, near to the *Midianites*. See *Book* i. on the *Creed*, *Chap.* 25. *Sect.* 3. where he notes, that the *Greek* Writers call the *Hagarites* Ἀγραῖοι; which is more consonant to the *Hebrew* Name than the Latin, *Hagareni*. Their chief City was called *Atra*, and the Inhabitants *Atræni*, unless they mistook their Name, which perhaps was *Agreni*.

Ver. 20. *And they were helped against them,*] It is likely the *Hagarites* fought stoutly, but God assisted the *Israelites*; enduing them with extraordinary Courage, and daunted their Enemies. For it is not likely any other *Help* is here meant but that from God.

And the Hagarites were delivered into their hand, and all that were with them:] That is, those Allies before mentioned, who came to their Aid.

For they cried unto God in the battle, and he was intreated of them, because they put their trust in him.] I suppose their Enemies were too hard for them, in the first Onset, which made them pray to God most earnestly in the midst of the Fight: Representing to him the pious Confidence they placed in him and his almighty Power, and not in their Arms and warlike Skill: Which moved him to give them the Success they desired. Here the *Targum*, instead of these Words, they put their Trust *in him*, hath these, they put their Trust *be memra*, in his WORD.

Ver. 21. *And they took away their cattle*;] In the Hebrew, *lead Captive*; that is, drove as many of their Cattle as they pleased into their own Country. This Place is, among others, alledged by *Grotius*, as a Proof of the Lawfulness of taking the Spoil in a just War against an Enemy: As God allowed the *Israelites* to do, when a City fell in their Hands, which had refused their Offers of Peace, *Deut.* xx. 14. But this Instance is the more to be minded, because the War here spoken of was not by divine Precept as that against the seven Nations of *Canaan*: But from common Right, which Men had to defend themselves against injurious Persons, or to invade those who had invaded them, and would make them no Satisfaction. Such War was approved by God, it appears by this, that he aided them, when they called upon him for Help, as we read in the foregoing *Verse*. See *Lib.* 3. *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, *Cap.* 6. *Sect.* 1.

Of their camels fifty thousand,] It is no Wonder there were so many, for the *Arabians* abounded in Camels, as *Diodorus Siculus* relates, *Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 12. which they used in War, as well as to carry Burdens in the Time of Peace. See *Pliny*, *Lib.* 8. *cap.* 18. and *Vegetius*, *L.* 3. For they being Creatures very patient of Thirst, were the fitter for any Service in that hot and dry Country. See *Bochartus* in his *Hierozoicon*, P. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 2.

And of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand,] The prodigious Number of Sheep that those Countries produced, is at large shewed by the same Author, *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 46. and their Breed of Asses in the same *Book*, *Cap.* 13.

And of men] In the Hebrew, *Souls of Men*; *i. e.* of Men, Women, and Children.

An hundred thousand.] Whom they did not kill (it appears by this Relation) but carried them out of their own Country, and sold them for Slaves (as the Manner was in those Days) or employed them as such in their own Business.

Ver. 22. *For there fell down many slain,*] Besides these taken Captive, a great Number were slain in the Fight; which could not be avoided.

Because the war was of God.] Perhaps they consulted him before they went upon this Expedition; and he encouraged them to undertake it, as he powerfully assisted them in it. Here again the *Targum* saith, the War was *from the WORD of Jehovah.*

And they dwelt in their steads] Possibly all those valiant Men who were engaged in this War, settled themselves in the Country which they had conquered.

Until the Captivity.] In the Days of *Pekah*, 2 *Kings* xv. 29. when they were rooted out, as the rest of the ten Tribes were in the Days of *Hoshea*.

Ver. 23. *And the children of the half tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land:*] In the same Country, on the other Side of *Jordan*, with the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*: Of whom he having spoken, gives a short Account of the *Manassites*.

They increased from Bashan unto Baal-hermon, and Senir, and unto Hermon.] They were first possessed of the Kingdom of *Og* in *Bashan*, *Josh.* xiii. 30. From whence they extended their Territories, when they were increased, unto the Northern Parts of the Country beyond *Jordan*.

Ver. 24. *And these were the heads of the house of their fathers, even Epher, and Ishi, and Eliel, and Azriel, and Jeremiah, and Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, mighty men of valour, famous men, and heads of the house of their fathers.*] He reckons only the most remarkable Men of this Tribe: Who were not only of chief Authority in their several Families, but by their valiant Exploits had gotten great Renown.

Ver. 25. *And they transgressed against the God of their fathers, and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land, whom God destroyed before them.*] All *Israel* transgressed as well as they: But it seems they were the greatest Transgressors, who began, perhaps, the Apostacy from God, and were Ring-leaders to Idolatry. And therefore, as it here follows, they were the first that were carried away captive.

Ver. 26. *And the God of Israel*] The *Targum* saith, the *Memra*, or *WORD of the God of Israel*. From whence it appears, they thought the divine ΛΟΓΟΣ to be the God of *Israel*: For they are Words of the same Import.

Stirred up the spirit of Pul the king of Assyria,] When, perhaps, he intended to bend his Forces another Way, God inclined him to go against *Israel*: Whom he distressed so much, that they were forced to make him a great Present: Whereby they moved him not to stay there, but return to his own Country, 2 *Kings* xv. 19, 20. We do not read, that he carried any of the People captive; though perhaps he might, after some Spoil in the Skirts of the Country, as he went home.

And the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria] Who came in the next King's Reign but one, and carried those Tribes away captive, as we read in 2 *Kings* xv. 29.

And he carried them away (*even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh*)] He carried these away entirely, together with some of the People of *Galilee*; particularly all *Naphtali*, as the fore-named Place tells us. And the *Jews* say, they carried away the golden Calf which was in *Dan*; as they gather from 2 *Chron.* xxviii. 21.

And brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara,] These are the very Places unto which *Salmaneser* afterward carried the Remainder of the Ten Tribes, 2 *Kings* xvii. 6. xviii. 11. where there is only this Difference, that there it is said *into the cities of the Medes*, but here unto *Hara*: Which is all one; for *Media* is the very same with *Hara*, and is by St *Hierom* (without an Aspiration) called *Ara*. And the *Greeks* commonly call it *Aria*, and the People of it *Arii*, as we read in *Herodotus*, *Pausanias*, and others. And *Bochartus* thinks, not without Reason, that the mountainous Part of the Country of *Media* towards the North, was properly called by this Name of *Hara*; from the Word *Har*, which signifies a Mountain. Here *Strabo* saith many Foreigners inhabited: For it is likely this hilly Country was most empty of People.

And the river of Gozan,] That is, to the Banks of the River on both Sides: For it is as much as τὴν περιχώρεγ, to the Region about this River, as our very learned Mr *Nic. Fuller* observes, in his *Miscellanea*, *Lib.* 2. *C.* 5. where he takes *Gozan* to be the ancient Name for that River, which the *Persians* afterward called *Cyrus*: Near to which stood the City *Gauzania* in *Ptolemy*; which retained that Name from the River *Gozan*.

Unto this day.] Here they settled, as the same learned Man observes; and did not range as far as *Tartary*, as some have thought. For how should they, being miserable Captives, who had no Power to go back, or to go forward? Especially through strange Countries, without any Arms, or other Accommodations.

CHAP. VI.

Verse 1. *THE sons of Levi; Gershon; Kohath, and Merari.*] The first of these is called *Gersham*, ver. 16. See *Gen.* xlvi. 11. *Exod.* vi. 16.

Ver. 2. *And the sons of Kohath*;] He begins with the Genealogy of the second Son, because from him sprung the Family of the Priests.

Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.] The second of these Sons is called *Aminadab*, ver. 22.

Ver. 3. *And the children of Amram; Aaron, Moses, and Miriam.*] See *Exod.* vi. 20.

The sons also of Aaron; Nadab, and Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.] The two first perished for their Sin, in offering with strange Fire, *Lev.* x. 1.

Ver. 4. *Eleazar begat Phinehas, and Phinehas begat Abishua*,

Ver. 5. *And Abishua begat Bukki, and Bukki begat Uzzi*,] According to the Manner of the *Greeks* and *Latins*, who are wont to deprave Oriental Names, *Josephus* calls these three *Abiezer*, *Boceias* and *Ozi*, Lib. 5. *Archæol.* Cap. 41. And the *Chronicon Alexandrinum*, as Mr *Selden* observes, assigns the very Time when they exercised the High-priesthood; *Abishua* (whom he calls *Abiud*) in the Time of *Ehud*; *Bukki* in the Time of *Shamgar*; and *Uzzi* in the Time of *Tola*. In whose Days, the *Jews* think, the Priesthood was translated from the Family of *Eleazar* to that of *Ithamar*: For some great Sin which they had committed; as afterwards for the Sins of *Eli* his Sons, it was translated back again to *Eleazar*'s Posterity. So they say in *Juchasin*, *In the days of Sampson died Uzzi of the family of Eleazar, and the high-priesthood was translated to the family of Ithamar; the first of which was Eli.* But as the *Alexandrian* Chronicle is of no great Authority, so there is no Mention, as Mr *Selden* observes, of the Names of these three Persons, as succeeding *Phineas*, either in the *Scripture*, or the *Hebrew Chronicles*, or in *Eusebius*. But the only High-priest between *Eleazar* and *Eli* is *Phineas*: Who the *Jews* think was alive in the War with the *Benjamites*, *Judges* xxi. 28. See *Lib.* 1. *De Success. ad Pontif. Cap.* 2. But this cannot be justified.

Ver. 6. *And Uzzi begat Zerahiah*, and *Zerahiah begat Meraioth.*

Ver. 7. *Meraioth begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub*,] See *Ezra* vii. 3. where in this Genealogy six Generations are omitted by him, *from Meraioth to Azariah the son of Johanan*, which are here mentioned. This *Kimchi* thinks was done for Brevity's sake.

Ver. 8.

Ver. 8. *And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Ahimaaz.*] See 2 *Sam.* viii. 17. and xv. 27.

Ver. 9. *And Ahimaaz begat Azariah, and Azariah begat Johanan.*

Ver. 10. *And Johanan begat Azariah, he it is that executed the priests office, in the temple that Solomon built in Jerusalem.*] The Divine Writer sets a Mark of Honour upon *Azariah* (which he doth not on any of the foregoing) for maintaining his Office so resolutely, with the Danger of his Life, against the Usurpation of one of *Solomon*'s Successors, who would have offered Incense in that very Temple which *Solomon* had built. Of which see 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 17, 18, &c. The mention of *Solomon*'s Temple in this Place, plainly denotes, that this was written after the second Temple was built, or while it was in building.

But *Ludovicus Capellus* is of Opinion, that *Azariah* here spoken of is not he that resisted *Uzziah*. For such a noble Fact as that was, he thinks, would not have been touched in such general Words: But he takes him to have been the High-priest in the Days of *Solomon*; and was the first that ministred only in his Temple. For *Zadok* his Grandfather, and *Ahimaaz* his Father ministred first in the Tabernacle. Therefore to make this agree with that *Azariah*, he thinks we ought to acknowledge a double *Metathesis* in these *Verses* 9, 10, 11, 12, which ought to be read thus: *Ahimaaz begat Azariah, (he is the first that executed the priests office in the house which Solomon built in Jerusalem) Azariah begat Amariah, Amariah begat Johanan, Johanan begat Azariah, Azariah begat Ahitub, Ahitub begat Zadok.* If this be admitted, all the Difficulties that arise out of this Genealogy are quite removed. See his *Chronologia Sacra Notæ in Tab.* XIV. p. 286.

Ver. 11. *Azariah begat Amariah, and Amariah begat Ahitub.*

Ver. 12. *And Ahitub begat Zadok, and Zadok begat Shallum.*] Who is called *Meshullam* in *ch.* ix. 11. These three are mentioned no where else, but in *Nehem.* xi. 11. tho' they discharged the High-Priest's Office in the Reigns of *Jotham*, *Ahaz*, *Hezekiah*, and *Manasseh*, as *Ludovicus Capellus* makes account in his *Chronol. Sacra*, p. 287.

Ver. 13. *And Shallum begat Hilkiah, and Hilkiah begat Azariah.*

Ver. 14. *And Azariah begat Seraiah, and Seraiah begat Jehozadak.*] When *Jerusalem* was taken by the king of *Babylon*'s Army, *Seraiah* was carried by the Captain of the Guard to *Nebuchadnezzar* at *Riblah*: Where he commanded him to be put to death. So that in him ended the Succession of High-Priests under the first Temple: Which from *Zadok* unto him were *twelve*. The *Jews* in *Seder Olam Zula* make them to be *eighteen*; but they are not to be believed against the Scripture: There being also the very same Succession mentioned, *Ezra* vii. 1, 2, &c. which beginning from *Aaron*, the first four of these here mentioned, together with *Ahitub* the Father of *Zadok* are omitted for Brevity's sake, as *Kimchi* thinks. See *Selden de Success. ad Pontiff.* L. i. cap. 5. But some think it sufficient to say, that it was not the Intention of the Writer of this Book to mention all the High-Priests that were from *Zadok* to *Seraiah*: Because *Jehoiada* who was the High-Priest in the Time of *Athaliah* is not here named. He is called indeed every where *Jehoiada the Priest*: Yet he took upon him such Authority, as may well make us suppose him to have been High-Priest. It is observed by *Kimchi*, that the Line of the High-Priest is drawn from *Aaron* down to the Captivity, thro' the Family of *Eleazar* his eldest Son; none of *Ithamar*'s being mentioned: Because the perpetual Priesthood was promised only to *Phineas* the Son of *Eleazar*, Numb. xxv.

Ver. 15. *And Jehozadak went into captivity, when the* LORD *carried away Judah and Jerusalem, by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.*] In the Captivity he begat *Jeshua*, who came back in the Time of *Cyrus*, Ezra iii. 2.

Ver. 16. *The sons of Levi; Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.*] He hath not yet done with the Account he intends to give of *Levi*'s Posterity: And therefore repeats the Names of his Sons, from whom these *Levites* sprung, who were not Priests.

Ver. 17. *And these be the names of the sons of Gershom; Libni, and Shimei.*] Who were not mentioned before.

Ver. 18. *And the sons of Kohath were, Amram, and Izhar, and Hebron, and Uzziel.*] See *ver.* 2.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi.*] See *Exod.* vi. 19.

And these are the families of the Levites, according to their fathers.] That is, these were the Heads of the Families that sprung from them: As it is probable, they that follow in the next Catalogue were the Chief of their Families which continued unto the Days of *David*, who regulated their Attendance in their several Courses.

Ver. 20. *Of Gershom: Libni his son, Jahath his son, Zimmah his son.*] This last was his Grand-Son by his Son *Shimei*, as appears from *ver.* 42. But such are frequently called *Sons*.

Ver. 21. *Joah his son, Iddo his son, Zerah his son, Jeaterai his son.*

Ver. 22. *The sons of Kohath; Amminadab.*] Called *Izhar*, *ver.* 2.

Korah his son, Assir his son.

Ver. 23. *Elkanah his son, and Eliasaph his son, and Assir his son.*

Ver. 24. *Tahath his son, Uriel his son.*] Called also *Zephaniah*, *ver.* 36.

Uzziah his son.] Who went also by the Name of *Azariah*, as that Verse tells us.

And Shual his son.

Ver. 25. *And the sons of Elkanah.*] He was the Son of *Korah*, mentioned *ver.* 23. as appears from *Exod.* vi. 24.

Amasai, and Ahimoth.

Ver. 26. *As for Elkanah: the sons of Elkanah; Zophai his son.*] Or *Zuph*, as he is called *ver.* 35. This is another *Elkanah*; Son, it is likely, of him last mentioned.

And Nahath his son.

Ver. 27. *Eliab his son.*] Who is called *Eliel*, *ver.* 34.

Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son.

Ver. 28. *The ſons of Samuel.*] Who was the Son of *Elkanah*, as we read, 1 *Sam.* i. 1. which being a thing well known, this Writer (giving only a Breviate of theſe Hiſtories) omits the mention of it. But it appears by this Account, that *Samuel* was only a *Levite*, not of the Race of the Prieſts (for he did not deſcend from *Aaron*, but from *Izhar* the Uncle of *Aaron*) much leſs the High-Prieſt, as ſome great Men have fancied. See *Selden de Succeſſ. ad Pontif.* L. 1. cap. 14.

The firſt-born Vaſhni, and Abiah.] The firſt of theſe is called *Joel*, 1 *Sam.* viii. 2. and here below, *ver.* 33.

Ver. 29. *The ſons of Merari; Mahli, Libni his ſon, Shimei his ſon, Uzza his ſon.*

Ver. 30. *Shimea his ſon, Haggiah his ſon, Aſaiah his ſon.*

Ver. 31. *And theſe are they.*] Having thus far deduced the Genealogy of the *Levites*, he proceeds now to give an Account how *David* ordered their Attendance upon the Service of God at the Tabernacle: And ſets down the Names of the Chief of them, which here follows.

Whom David ſet over the ſervice of the ſong.] Appointed to miniſter unto God by ſinging of Songs in his Houſe.

After that the ark had reſt.] After *David* had brought it from the Houſe of *Obed Edom*, and ſettled it at *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 17.

Ver. 32. *And they miniſtred before the dwelling place of the tabernacle of glory.*] Which *David* had prepared for the Ark, when it came to *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 17.

With ſinging.] The Pſalms which *David* and other Prophets compoſed.

Until Solomon had built the houſe of the LORD *in Jeruſalem.*] Before the Temple was built by *Solomon*, they performed this Service: Which did not ceaſe after it was built, but continued in great Order, as it here follows.

And then they waited in their office, according to their order.] Which *David* himſelf had conſtituted a little before his Death: As we read in the latter End of this Book.

Ver. 33. *And theſe are they that waited with their children: Of the ſons of the Kohathites; Heman a ſinger, the ſon of Joel, the ſon of Shemuel.*] That is, of *Samuel* the great Prophet: Whoſe Name, it appears by this, was differently pronounced in different Times and Places. This Place alſo ſtill ſhews more clearly, that *Samuel* was only a *Levite* of the Family of the *Kohathites*, not a Prieſt of the Family of *Aaron*, which is ſuggeſted by the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xcix. *Moſes and Aaron among his prieſts, and Samuel among them that call upon his name.* Therefore, at *Eſtius* obſerves, when *Samuel* is ſaid to have offered Sacrifice, (as he did often in *Galgal* and other Places) it muſt be underſtood that he did it by the Miniſtry of the Prieſts, not by himſelf. And thus *David* and *Solomon* ſacrificed, but not by their own Hands, but by thoſe to whoſe Office it properly belonged.

This *Heman* was ſo eminent for his Skill in ſinging, that he is thought to have been a Compoſer of Hymns: Which I have conſidered in my *Notes* upon 1 *Kings* iv.

Ver. 34. *The ſon of Elkanah, the ſon of Jeroham, the ſon of Eliel, the ſon of Toah.*] Called *Nahath*, *ver.* 26.

Ver. 35. *The ſon of Zuph.*] Called *Zuphai*, *ver.* 26.

The ſon of Elkanah, the ſon of Mahath, the ſon of Amiſai.

Ver. 36. *The ſon of Elkanah, the ſon of Joel, the ſon of Azariah, the ſon of Zephaniah,*

Ver. 37. *The ſon of Tahath, the ſon of Aſſir, the ſon of Ebiaſaph, the ſon of Korah,*

Ver. 38. *The ſon of Izhar, the ſon of Kohath, the ſon of Levi, the ſon of Iſrael.*] Thus in honour of *Samuel*, the Pedigree of *Heman*, who was his Grand-Son, is derived from *Iſrael* the Father of them all.

Ver. 39. *And his brother Aſaph (who ſtood on his right hand) even Aſaph the ſon of Berechiah, the ſon of Shimea.*] This depends upon *ver.* 33. where it is ſaid, *theſe are they that waited with their Children*, &c. *viz. Heman* and *Aſaph:* Who is called *Heman*'s Brother, according to the *Hebrew* Phraſe; in which all near Kindred are called *Brothers*. And theſe two were of the ſame Tribe, and Family; and alſo of the ſame Employment, upon which Account, if there were no other, he might be called the *Brother* of *Heman*.

Ver. 40. *The ſon of Michael, the ſon of Baaſeiah, the ſon of Melchiah,*

Ver. 41. *The ſon of Ethni, the ſon of Zerah, the ſon of Adaiah.*

Ver. 42. *The ſon of Ethan, the ſon of Zimmah, the ſon of Shimei,*

Ver. 43. *The ſon of Jahath, the ſon of Gerſhom, the ſon of Levi.*] There was no need to add, *the ſon of Iſrael:* For it is apparent they ſprung from the ſame Stock, by two Brethren the Sons of *Levi*.

Ver. 44. *Their brethren the ſons of Merari, ſtood on the left hand.*] In like Manner, the Children of the next Son of *Levi* are here mentioned; who had the loweſt Place aſſigned, becauſe they were of the youngeſt Family. So there were three principal Singers, who were Maſters and Governors of the whole Choir, *Heman* deſcended from *Kohath* was the Prime, who, together with his Sons ſtood in the middle: And then *Aſaph*, deſcended from *Gerſhom* with his Sons ſtood on his right Hand: And *Ethan* from *Merari* on the left. Of theſe three Families there were three principal Perſons, who bare Rule over the reſt of the Singers here mentioned, and kept good Order among them. And indeed there was an admirable Order obſerved, in the whole Miniſtry at the Tabernacle: Three great Men, and their Sons were Singers and Muſicians; the reſt of the *Levites* prepared and made ready the Sacrifices; the Prieſts offered them; and the High Prieſt officiated in the moſt Holy Place, as it here follows.

Ethan the ſon of Kiſhi, the ſon of Abdi, the ſon of Malluch:] He who is here called *Ethan*, is called *Jeduthun*, *ch.* ix. 16. and in many other Places.

Ver. 45. *The ſon of Haſhabiah, the ſon of Amaziah, the ſon of Hilkiah.*

Ver. 46. *The ſon of Amzi, the ſon of Bani, the ſon of Shamer,*

Ver. 47.

Ver. 47. *The ſon of Mahli, the ſon of Muſhi, the ſon of Merari, the ſon of Levi.*] It is obſervable, that in all the Genealogies of the *Levites*, there is not a Word ſaid of the Sons of *Moſes* and their Poſterity: He having no Ambition to prefer them unto any Office, either in Church or State.

Ver. 48. *Their brethren alſo the Levites,*] The reſt of that Tribe, who were not fit to be Singers.

Were appointed unto all manner of ſervice of the tabernacle, of the houſe of God.] They performed all the laborious Work that was to be done in the Tabernacle; being Porters, Keepers of the Veſſels of the Sanctuary, as well as taking Care to prepare the Sacrifices, and ſuch like Things. Of which an Account is given below in *ch.* xxiii. and theſe following.

Ver. 49. *But Aaron and his ſons offered upon the altar of the burnt-offering, and on the altar of incenſe, and were appoined for all the work of the place moſt holy, and to make an atonement for Iſrael, according to all that Moſes the ſervant of God had commanded.*] The nobleſt Part of the Miniſtry was reſerved for *Aaron* and his Poſterity: Which is mentioned at large in the Book of *Leviticus*. Which ſhews that *Aaron* alone, and his Succeſſors in the High Prieſthood, miniſtred in *the place moſt holy*, and made the *Atonement:* But his Sons the Prieſts, offered on the Altars *of Burnt-offering, and of Incenſe.*

Ver. 50. *And theſe are the ſons of Aaron; Eleazar his ſon, Phineas his ſon, Abiſhua his ſon,*

Ver. 51. *Bukki his ſon, Uzzi his ſon. Zerahiah his ſon,*

Ver. 52. *Meraioth his ſon, Amariah his ſon, Ahitub his ſon,*

Ver. 53. *Zadok his ſon, Ahimaaz his ſon.*] Having mentioned the High-Prieſt's Office, he ſets down the Succeſſion of it from *Aaron* to the Time of *David:* Which he had done before more largely to the Time of the Captivity, *ver.* 3, 4, &c. There was no Age like to this of *David*'s, as *Victorinus Strigelius* obſerves, which produced ſo many great Men, that he calls it the Prophetical Age. Wherein God raiſed up *Samuel, Nathan, Gad, Heman, Aſaph*, and *Ethan:* Who made the Word of God dwell plentifully in the Church of *Iſrael* in all Wiſdom.

Ver. 54. *Now thoſe are their dwelling-places throughout their caſtles, in the coaſts of the ſons of Aaron, of the families of the Kohathites.*] Now follows an Account of the Place where they inhabited: And firſt of the Habitation of the Sons of *Aaron*, who were the nobleſt of the *Kohathites.*

For theirs was the Lot.] That is, the firſt Lot fell to them. See *Joſh.* xxi. 4.

Ver. 55. *And they gave them Hebron in the land of Judah, and the ſuburbs thereof round about it. Joſh.* xxi. 10, 11.

Ver. 56. *But the fields of the city, and the villages thereof, they gave to Caleb the ſon of Jephunneh. Joſh.* xxi. 12.

Ver. 57. *And to the ſons of Aaron they gave the cities of Judah, namely, Hebron the city of refuge, and Libnah with her ſuburbs, and Jattir, and Eſhtemoa, with their ſuburbs.*] Beſides the forenamed City of *Hebron* (which is mentioned again, becauſe the moſt eminent) they gave them theſe following, which were in the ſame Tribe of *Judah.*

Ver. 58. *And Hilen with her ſuburbs.*] Called *Holon* in the Book of *Joſhua, ch.* xxi. 15.

And Debir with her ſuburbs.] Mentioned in the ſame Place.

Ver. 59. *And Aſhan with her ſuburbs.*] Called *Ain*, Joſh. xxi. 16.

And Beth-ſhemeſh with her ſuburbs.] Mentioned in the ſame Place.

Ver. 60. *And out of the tribe of Benjamin; Geba with her ſuburbs, and Alemeth with her ſuburbs.*] Called *Almon*, Joſh. xxi. 18.

And Anothoth with her ſuburbs. All their cities throughout their families were thirteen cities.] Whereof there are only *eleven* here mentioned: But there are two more added in the Book of *Joſhua*, viz. *Jattah* and *Gibeon*, which make thirteen, *ch.* xxi. 16, 17. Perhaps they were not yet rebuilt, when this Book was written.

Ver. 61. *And unto the ſons of Kohath, which were left of the ſame family of that tribe.*] Who were not of the Sons of *Aaron*, but deſcended from *Kohath.*

Were cities given out of the half tribe, namely out of the half tribe of Manaſſeh, by lot, ten cities.] Some of theſe Cities were taken out of the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, and ſome out of others; as appears from *Joſh.* xxi. But in all they made *ten, v.* 26.

Ver. 62. *And to the ſons of Gerſhom throughout their families, out of the tribe of Iſſachar, and out of the tribe of Aſher, and out of the tribe of Naphtali. and out of the tribe of Manaſſeh, in Baſhan, thirteen cities.*] Their Cities were aſſigned them in theſe ſeveral Tribes, becauſe they were too many to be contained in one.

Ver. 63. *Unto the ſons of Merari were given by lot, throughout their families, out of the tribe of Reuben, and out of the tribe of Gad, and out of the tribe of Zebulun, twelve cities.*

Ver. 64. *And the children of Iſrael gave to the Levites theſe cities, with their ſuburbs.*] To the Tribe of *Levi*, conſiſting of Prieſts, and ſimple *Levites*, theſe Cities were given, which are here mentioned in this *Chapter.*

Ver. 65. *And he gave by lot out of the tribe of the children of Judah, and out of the tribe of the children of Simeon, and out of the tribe of the children of Benjamin.*] Theſe three Tribes were very near one to another; and in ſeveral Places *Simeon* mixed together with the other two.

Theſe cities which are called by their names.] Which are recited in the foregoing *Verſes* (*v.* 57, &c.) and given to the Sons of *Aaron.*

Ver. 66. *And the reſidue of the families of the ſons of Kohath had cities of their coaſts, out of the tribe of Ephraim.*] By *Coaſts* here is meant *Portions:* Which were aſſigned them, tho' they were not Prieſts, for their Support in a lower Miniſtry. Theſe Things ſeem to be mentioned ſo often, and with ſuch Exactneſs, that it might appear what Care was taken by God for the Maintenance of his Miniſters of all Sorts; and for the Inſtruction of his People, among whom he diſperſed the *Levites*, who were peculiarly devoted to his Service.

Ver. 67. *And they gave unto them of the cities of refuge, Shechem in mount Ephraim, with her ſuburbs: they gave alſo Gezer with her ſuburbs.*] Theſe were Places of great Eminence, unto which there was great Reſort: Which gave them the greater Opportunity of doing good. They are both expreſsly mentioned, *Joſh.* xxi. 21.

Ver. 68. *And Jokeam with her ſuburbs, and Beth-horon with her ſuburbs,*

Ver. 69. *And Aijalon with her ſuburbs, and Gathrimmon with her ſuburbs.*

Ver. 70. *And out of the half tribe of Manaſſeh; Aner with her ſuburbs, and Bilean with her ſuburbs, for the family of the remnant of the ſons of Kohath.*] The City here called *Bileam* is called *Ibleam* in the Book of *Joſhua*; Length of Time making greater Alterations in the Names both of Perſons and Places, than this is, as appears by ſeveral other Places here mentioned. For as *Kimchi* here well notes (which frivolous Cavillers ſhould obſerve) the Divine Writers did not affect Accuracy in ſuch Matters as theſe; but took Names as they found them.

Ver. 71. *Unto the ſons of Gerſhom were given out of the family of the half tribe of Manaſſeh, Golan in Baſhan with her ſuburbs, and Aſhtaroth with her ſuburbs.*] From *Golan* came the *Gaulonites*.

Ver. 72. *And out of the tribe of Iſſachar; Kediſh with her ſuburbs, Daberath with her ſuburbs,*

Ver. 73. *And Ramoth with her ſuburbs, and Anem with her ſuburbs:*

Ver. 74. *And out of the tribe of Aſher; Maſhal with her ſuburbs, and Abdon with her ſuburbs,*

Ver. 75. *And Hukok with her ſuburbs, and Rehob with her ſuburbs.*

Ver. 76. *And out of the tribe of Naphtali; Kedeſh in Galilee with her ſuburbs, and Hammon with her ſuburbs, and Kirjathaim with her ſuburbs.*] That Place which here is called *Hamon*, is in *Joſh.* xxi. 32. called *Hamoth*: From whence ſome argue, that one of theſe Places is corrupted; and they fancy this, becauſe the LXX here hath χαμώθ. As tho' the Name of ſome Place and Perſon (as I ſaid before) may not be differently pronounced in different Times and Countries. As *Achan* and *Achar*, mentioned above.

Ver. 77. *Unto the reſt of the children of Merari were given out of the tribe of Zebulon, Rimmon with her ſuburbs, Tabor with her ſuburbs.*

Ver. 78. *And on the other ſide Jordan by Jericho, on the eaſt-ſide of Jordan were given them out of the tribe of Reuben, Bezer in the wilderneſs with her ſuburbs, and Jahzah with her ſuburbs.*

Ver. 79. *Kedemoth alſo with her ſuburbs, and Mephaath with her ſuburbs.*

Ver. 80. *And out of the tribe of Gad; Ramoth in Gilead with her ſuburbs, and Mahanaim with her ſuburbs,*

Ver. 81. *And Heſhbon with her ſuburbs, and Jazer with her ſuburbs.*] The firſt of theſe, *Heſhbon*, was reckoned to be in the Tribe of *Reuben* as well as in *Gad*. Of which ſee *Joſh.* xiii. 17.

CHAP. VII.

Verſe 1. *NOW the ſons of Iſſachar were Tola, and Puah, Jaſhub, and Shimron, four.*] There is ſome little Difference in the Names of two of theſe, as they are mentioned *Gen.* xlvi. And *Jaſhub* ſeems to have been called *Job*, for brevity ſake: Juſt as *Aram* is called *Ram*, and among us *Alexander* is called *Saunder*. See *Buxtorf's Anticritica*, Part ii. Cap. 8. where *Raſi* gives another Account of it, but not ſo likely.

Ver. 2. *And the ſons of Tola; Uzzi, and Rephaiah, and Jeriel, and Jahmai, and Jibſam, and Shemuel, heads of their fathers houſe, to wit, of Tola: they were valiant men of might in their generations; whoſe number was in the days of David two and twenty thouſand and ſix hundred.*] When *David* numbered the People (2 *Sam.* xxiv.) there were found thus many deſcended from the firſt-born of *Iſſachar*; which was a very great Increaſe.

Ver. 3. *And the ſons of Uzzi; Izrahiah.*] He names but one Son: Therefore, all his Poſterity is comprehended in the Name of *Sons*.

And the ſons of Izrahiah; Michael, and Obadiah, and Joel, Iſhiah, five: all of them chief men.] Reckoning their Father for one, they were five in all: And Perſons of great Authority.

Ver. 4. *And with them, by their generations, after the houſe of their fathers, were bands of ſouldiers for war, ſix and thirty thouſand men.*] As they were numerous, ſo they were of a warlike Spirit; which made them very conſiderable.

For they had many wives and ſons.] They were very fruitful, and propagated the more, becauſe they had many Wives, who bare them many Sons: And thoſe Sons, it is likely, took many Wives alſo, for the greater Increaſe of their Family. For this was the Cauſe of Polygamy among them, the Deſire of a numerous Off-ſpring (whereby God's Promiſe to *Abraham*, of making them as the Stars of Heaven for Multitude, might be fulfilled) and of an holy Race of People to propagate Piety, when the Nations of the World were generally corrupted. See *Chap.* viii. 40.

Ver. 5. *And their brethren.*] That is, their Kindred.

Among all the families of Iſſachar, were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies, fourſcore and ſeven thouſand.] There was no ſuch great Increaſe of the reſt of the Families of *Iſſachar*, ſince in all they amounted but to this Number: And from two of his Sons ſprung above fifty eight thouſand.

Ver. 6. *The ſons of Benjamin; Bele, and Becher, and Jediael, three.*] He mentions no more in this Place; but in the next *Chapter*, *ver.* 1, 2. he mentions *five*: They were *ten* in all, as we read in *Gen.* xlvi. 21. But either half of them died without Iſſue, or their Families were extinct, or their Genealogies loſt.

Ver. 7. *And the ſons of Bela; Ezbon, and Uzzi, and Uzziel, and Jerimoth, and Iri, five; Heads of the houſe of their fathers, mighty men of valour, and were reckoned by their genealogies, twenty and two thouſand and thirty and four.*] There

are

are others mentioned as his Sons, *ch.* viii. 8. therefore it is likely these were his Grand-sons: Who being more eminent than their Fathers, were mentioned as the chief of their several Families, from whence they sprung.

Ver. 8. *And the sons of Becher; Zemira, and Joash, and Eliezer, and Elioenai, and Omri, and Jerimoth, and Abiah, and Anathoth, and Alameth. All these are the sons of Becher.*

Ver. 9. *And the number of them after their genealogy by their generations, heads of the house of their fathers, mighty men of valour, was twenty thousand and two hundred.*] They were not so many as those descended from the eldest Son: And the youngest Son had still fewer.

Ver. 10. *The sons also of Jediael; Bilhan.*] He mentions but one; who includes all descended from him, as it here follows.

And the sons of Bilhan; Jeush, and Benjamin, and Ehud, and Chenaanah, and Zethan, and Tharshish, and Ahishahar.

Ver. 11. *All these the sons of Jediael, by the heads of their fathers, mighty men of valour, were seventeen thousand and two hundred souldiers, fit to go out for war and battle.*

Ver. 12. *Shuppim also, and Huppim, the children of Ir.*] Or, of *Iri*, as he is called, *v.* 7. the youngest Son of *Bela*. Whose Sons are called *Huppim* and *Muppim*, *Gen.* xlvi. 21. In which Book there are other proper Names of Men, in the plural Number, *Gen.* x. 13, 14. xxv. 3.

And Hushim, the sons of Aher.] If he still speak of the Sons of *Benjamin*, this Person was called *Ahiram*, *Numb.* xxvi. 39. But there being no mention of the Tribe of *Dan* in this Genealogy, unless it be here, many take *Aher* not to be a proper Name, but a common Word, signifying *other:* And so translate the Words thus, *another Son:* That is, the Son of another Tribe or Family, *viz.* of *Dan*. For *Hushim* was his only Son, *Gen.* xlvi. 23. where the Word *Sons*, tho' he speak of one Man only, is used as it is in this Place.

Ver. 13. *The sons of Naphtali; Jahziel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shallum, the sons of Bilhah.*] The Sons of *Bilhah* were *Naphtali*, and *Dan*. Therefore these were her Grand-sons by the first of them.

Ver. 14. *The sons of Manasseh; Asriel.*] His great Grand-son: For both he, and *Zelophehad* were the Sons of *Gilead*, the Son of *Machir*, the Son of *Manasseh*. See *Num.* xxvi. 29, &c. xxvii. 1.

Whom she bare.] That is, whom his Wife bare: For his Concubine is here opposed to her, in the next Words.

(But his concubine, the Aramitess, bare Machir the father of Gilead.] He took a *Syrian* Woman to Wife; from whom his chief Posterity descended.

Ver. 15. *And Machir took to wife the sister of Huppim and Muppim, whose sisters name was Maachah.)*] He married into the Tribe of *Benjamin*, whose Sons these were.

And the name of the second son was Zelophehad.] This relates to the Beginning of *ver.* 14. where his first Son *Ashriel* is mentioned.

And Zelophehad had daughters.] No Sons, but only Daughters; as we read in the Book of *Numbers*, *ch.* xxvii.

Ver. 16. *And Maachah the wife of Machir bare a son, and she called his name Peresh; and the name of his brother was Sheresh; and his sons were Ulam, and Rakem.*

Ver. 17. *And the sons of Ulam; Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead, the son of Machir, the son of Manasseh.*

Ver. 18. *And his sister Hammoleketh bare Ishod, and Abiezer, and Mahalah.*] That is, the Sister of *Gilead*, as *Kimchi* understands it, (tho' some take her to have been the Sister of *Bedan*) who was an illustrious Woman, and therefore here mentioned, and, as the *Targum* imagine, was a Queen; That is, Governess of a certain Tract of Land, in the Country of *Gilead*. For he takes *Hamoleketh* not for a proper Name, but for an Appellative: Of which there is no mention neither in the Law, nor in the Prophets, as *Kimchi* confesses; but they have this by Tradition. Which, tho' it be very groundless, the *Vulgar Latin* follows it, and translates this Word *Regina*. Which *Estius* ingenuously acknowledges to be a Mistake.

Ver. 19. *And the sons of Shemida were, Ahiah, and Shechem, and Likki, and Aniam.*] There is no mention of *Shemida* before. But he is supposed to be another Son of *Gilead*'s Sister beforenamed.

Ver. 20. *And the sons of Ephraim; Shuthelah, and Bered his son, and Tahath his son, and Eladah his son, and Tahath his son.*] Some will have all these to be the Sons of *Ephraim:* But the most natural Sense seems to be, that *Bered* was the Son of *Shuthelah*, and *Tahath* the Son of *Bered*, &c. and so on to the following Descendants of *Ephraim*, whose Genealogy is now related.

Ver. 21. *And Zabad his son, and Shuthelah his son, and Ezer, and Elead, whom the men of Gath that were born in that land slew, because they came down to take away their cattle.*] This Piece of History is nowhere else recorded: Which in all likelihood fell out before the Children of *Israel* came out of the Land of *Egypt*. For *Ephraim*, it appears by the next *Verse*, was alive when these Children of his were slain. Who, as the *Targum* thinks, mistook in their Computation of the End of the Years, wherein they were to be Slaves in *Egypt*; and imagining them to be expired, made an Inroad into the Land of *Canaan* to take Possession of it, before the Time they were to enjoy it. But others think it proceeded from their Desire of Prey and Spoil, which they thought they might lawfully get from those whose Country they were to possess: And they presumed the more to make this Attempt, because they were valiant Men, and proud, perhaps of the great Power and Authority, which their Uncle *Joseph* had in *Egypt*. Tho' others think it more probable, that the *Philistines* having infested them in the Land of *Goshen*, these Sons of *Zabad*, broke into their Country, to make Reprisals upon their Cattle. Dr *Lightfoot* (in the Conclusion of his *Annotations on Genesis*) quite contrary, thinks that the Men of *Gath* went to plunder in *Egypt*; and there slew these *Ephraimites*, who only stood up in Defence of their Cattle. And those Words, *that were born in the land*, he thinks, signify

these Men of *Gath* were born in *Egypt*, tho' they now dwelt in *Gath*. So the Men of *Gath* were the Plunderers, and not the *Ephraimites*. But they who take the *Ephraimites* to have been the Invaders, think those Words are added, to shew that the *Philistines* were the more incensed against them; because they seemed to come to dispossess them of their Land.

Ver. 22. *And Ephraim their father.*] They were his Grand-children.

Mourned many days, and his brethren came to comfort him.] That is, his Kindred (as the Word *Brethren* often signifies) they that were of his Family, came to condole with him. This shews, *Ephraim* lived to be a very old Man, if this happened near to the Time of their going out of *Egypt*.

Ver. 23. *And when he went in to his wife, she conceived and bare a son, and he called his name Beriah, because it went evil with his house.*] For so the Word *Beriah* imports: His Family was *in an ill Condition*.

Ver. 24. *And his daughter was Sherah, who built Beth-horon the nether, and the upper, and Uzzen-sherah.*] She was, it seems, a very great Woman: Who restored both these Cities of *Beth-horon*, which were destroyed by the *Israelites*, when they conquered the Land of *Canaan*, and rebuilt them in the same Place; adding another City, which carried her own Name in it.

Ver. 25. *And Rephah was his son.*] *i. e.* The Son of *Beriah*.

Also Resheph, and Telah his son, and Tahan his son.] *Beriah* also had another Son, whose Name was *Resheph*, whose Son was *Tela*, &c.

Ver. 26. *Laadan his son, Ammihud his son, Elishama his son.*] Who was the chief Commander in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, when they were in the Wilderness, *Numb.* i. 10.

Ver. 27. *Non his son, Jehoshuah his son.*] For whose sake his Pedigree seems to be thus largely deduced.

Ver. 28. *And their Possessions and Habitations were Bethel, and the towns thereof.*] See *Josh.* xvi. 1, &c.

And eastward Naaran, and westward Gezer with the towns thereof, Shechem also and the towns thereof, unto Gaza and the towns thereof.] Or rather *Ad-azea*, a Place so called: For their Border did not extend so far as *Gaza* in the Land of the *Philistines*.

Ver. 29. *And by the borders of the children of Manasseh, Beth-shean and her towns, Taanach and her towns, Megiddo and her towns, Dor and her towns. In these dwelt the children of Joseph, the son of Israel.*] That is, the Children of *Manasseh*. See *Josh.* xvi. 11.

Ver. 30. *The sons of Asher; Imnah, and Isuah, and Ishuai, and Beriah, and Serah their sister.*] See the same Account of them in *Gen.* xlvi. 17.

Ver. 31. *And the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel, who is the father of Birzavith.*] The two first of these were born before they went into *Egypt*, as appears from *Gen.* xlvi. 11.

Ver. 32. *And Heber begat Japhlet, and Shomer, and Hotham, and Shuah their sister.*

Ver. 33. *And the sons of Japhlet; Pasach, and Bimhal, and Ashvath: these are the children of Japhlet.*

Ver. 34. *And the sons of Shamer; Ahi, and Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.*] The Father of these was the second Brother of *Japhlet*, called *Shomer*, ver. 32.

Ver. 35. *And the sons of his brother.*] That is, of *Hotham*, who was next Brother of *Shamer*.

Helem, Zophah, and Imna, and Shelesh, and Amal.

Ver. 36. *The sons of Zophah; Suah, and Harnepher, and Shual, and Beri, and Imrah,*

Ver. 37. *Bezer, and Hod, and Shammah, and Shilshah, and Ithran, and Beera.*

Ver. 38. *And the sons of Jether; Jephunneh, and Pispah, and Ara.*] This *Jether* is the same that is called in the *Verse* foregoing *Ithran*; the youngest Son, but one, of *Zophah*: The rest had no Sons; or their Genealogy was lost.

Ver. 39. *And the sons of Ulla; Arah, and Haniel, and Rezia.*] We do not read whose Son *Ulla* was; but 'tis probable of *Jether*: Whereof there are many Examples in the foregoing *Chapters*.

Ver. 40. *All these were the children of Asher, heads of their fathers house, choice and mighty men of valour, chief of the princes.*] Of these only he gives an Account, and takes no Notice of inferior Families: Tho' they are included, I suppose, in the following Number.

And the number throughout the genealogy of them that were apt to the war and to battle, was twenty and six thousand men.] Tho' they lived in a rich and delicious Country, abounding with Wine and Oil, and other good Things, in the best Part of *Galilee*; yet they did not give themselves up to Sloth and Laziness; but were a warlike and valiant People.

CHAP. VIII.

Verse 1. *NOW Benjamin begat Bela his first-born.*] He goes over the Genealogy of this Tribe again (which he had begun before in the foregoing *Chapter*, *v.* 6.) and gives a larger Account of it; because it was entirely joined to the Tribe of *Judah*: And likewise, that he might make way for the following History, and touch upon the Generations of *Saul*; and shew, how this Tribe was increased again, after that great Calamity which befel them in the Time of the Judges.

Ashbel the second Son, and Aharah the third.] His first-born *Bela* is expressly so called by *Moses*, *Gen.* xlvi. 21. But all the rest are called by very different Names. Therefore, either these were his Grand-children (who are frequently called *Sons*) or they had two Names, which I shewed before was not unusual. See *Chap.* iii. 1.

Ver. 2. *Nohah the fourth, and Rapha the fifth.*

Ver. 3. *And the sons of Bela were, Addar, and Gera, and Abihud,*

Ver. 4. *And Abishua, and Naaman, and Ahoah,*

Ver. 5. *And Gera.*] It is likely, this was the Son of the fore-named; and so Grand-son to *Bela*.

And Shephuphan, and Huram.

Ver. 6. *And these are the sons of Ehud.*] Who is not named before; unless he be the third

Son of *Bela*, called *Abihud*, ver. 3. And ſome think the three Perſons laſt named to have been his Sons.

Theſe are the heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Geba.] Where their firſt Settlement was.

And they removed them to Manahath.] That is, *Gera* removed them, as it follows, *ver.* 7. to a Place mentioned before in the *ſecond Chapter* of this Book, *ver.* 52, 54. *Geba* being too narrow for them, when they were multiplied: Or, this other Place being a more commodious Habitation.

Ver. 7. *And Naaman, and Ahiah, and Gera: he removed them, and begat Uzza, and Ahihud.*] After his Removal.

Ver. 8. *And Shaharim begat children in the country of Moab, after he had ſent them away; Huſhim, and Baara were his wives.*] After the Removal before mentioned, this Perſon took two Wives of the Country of *Moab*: Whoſe Names are here ſet down. To ſhew (ſay ſome of the *Jews*) that tho' a *Moabite* was excluded from the Congregation of the LORD, yet a *Moabiteſs* was not; as appears by the Example of *Ruth*.

Ver. 9. *And he begat of Hodeſh his wife.*] The *Jews* think ſhe is the ſame with *Baara*: Who was called *Hodeſh*, that is *new*; becauſe he renewed the Example of marrying a *Moabitiſh* Woman: Which was firſt practis'd in *Ruth*. But this is an odd Fancy of theirs, who miſplace the Time of *Ruth*.

Jobab, and Zibia, and Meſha, and Malcham.

Ver. 10. *And Jeuz, and Shachia, and Mirma. Theſe were his ſons, heads of the fathers.*] Chief Men in their Families.

Ver. 11. *And of Huſhim he begat Ahitub, and Elpaal.*] On this *Verſe* the *Jews* ground what they ſay of *Hodeſh*, that ſhe was the ſame with *Baara*, mentioned *ver.* 8. with *Huſhim* as his other Wife.

Ver. 12. *The ſons of Elpaal; Eber, and Miſham, and Shamed, who built Ono, and Lod, with the towns thereof.*] Theſe two, *Ono*, and *Lod*, are joined together in other Places, being neighbouring Cities. See *Ezra* ii. 33. *Nehem.* vi. 37. xi. 33. They were but three Miles diſtant one from the other, as Dr *Lightfoot* computes in his *Chorographical Decats* before St *Mark*, chap. ix. ſect. *ult.* where he ſhews the *Talmudiſts* ſay, that *Ono* was a walled City from the Days of *Joſhua*; but in the War againſt *Gibeah* it was burnt with Fire, as other Cities were: And rebuilt by this *Elpaal*: Who alſo re-edified *Lod*, which is the ſame with *Lydda* in the *New Teſtament*, as the ſame Dr *Lightfoot* obſerves in his *Chorogaphical Century* before St *Matthew*. Where he obſerves the Author of the Maps of the Land of *Canaan*, hath placed *Lydda* not far from *Jordan*, and *Lod* near the *Mediterranean*: Whereas they are one and the ſame Place, as he ſhews at large. And in the other Place mentioned before, he ſhews it was alſo called *Laodicea*: For ſometimes they ſpeak of the *Martyrs in Lod*, and in other Places call them the *Martyrs in Laodicea*.

Ver. 13. *Beriah alſo, and Shema, who were heads of the fathers of the inhabitants of Aijalon.*] That is, of the Fields that lay about *Aijalon*: For the Town it ſelf belonged to the Tribe of *Dan*, *Joſh.* xix. 42.

Who drove away the inhabitants of Gath.] In revenge (as *Pelicanus* thinks) of the Slaughter they made long ago, of their Brethren the *Ephraimites*, *ch.* vii. 21. Or, finding the Men of *Gath* had poſſeſſed themſelves of this Place, they drove them out after their Return from the Captivity of *Babylon*. But we read of no War after their Return, till the Time of the *Maccabees*: And therefore this belongs (as a moſt judicious Friend of mine, Dr *Alix*, obſerves) to what was done in ancienter Times, *viz.* after the Diviſion of the Country by *Joſhua*.

Ver. 14. *And Ahio, Shaſhak, and Jeremoth,*

Ver. 15. *And Zebadiah, and Arad, and Adar.*

Ver. 16. *And Michael, and Iſpah, and Joha, the ſons of Beriah.*] Mentioned before, *ver.* 13.

Ver. 17. *And Zebadiah, and Meſhullam, and Hezeki, and Heber.*

Ver. 18. *Iſhmerai alſo, and Jezliah, and Jobab, the ſons of Elpaal.*] Of whom we had an Account before, *ver.* 11, 12.

Ver. 19. *And Jakim, and Zichri, and Zabdi,*

Ver. 20. *And Elienai, and Zilthai, and Eliel,*

Ver. 21. *And Adaiah, and Beraiah, and Shimrath, the ſons of Shimhi.*] It is likely that this *Shimhi* is the ſame with him who is called *Shema*, ver. 13.

Ver. 22. *And Iſhpan, and Heber, and Eliel,*

Ver. 23. *And Abdon, and Zichri, and Hanan,*

Ver. 24. *And Hananiah, and Elam, and Antothijah.*

Ver. 25. *And Iphedeiah, and Penuel, the Sons of Shaſhak.*] This *Shaſhak* was an eminent Perſon, mentioned *ver.* 14.

Ver. 26. *And Shamſherai, and Shehariah, and Athaliah.*] Here is another Inſtance of the ſame Name, being common to Men and Women.

Ver. 27. *And Jareſiah, and Eliah, and Zichri, the ſons of Jeroham.*] He is the ſame with *Jeremoth*, mentioned *ver.* 14. next to *Shaſhak*.

Ver. 28. *Theſe were heads of the fathers, by their generations, chief men. Theſe dwelt in Jeruſalem.*] It is probable that all theſe mentioned from *ver.* 14. dwelt at *Jeruſalem*, (one Part of which belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*) as they that are fore-named did at *Aijalon*.

Ver. 29. *And at Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon (whoſe wifes name was Maachab.*] Perhaps *Gibeon* built this City, and gave his Name to it, as *Kimchi* conjectures. But his proper Name was *Jehiel* (as we read *ch.* ix. 35. where this Genealogy is repeated) and he is called *the Father of Gibeon*, becauſe he was the chief Ruler or Governor of the *Benjamites*, who inhabited that Place.

Ver. 30. *And his firſt-born ſon Abdon, and Zur, and Kiſh, and Baal, and Nadab.*] Between *Baal* and *Nadab*, there is mention of another Son called *Ner*, *ch.* ix. 36.

Ver. 31. *And Gedor, and Ahio, and Zacher.*] Who is called *Zachariah* in *ch.* ix. 37. where another Son is added, called *Mikloth*, whoſe Poſterity here follows.

Ver. 32. *And Mikloth begat Shimeah.*] Who is called *Shimeam*, *ch.* ix. 38.

And theſe alſo dwelt with their brethren in Jeruſalem, over-againſt them.] Theſe Families likewiſe were ſettled at *Jeruſalem*, as well as the fore-named: And dwelt in a Part of the City directly over-againſt the other.

Ver. 33. *And Ner begat Kiſh, and Kiſh begat Saul.*] I obſerved before, *ver.* 30. that *Ner* was one of the Sons of *Gibeon* (or *Jehiel*) who did not beget (in the common Signification of the Word) *Kiſh:* But educated him and bred him up. For *Kiſh* was the Son of *Abiel:* But different from him mentioned 1 *Sam.* xiv. 51. who was his Brother. The *Targum* here ſaith, that *Ner* and *Abiel* were the ſame Men; who had two Names: *Abiel* was his proper Name, but he was called *Ner* (which ſignifies a *Light*) becauſe he was illuſtrious upon ſome Accounts which the *Jews* mentioned. See upon 1 *Sam.* ix. 1. where there is a large Account of the Anceſtors of *Abiel*; none of which are here mentioned. Upon which *Conradus Pelicanus* makes this Reflection. "That hence we may learn, "it is an unneceſſary Labour ſcrupulouſly to "enquire after theſe things, from which we "can reap no Fruit, and of which we may be "ignorant without danger. Eſpecially in the "Matter of theſe Genealogies; the Reaſon "of which is long ago expired; together with "the Tribes to which they belong. As for "the Certainty of our Belief, which depends "upon the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, "that ſtands firm and conſtant, tho' ſome "Things by the Length of Time be ſo ob"ſcure, that they are not now exactly under"ſtood; eſpecially in the Difference we find "in the proper Names of Perſons and Places, "which without any prejudice to the Faith "may be neglected." Thus he.

And Saul begat Jonathan, and Malchi-ſhua, and Abinadab, and Eſh-Baal.] Who is called alſo *Iſhboſheth.* See 2 *Sam.* ii. 8.

Ver. 34. *And the ſon of Jonathan was Merib-baal; and Merib-baal begat Micha.*] This Son of *Jonathan* is called commonly *Mephiboſheth.* See in the fore-named Place.

Ver. 35. *And the ſons of Micah were, Pithon, and Melech, and Tarea, and Ahaz.*] The third of theſe is called *Tahrea*, *ch.* ix. 41.

Ver. 36. *And Ahaz begat Jehoadah, and Jehoadah begat Alemeth, and Azmaveth, and Zimri; and Zimri begat Moza.*

Ver. 37. *And Moſa begat Binda: Rapha was his ſon, Eleaſah his ſon, Azel his ſon:*

Ver. 38. *And Azel had ſix ſons, whoſe names were theſe, Azrikam, Bocheru, and Iſhmael, and Sheariah, and Obadiah, and Haman. All theſe were the ſons of Azel.*

Ver. 39. *And the ſons of Eſhek his brother, were Ulam his firſt-born, Jehuſh the ſecond, and Eliphelet the third.*] We read nothing of *Eſhek* before, unleſs he be the ſame with *Eleaſah*, *v.* 37.

Thus the Family of *Saul*, tho' he was rejected by God from being King of *Iſrael*, was bleſſed with a numerous Progeny; which ſprung from his great Grand-Child *Micah:* Whoſe Poſterity is hear largely recorded, in honour of *Jonathan.*

Ver. 40. *And the ſons of Ulam were mighty men of valour, archers.*] In the *Hebrew the* Word for *Archers* is, thoſe that *tread the Bow* becauſe their Steel Bows (which were much in uſe among them) were ſo ſtrong, that they could not bend them with their Arms; but ſat down, and preſſing them with their Feet, pulled the Arrow with both Hands, that it might fly with greater Force.

And had many ſons, and ſons ſons an hundred and fifty. All theſe are of the ſons of Benjamin.] Who it appears by *Judges* xx. were a very valiant Tribe: And this Family, in particular, were noted to be very great, both in Number and Valour.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *So all Iſrael were reckoned by genealogies.*] As much as to ſay, thus I have ſummarily reckoned up the Genealogies of all the Tribes; as I found them in the publick Regiſters.

And behold, they were written in the book of the kings of Iſrael, and of Judah.] For, let it be noted, they were ſo careful to preſerve their Genealogies, that they were kept in the publick Records, not only of the *Jews*, but of the *Iſraelites:* Whoſe Kings were not negligent in this Matter.

Who were carried away to Babylon for their tranſgreſſion.] Theſe laſt mentioned, of the Tribe of *Judah*, were carried thither; as the *Iſraelites* had been before into remote Countries, upon the ſame Account of their Idolatry. In which Captivity there was, no doubt, a great Confuſion made in their Families: But *Ezra*, by the help of the Prophets *Haggai*, and *Malachi* (as the *Jews* think) undertook to ſet them right, by giving an Account of what he found remaining in his Time. Tho' there is a great Difference of Names in *Nehem.* xi. from thoſe who are here mentioned: *Malachi* alſo and *Ezra* did not live in the ſame Time.

Ver. 2. *Now the firſt inhabitants that dwelt in their poſſeſſions in their cities were.*] He ſpeaks of thoſe that came back to their own Country with *Zerubbabel.*

The Iſraelites, the prieſts, Levites, and the Nethinims.] The firſt Inhabitants that came and ſettled in their Country, out of which they had been carried Captive, he comprehends, under four Sorts of Perſons, *Iſraelites*, *Prieſts*, *Levites*, and *Nethinims.* The firſt of theſe ſeems to comprehend not only all thoſe of the ten Tribes, who were carried Captive with *Judah* and *Benjamin*, but thoſe alſo who were carried into *Aſſyria* and *Media* by *Tiglath-Pileſer* and *Salmanaſſer.* For the Edict of *Cyrus* extended to them, as well as to *Judah* and *Benjamin*; and as the Prophets had foretold, (ſee *Jer.* v. 3, 4, 10, and *ch.* xxxi.) ſome of them did return, tho' too many (as the *Jews* alſo did) continued where they were ſettled in their Captivity. But that the Word *Iſraelites* is here a diſtinct Name from the *Jews*, is apparent from what follows, *ver.* 3. The laſt of theſe, *viz.* the *Nethinims*, are generally thought by the Jewiſh Interpreters to be the ſame with the *Gibeonites*, who performed the lower Offices in the Temple, being Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water. See *Joſh.* ix. 27. But *Ezra* hath given us a better Account of them, *ch.* viii. 20. where he informs

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us they were *given* by *David* to minister to the *Levites*, (which is the Original of their Name) as the *Levites* were given by God to help the Priests. And therefore in all Places they are mentioned with Holy Persons.

Ver. 3. *And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of Ephraim and Manasseh.*] This shews that some of the ten Tribes returned with those of *Judah* and *Benjamin*. For the Proclamation of *Cyrus* excepted none, but gave all the People of that Nation liberty to return to their own Country. And *Josephus* says expressly, that the Edict of *Cyrus* was sent by *Zerubbabel* to those of *Assyria* and *Media*. Many indeed neglected that Favour (as I said before) and continued where they were settled; but those that did return were united to the *Jews* without Distinction. Insomuch, that at *Jerusalem*, which belonged to the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, some of *Ephraim* and *Manasseh* were permitted to make their abode. For several of those Tribes being left in the Land of *Samaria*, when the ten Tribes were carried away, joined with *Judah* (2 *Chron.* xxxi. 1. xxxii. 1. xxxiv. 9, &c.) and were carried with them to *Babylon*, and returned with them.

Ver. 4. *Uthai the son of Ammihud, the son of Omri, the son of Imri, the son of Bani, of the children of Pharez the son of Judah.*] Now he sets down their Names; and first those of the Tribe of *Judah* in this and the two following Verses. But their Names are so different from those in *Nehem.* xi. that it is an Argument they speak of quite different Persons, who lived in different Times.

Ver. 5. *And of the Shilonites.*] Who are called *Shelomites* in *Numb.* xxvi. 20.

Asaiah the first-born, and his sons.] The eldest of that Family, and those descended from him.

Ver. 6. *And of the sons of Zerah; Jeuel, and his brethren.*] By *Brethren* are meant near Relations, as *ver.* 13, 21.

Six hundred and ninety.] This was the whole Number of the Children of *Judah*, who dwelt in *Jerusalem*, after they came out of their Captivity.

Ver. 7. *And of the sons of Benjamin, Sallu, the son of Meshullam, the son of Hodaviah, the son of Hasenuah.*] This *Meshullam* is said to be descended from quite different Ancestors, than is mentioned *Nehem.* xi. 7. And therefore this is a quite different Person from the other, tho' of the same Name. Tho' some think that one of these Authors gives an Account of his remote Ancestors, and the other of his more immediate: Which is not probable.

Ver. 8. *And Ibneiah the son of Jeroboam, and Elah the son of Uzzi, the son of Michri, and Meshullam the son of Shephatiah, the son of Reuel, the son of Ibnijah.*

Ver. 9. *And their brethren according to their generations, nine hundred and fifty and six.*] By *Brethren*, as I said before, are meant their near Kindred.

All these Men.] That is, the seven mentioned above, *ver.* 4, 8.

Were chief of the fathers in the house of heir fathers.] They are called chief Fathers, because they were principal Governors in their Families. *Nehemiah* mentions no more than nine hundred twenty and eight, who came with these; therefore gives an Account of different Persons; or some before his Time were dead, or removed to some other Place. The first is most likely.

Ver. 10. *And of the priests; Jedaiah, and Jehoiarib, and Jachin.*] These are the second Sort of Inhabitants that first settled in their Possessions after the Captivity, mentioned *ver.* 2.

Ver. 11. *And Azariah the son of Hilkiah.*] Not he in the Days of *Josiah*, (2 *Kings* xxii. 8.) but another of the same Name; whose Son *Seraiah* lived in the Time of *Nehemiah*, xi. 11.

The son of Meshullam, the son of Zadok, the son of Maraioth, the son of Ahitub, the ruler of the house of God.] This last Person is thought by *Pellicanus* to have been the High-Priest: But both *Ezra*, and *Haggai* tell us *Jeshua* (or *Joshua*) was High-Priest, *Ezra* iii. 2. *Haggai* i. 1. This therefore was not the *Ruler*, but *a Ruler* in God's House (as the Words should be translated) not the principal Ruler, but one in great Authority under him: Perhaps he that was called the *Sagan* (who was Vicar to the High-Priest; and perform'd his Office when he was sick, or otherwise hindred) or he was the Head of one of the Courses of the Priests, that attended in their Turns, at the House of God. Here it is to be noted, that by *the House of God* in this Place, we are taught by *ver.* 23. to understand *the House of the Tabernacle.* For as before the first Temple was built there was a Tabernacle for Divine Service; so after the second was founded, they erected a Tabernacle, till this Temple could be finished: Without which they could not have performed the several Parts of the Worship of God, which were annexed to the several Parts of the Holy Places, according to the Law.

Ver. 12. *And Adaiah the son of Jeroham, the son of Pashur, the son of Malchijah, and Maasiai the son of Adiel, the son of Jazerah, the son of Meshullam, the son of Meshillemith, the son of Immer.*] There were three between that *Jeroham* and *Pashur* mentioned in *Nehemiah*: And therefore he was either his great Grand-Son, or they were different Persons, tho' of the same Name.

Ver. 13. *And their brethren, heads of the house of their fathers, a thousand and seven hundred and threescore; very able men for the work of the service of the house of God.*] In the *Hebrew* they are called *mighty men of valour.* For the Service of the House of God required not only great Strength of Body, but great Courage and Resolution of Mind; especially at that Time when they were newly come out of Captivity. There was a famous Instance of this Courage before the Captivity, in *Azariah:* Who resisted the King himself, when he would have profaned the Holy Place, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 17, 18, &c.

Ver. 14. *And of the Levites; Shemaiah the son of Hashub, the son of Azrikam, the son of Hashabiah, of the sons of Merari.*] These are the third Sort of Persons, mentioned *ver.* 2.

Ver. 15. *And Bakbakkar, Heresh, and Galal, and Mattaniah the son of Micah, the son of Richri, the son of Asaph.*] This last was descended,

it is likely, from that *Aſaph* who lived in *David*'s Time, 2 *Chron.* xx. 14.

Ver. 16. *And Obadiah the ſon of Shemaiah, the ſon of Galal, the ſon of Jeduthun, and Berechiah the ſon of Aſa, the ſon of Elkanah, that dwelt in the villages of the Netophathites.*] He ſpeaks of *Elkanah*, not of *Berechiah:* For he dwelt at *Jeruſalem*. But there was not room for them all there; therefore *Elkanah*, and thoſe that belonged to him, dwelt in theſe Villages, till their own Cities were rebuilt. They were in the Tribe of *Judah*, (*ch.* ii. 54.) and waited at *Jeruſalem* in their Courſes, tho' they did not dwell there.

Ver. 17. *And the porters*] Or, rather the *Guards*, as the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies, and not *Porters*.

Were Shallum, and Akkub, and Talmon, and Ahiman, and their brethren: Shallum was the chief.] The next *Verſe* tells us, at what Places theſe Guards exerciſed their Office.

Ver. 18. *(Who hitherto waited in the kings gate eaſtward.)*] That is, where the King's Gate formerly was. Which ſhews that the Tabernacle they had erected was not on Mount *Moriah*, but in *Sion*, ſince their Return from Captivity.

They were porters.] That is, the four Perſons above-mentioned.

In the companies of the children of Levi.] That were at the four Sides of the Tabernacle, *Jeruſalem* being without Walls.

Ver. 19. *And Shallum.*] Mentioned *ver.* 17.

The ſon of Kore, the ſon of Ebiaſaph, the ſon of Korah, and his brethren (of the houſe of his father.)] That is, the reſt of that Family.

The Korahites were over the work of the ſervice, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle.] Their Service was to be Keepers of the Porches of the Tabernacle. From which it appears again, that the *Jews* (as I ſaid before) did pitch a Tabernacle upon Mount *Sion*, till they had rebuilt the Temple on Mount *Moriah*.

And their fathers being over the hoſt of the LORD.] Here the principal Perſon among them attended, taking Care of the Tabernacle and all its Appurtenances, which ſome think is meant by the *Hoſt of the* LORD.

Were keepers of the entry.] More eſpecially they took Care of the Court that none ſhould enter into it but ſuch as the Law allowed.

Ver. 20. *And Phinehas the ſon of Eleazar was the ruler over them in time paſt.*] So we rightly tranſlate the laſt Word, *lepanim*; which, as *R. David Gauz* obſerves in his *Tzemoth David* (ad A. M. 2892.) doth not ſignify that *Phineas* was now living, but he was Ruler of them *in time paſt*, when he was living. And thus that *Hebrew* Word is rendred, *Ruth* iv. 7. and *Pſalm* cii. 26. But that he ſhould be Ruler over theſe Sort of Officers ſeems unlikely, being the Son of the High-Prieſt, and after *Eleazar* High-Prieſt himſelf: Which raiſed him far above ſuch a low Employment. Beſides, it is evident he is here ſpeaking of the *Levites*, not of the *Prieſts*, and therefore it is probable this *Phineas* was only a *Levite*, called, as his Father was, by the ancient Name of an High-Prieſt. See *Selden de Succeſſ. in Pontificatum*, L. i. cap. 2. fol. 117, 119.

And the LORD *was with him.*] In the *Targum*, the WORD of the LORD was his Helper. From which *Beckius* frames this Argument againſt the preſent *Jews*, that if he who was with *Phineas* was JEHOVAH the true God, and this WORD was with *Phineas*, then the WORD, in the Opinion of this Paraphraſt, was JEHOVAH the true God.

Ver. 21. *And Zechariah the ſon of Meſhelamiah, was porter of the door of the tabernacle of the congregration.*] Here again the *Tabernacle* is mentioned, which, as I ſaid, the firſt Inhabitants of the Country, after their return from Captivity, erected till the Temple could be built. For they would not be without the publick Worſhip of God, and a Place was neceſſary for it. By the *Door of the Tabernacle*, I ſuppoſe is meant the Door which let into the Court of the Prieſts; for the *Levites* might not go into that Court; and therefore this is not meant of the Door of the Sanctuary, as ſome have thought.

Ver. 22. *All theſe which were choſen to be porters in the gates, were two hundred and twelve.*] Who came in their Turns to diſcharge this Office.

Theſe were reckoned by their genealogy in their villages.] See *ver.* 16.

Whom David and Samuel the ſeer did ordain.] All things, that is, after their Return from Captivity, were put into that Order at the Houſe of *God*, which *Samuel* projected, and *David* when he was ſettled in Peace, put in Execution. See *ch.* xxiii. 5. For there had been very great Confuſion, no doubt, in the Service of God, in the Days of the *Judges*, as there had been in all other things. But when *Samuel* came to govern, he deſigned to put things in good Order: And eſpecially to make the Attendance of God's Miniſters at his Houſe more regular than it had been. For which End he contrived, in all likelihood, that Method of the *Prieſts* and *Levites* waiting in their Courſes; which (*Saul* being rejected by God) he imparted unto *David*, whom he anointed by God's Appointment to be King over *Iſrael*. Who accordingly, in the latter End of his Reign, diſpoſed their Service at the Tabernacle.

In their ſet office.] Or rather (as it is in the Margin) *in their Truſt*; for the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies *Fidelity:* Importing, that their Attendance at the Houſe of God was no longer confuſed and diſorderly (as it had been formerly, when there was ſometimes too many, and ſometimes too few waiting there; or they had no certain Work aſſigned them, or were negligent for want of Overſeers) but they every one in their Courſe obediently went about their proper Work, and faithfully diſcharged it.

Ver. 23. *So they and their children had the overſight of the gates of the houſe of the* LORD, *namely, the houſe of the tabernacle.*] This *Verſe* plainly inſtructs us that they built a tabernacle for the Worſhip of God (as I noted *ver.* 10.) after their return from *Babylon*, till the Temple was finiſhed: And here the *Prieſts* and *Levites* attended; as *in the Houſe of the* LORD.

By wards.] According to the Courſes that *David* appointed; as it is explained, *ver.* 25.

Ver. 24. *In four quarters were the porters, towards the east, west, north and south.*] On the four Sides of the Tabernacle, as I obſerved on *ver.* 18. After the Temple was built, theſe Guards were kept, as Dr *Lightfoot* notes, on the four Quarters of the outward Wall. For the Wall that incompaſſed the Courts had no Gate on the Weſt. See *Proſpect of the Temple*, chap. iv. ſect. 3.

Ver. 25. *And their brethern which were in the villages, were to come after ſeven days.*] Every Week a new Courſe came to attend the Service of the Houſe of God, and to relieve their Brethren.

From time to time with them.] They came to wait their Week under the Goverment of the chief Porters: Who ſeem to have conſtantly dwelt at *Jeruſalem*, to ſee the Courſes diſpoſed according as *David* had ordained. So it here follows.

Ver. 26. *For theſe Levites, the four chief porters, were in their ſet office.*] The principal Porters were four, one at each Gate, *ver.* 24. to whom was committed the Care of the reſt of their Brethren to ſee that they did their Duty.

And were over the chambers and treaſuries of the houſe of God.] This I ſhall explain upon *Chap.* xxvi. 20. where it is more diſtinctly mentioned.

Ver. 27. *And they lodged round about the houſe of God, becauſe the charge was upon them; and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them.*] Round about the outward Wall, before mentioned, *ver.* 24. For as the ſame learned Man obſerves, neither *Prieſts* nor *Levites* had any Lodgings in the Gates of the Courts: Nor did the *Levites* open thoſe Doors, but the *Prieſts*.

Ver. 28. *And certain of them had the charge of the miniſtring veſſels, that they ſhould bring them in and out by tale.*] For the Uſe of the Prieſts when they miniſtred: Who returned, when they had done their Work, the ſame Number to the *Levites*, which they had received from them. This was another Duty of the *Levites*.

Ver. 29. *Some of them alſo were appointed to overſee the veſſels, and all the inſtruments of the ſanctuary, and the fine flour, and the wine, and the oil, and the frankincenſe, and the ſpices.*] See upon *ch.* xxvi. 20.

Ver. 30. *And ſome of the ſons of the prieſts made the ointment of the ſpices.*] Or rather, *but ſome of the ſons of the prieſts*, &c. For tho' the *Levites*, had the Cuſtody of the Spices of which the Ointment was made, yet none but the *Prieſts* could compound them and make the Ointment. See *ch.* xxx. 23, &c.

Ver. 31. *And Mattithiah one of the Levites (who was the firſt-born of Shallum the Korahite) had the ſet office* (or truſt) *over the things that were made in the pans.*] To prepare fine Flour and Oil for the *Mincha*, or Meat-Offering that was offered every Morning and Evening, as we read *Levit.* ii. 5. The LXX (who herein follow the *Talmudiſts*) will have this peculiarly refer to the *Mincha* offered by the High-Prieſt for himſelf and his Family: Which was the tenth Part of an *Ephah*; half in the Morning, and half in the Evening, *Levit.* vi. 20, &c.

Ver. 32. *And other of their brethren of the ſons of the Cohathites, were over the ſhewbread to prepare it every ſabbath.*] When it was ſet new upon the Table in the Holy Place, and the old taken away. See upon *Exod.* xxv. 30.

Ver. 33. *And theſe are the ſingers, chief of the fathers of the Levites; who remaining in the chambers, were free.*] Others of the *Levites*, and principal Perſons among them were appointed to be Singers, and attended nothing elſe: But dwelt in ſome Chambers about the Temple, free from all other Employment. And the Reaſon why they dwelt there was, that they might not be defiled, and ſo made unfit at any time for that Miniſtry: And that they might be ready at hand to attend upon it.

For they were employed in that work day and night.] In learning and teaching to ſing, and to play upon Inſtruments both wind and ſtringed: As appears from *Chapter* xxvi. This was wholly a new thing, *Moſes* having ordained nothing concerning Singing and Muſick in the Houſe of God, and ſeems (as it is objected in the Book of *Coſri*) to be contrary to what he commanded, *Deut.* xii. 32. *thou ſhalt not add unto it*, (that is, to the Law) *nor take from it*: But they anſwer very well, that this Command concerned the People only, who were forbidden out of their own Heads, as we ſpeak, to innovate any thing, and frame Laws to themſelves out of their own Reaſonings. But it did not oblige Prophets and Divine Men, ſuch as *Moſes* was: And therefore *David* had Authority from God (who had not bound up himſelf to add nothing) to do what he did; as *Solomon* afterwards had to ſet up another Altar in the midſt of the Court, upon a ſpecial Occaſion, 2 *Chron.* vii. 7, 8, 9. and *Nehemiah* to require but a third Part of a Shekel of the People, *ch.* x. 32. Thus *Sepher Coſri*, Par. III. Sect. 11, 12.

Ver. 34. *Theſe chief fathers of the Levites, were chief throughout their generations.*] Theſe were principal Perſons, among whoſe Families had always been eminent Men, who were choſen for this Service.

Theſe dwelt at Jeruſalem.] They were ſettled there, for the greater Convenience of attending the Morning and Evening Service at the Temple, without much trouble. But theſe Words ſeem to comprehend a great deal more, *viz.* that not only theſe chief of the *Levites*, but all thoſe whom he hath mentioned from *ver.* 3. unto this *Verſe*, lived at *Jeruſalem*, and came back with *Zerubbabel*.

Ver. 35. *And in Gibeon dwelt the father of Gibeon, Jehiel, whoſe wifes name was Maachah.*] From hence to the End of the *Chapter*, the ſame Genealogy is ſet down again, which we had in the foregoing *Chapter* (*ver.* 29, 30, &c.) and in the ſame Words: And therefore I ſhall not here tranſcribe them. Of this I can give no Account but that this Narrative of the Deſcent and Family of *Saul* is repeated, the better to join the following Hiſtory to it, concerning the Death of that King. But if we could give no Account of it, *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks it is not irreligious to acknowledge

that in these *Jewish* Genealogies, which are very long and useless to us, some Errors may have crept in by the Negligence of Transcribers. Who in copying of them might not attend sometimes, but be drowsy, as we are apt to be, when we are about any tedious Work and not very profitable, in which if there be any Error, the Church suffers no Damage by it. But there is no need of this.

CHAP. X.

Verse 1. *NOW the Philistines fought against Israel, and the men of Israel fled before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa.*] This *Verse*, and those that follow, to *ver.* 13. have been explained upon 1 *Sam.* xxxi. where the same History is related; in the same Words, and with very little Difference. And it is repeated here, to make way for the History of *David*, (which is mainly intended in the rest of this Book) who by *Saul*'s Death was advanced to the Crown.

Ver. 2. *And the Philistines followed hard after Saul, and after his sons, and the Philistines slew Jonathan, and Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul.*

Ver. 3. *And the battle went sore against Saul, and the archers hit him, and he was wounded of the archers.*

Ver. 4. *Then said Saul to his armour-bearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and abuse me. But his armour-bearer would not, for he was sore afraid. So Saul took a sword, and fell upon it.*

Ver. 5. *And when his armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise on the sword, and died.*

Ver. 6. *So Saul died and his three sons, and all his house died together.*] That is, all that were present with him in the Battle: And his Family had such a Blow by their Fall, that it never recovered it self. For tho' *Ishbosheth* reigned over a Part of the Country, yet it was not in any Splendor: Such a deadly Wound being given to the House of *Saul*, that it did not long survive him in the Kingly Authority.

Ver. 7. *And when all the men of Israel that were in the valley, saw that they fled, and that Saul and his sons were dead, then they forsook their cities, and fled: and the Philistines came and dwelt in them.*] By the Valley is meant, the Towns in the open Country, which were not fortified. See 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 7.

Ver. 8. *And it came to pass on the morrow, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his sons fallen in mount Gilboa.*

Ver. 9. *And when they had stripped him, they took his head.*] Which they cut off from his Body, as we read, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 9.

And his armour, and sent into the land of the Philistines round about, to carry tidings unto their idols, and to the people.] That publick Thanksgiving might be given by them to their Gods, for this Victory.

Ver. 10. *And they put his armour in the house of their gods.*] In the Temple of *Ashtaroth*, as the same Book tells us, 1 *Sam.* xxxi. 10.

And fastened his head in the temple of Dagon.] These two, *Dagon* and *Ashtaroth*, were the principal Gods of the Country of the *Philistines*; unto whom they sent these Trophies of their Victory. And the Place forenamed informs us where they fastened his Body, after they had separated his Head from it, and stripp'd off the Skin and the Hair; for the *Hebrew* Word signifies a *Skull*.

Ver. 11. *And when all Jabesh-Gilead heard all that the Philistines had done to Saul.*] By *Jabesh-Gilead*, is meant the People of the City, and of the Territory round about it.

Ver. 12. *They arose, all the valiant men, and took away the body of Saul, and the bodies of his sons, and brought them to Jabesh, and buried their bones under the oak in Jabesh, and fasted seven days.*] This was a noble Instance of their Courage, and of their Love and Gratitude to their Prince: Who had some excellent Qualities in him, and had highly oblig'd this City in the Beginning of his Reign: As I have observed on the Book of *Samuel*. If we may believe *Josephus*, there was a Law among the *Jews*, that they who killed themselves should be denied Burial: For this was all the Punishment that could be inflicted on them after they were dead, for so great a Sin. Yet *David* highly approved this Fact of the Men of *Jabesh-Gilead*, who buried *Saul*: And therefore the *Jews* make this Exception to the Rule, That if they killed themselves merely to avoid that Reproach which might be cast upon them if they lived, they might be buried: And they instance in *Samson* and *Saul*. Who they fancy repented of his many Sins, after *Samuel* had appeared to him, and told him of his sad Fate. But the two following *Verses* seem to contradict this. See *Grotius* in his Book *de Jure Belli & Pacis*, *Lib.* ii. *Cap.* 19. *Sect.* 5.

Ver. 13. *So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the* LORD, *even against the word of the* LORD, *which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it.*] His two great Transgressions, (one against the express Order and Command of God by *Samuel*, and the other against a known Law of *Moses*) were his sparing the *Amalekites*, and his consulting the Witch of *Endor*: Which were plain Proofs that he did not mind God, as it follows in the next *Verse*.

Ver. 14. *And enquired not of the* LORD.] He did not regard him, as he ought to have done: For otherwise he did enquire of him, (1 *Sam.* xxviii. 6.) but not with a religious Mind.

Therefore he slew him, and turned the Kingdom unto David the son of Jesse.] Kingdoms are never translated from one Family to another, but Injustice and Impiety go before, as *Grotius* here notes. Which the Son of *Sirach* expresses admirably, *Eccles.* x. 8. *Because of unrighteous dealings, injuries and riches got by deceit, the kingdom is translated from one people to another.*

CHAP. XI.

Verse 1. *THen.*] That is, after the Death of *Ishbosheth*: For many things passed after the Death of *Saul*, which are here omitted.

ted. As the coming of the *Amalekite* to *David* with the News of it; his Lamentation over *Saul* and *Jonathan*; his anointing at *Hebron* over the Tribe of *Judah*; the Death of *Abner*, and then of *Ishbosheth*. After which this Author relates the Promotion of *David* to be King of all the Tribes of *Israel*, by the full Consent of all the People.

All Israel gathered themselves together to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh.] By *all Israel* is meant the Elders of all their Tribes. 2 *Sam.* v. 1. where this *Verse* is explained.

Ver. 2. *And moreover, in time past, when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out, and broughtest in Israel: and the* LORD *thy God said unto thee, thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.*] See 2 *Sam.* v. 2. where there are the very same Words.

Ver. 3. *Therefore came all the elders of Israel to the king to Hebron, and David made a covenant with them in Hebron, before the* LORD, *and they anointed David king over Israel.*] See there 2 *Sam.* v. 3.

According to the word of the LORD *by Samuel.*] These Words are added unto those in the Book of *Samuel*, to shew how the People came to know that God told *David* (as they say in the foregoing *Verse*) he should govern *Israel*. *Samuel* declared it to him, and published it, no doubt, among the People.

Ver. 4. *And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus.*] See concerning this Place, *Judges* xix. 10.

Where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land.] See 2 *Sam.* v. 6.

Ver. 5. *And the inhabitants of Jebus said to David, thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless, David took the castle of Zion, which the city of David.*] The insolent Language of the *Jebusites* is recorded more largely, in 2 *Sam.* v. 6. where see what I have noted.

Ver. 6. *And David said, Whosoever smiteth the Jebusites first, shall be chief and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and was chief.*] It is evident *Joab* was before this in a great Station, commanding all the Forces of *Judah*; as may be gathered from 2 *Sam.* ii. 13, 14. and iii. 22, 23. But now he was a Commander in Chief of all the Forces both of *Judah* and *Israel*; which made him very powerful: Or, perhaps, *Abishai* being his elder Brother, was General of the Forces before; and this Place gives an Account how *Joab* came to have the Pre-eminence, by this great Atchievement.

Ver. 7. *And David dwelt in the castle, therefore they called it, the city of David.*] Because here he chose to have his constant Residence: In order to which he enlarged and adorned it with many Buildings, as it here follows.

Ver. 8. *And he built the city round about, even from Millo round about.* See 2 *Sam.* v. 9.

And Joab repaired the rest of the city.] He repaired perhaps the Fortifications, which had been, in the Time of the Siege, much shattered. And, as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks, built some Houses, for the quartering of his Soldiers.

Ver. 9. *So David waxed greater and greater: for the* LORD *of hosts was with him.*] The WORD of the LORD was his Help, as the *Targum* expresses it. See 2 *Sam.* v. 10.

Ver. 10. *These also are the chief of the mighty men whom David had, who strengthened themselves with him in his kingdom.*] Having touch'd upon *David*'s Promotion to the Throne, and his Settlement in *Sion*, he next thought fit to relate who those valiant Men were that assisted him in his Advancement, and helped to establish him in his Authority. They were such in all likelihood as had accompanied him, during his Persecution by *Saul*; when they gave *David* many Proofs of their Valour and Affection, as they also did afterward.

And with all Israel, to make him king.] A great many of the *Israelites*, as is related in the next *Chapter*, came to *David* before the Death of *Saul*; Believing he was designed by God to be their King.

According to the word of the LORD, *concerning Israel.*] That *David* should be King over all *Israel*: Which Word was delivered by *Samuel*, and known to all the People, as well as to *Saul* and *Jonathan*.

Ver. 11. *And this is the number of the mighty men whom David had; Jashobeam an Hachmonite, the chief of the captains: he lifted up his spear against three hundred, slain by him at one time.*] I have explained this upon 2 *Sam.* xxii. 8. where I observed, how *Kimchi* reconciles this Place to that, which saith he slew eight hundred. But I now think it plainer to say, That he slew eight hundred with his own Hand, and thereby routed the Enemy, and put them to Flight; in which five hundred more were killed in the Pursuit. All which might be said to be slain by him; because the Slaughter he made was the Cause the rest were slain. Or, as *Mayers* (upon *Seder Olam*) interprets it; after he had slain three hundred, he was so little tired, that he slew as many more as made eight hundred.

Ver. 12. *And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite.*] The Son of *Ahohi*, as *Kimchi* understands it; for this is not the Name of a Country, but of a Family.

Who was one of the three mighties.] See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 9.

Ver. 13. *He was with David at Pas-dammin.*] The same with *Ephes-dammin*, 1 Sam. xvii. 1.

And there the Philistines were gathered together to battle, where was a parcel of ground full of barley, and the people fled from before the Philistines.

Ver. 14. *And they set themselves in the midst of that parcel, and delivered it, and slew the Philistines; and the* LORD *saved them by a great deliverance.*] All this is related, and hath been explained in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 9. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 15. *Now three of the thirty captains went down to the rock to David, into the cave of Adullam, and the host of the Philistines encamped in the valley of Rephaim.*] See there, *ver.* 13.

Ver. 16. *And David was then in the hold, and the Philistines garison was then at Bethlehem.*] See there, *ver.* 14.

Ver. 17. *And David longed and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that is at the gate.*] See *ver.* 15. He did not desire any one should venture to fetch him some of this Water, but in a very hot Day, said, as we sometimes do, What would I not give for a Draught of those cool

and

and refreſhing Waters? Which he remembred he had drunk of freely in his Youth.

Ver. 18. *And the three brake through the hoſt of the Philiſtines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took it, and brought it to David: but David would not drink of it, but poured it out to the* LORD.

Ver. 19. *And ſaid, My God forbid it me, that I ſhould do this thing: ſhall I drink the blood of theſe men that have put their lives in jeopardy? for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it: therefore he would not drink it. Theſe things did theſe three mighties.*] See all this explained in that Place, *ver.* 16, 17.

Ver. 20. *And Abiſhai the brother of Joab, he was chief of the three: for lifting up his ſpear againſt three hundred, he ſlew them, and had a name among the three.*] See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 18. There are but two here mentioned; the third, *Abarbinel* thinks, was *Adina* the Son of *Shiza*, mentioned *ver.* 42. who is ſaid to be a Captain of the *Reubenites*, and thirty with him.

Ver. 21. *Of the three he was more honourable than the two, for he was their captain.*] Perhaps he was the firſt, and led them on, in that bold Exploit at *Bethlehem*.

Howbeit, he attained not unto the firſt three.] But came ſhort of them in their great Atchievements.

Ver. 22. *Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, the ſon of a valiant man of Kabzeel, who had done many acts, he ſlew two lion-like men of Moab; alſo he went down and ſlew a lion in a pit in a ſnowy day.*] See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 20.

Ver. 23. *And he ſlew an Egyptian, a man of great ſtature, five cubits high*, &c.] The Country of *Egypt* was famous for Men of vaſt Bigneſs, as we learn from *Herodotus*, *L.* ii. *cap.* 130, 143, 153, 175, 176. See *Huetius* in his *Quæſtiones Alnætanæ*, *L.* ii. *p.* 180. where he obſerves out of *Pliny*, that in *Æthiopia* there was a People that were eight Cubits high, *L.* vi. *cap.* 30. *L.* vii. *cap.* 2.

Ver. 24. *Theſe things did Benaiah the ſon of Jehoiada, and had the name among the three mighties.*] See all this explained in the forenamed Book, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 21, 22.

Ver. 25. *Behold, he was honourable among the thirty, but attained not to the firſt three.*] He ſets a Mark of Honour upon him as a Man of great Reputation among the thirty; tho' he did not riſe up to the Pitch of the firſt three, nor of *Abiſhai*, tho' it is likely he excell'd the third. See there, *ver.* 23.

And David ſet him over his guard.] The *Cerethites* and *Pelethites*. Or, as ſome take it, he made him Preſident of his Council, as the *Hebrew* Word imports, (ſo *Kimchi*) there being a rare Conjunction in him of Wiſdom with Valour.

Ver. 26. *Alſo the valiant men of the armies were Aſahel the brother of Joab, Elbanan the ſon of Dodo of Bethlehem.*] See there, *ver.* 24. Theſe were chief Commanders in the Army, either Colonels, as we ſpeak, or Captains; and they were under the Command of the three foregoing great Men, who were over them, as they were over the Soldiers. But theſe great Men were below the firſt three: Who are ſaid in the *tenth Verſe* of this *Chapter*, to be *mighty men to David*, (as the Words are in the *Hebrew*) becauſe they attended upon him continually, as the Keepers of his Body; and had no other Command.

Ver. 27. *Shammoth the Harorite, Helez the Pelonite.*] See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 25.

Ver. 28. *Ira the ſon of Ikkeſh the Tekoite, Abiezer the Antothite.*] See there, *ver.* 26. All the reſt that follow are mentioned in that *Chapter* of the ſecond Book of *Samuel*, with ſome Difference in their Names, as I have there noted. Some others alſo are added, being Men of great Note, tho' not equal to the above-named. Particularly, he relates who were the chief Commanders, in the Borders of the Kingdom beyond *Jordan*, v. 42, &c. This appears by the Names of their Country, which was beyond that River.

There is a little Difficulty in the *thirty eighth Verſe*, where *Joel*, who is called *Igal* in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 36. (there being nothing more common than ſuch Alterations in Names) is ſaid to be *the Brother of Nathan*: Which ſeems not to conſiſt with what is ſaid in the other Place, that he was *the ſon of Nathan*. But the Account of this is eaſy, for he might be both, if he was his adopted Son, for want of Children: The Word *Son* often ſignifying no more than a Nephew, as the Word *Brother* doth one near of Kin. As for the reſt of the Variations, *Conradus Pellicanus* reſolves, that we need not trouble our ſelves about the Errors of Tranſcribers, which we may acknowledge, in ſuch Matters as theſe, without any Prejudice to Faith, Truth, or good Manners. So he concludes this *Chapter*.

CHAP. XII.

Verſe 1. *NOW theſe are they that came to David to Ziklag, while he yet kept himſelf cloſe, becauſe of Saul the ſon of Kiſh: and they were among the mighty men, helpers of the war.*] This Author thought fit to do thoſe the Honour of being remembred (which is omitted in the Book of *Samuel*) who came and joined themſelves to *David*, when he was in Exile: And were afterward very aſſiſtant to him in his Wars. They are ſaid to come to him, while he *kept himſelf cloſe becauſe of Saul*: Becauſe they pitying *David*'s Condition, who was forced to ſkulk in ſecret Places to ſecure himſelf from *Saul*'s Fury, deſigned to help him, and it is likely left their Habitations, and went to ſeek him: Tho' they did not actually join him till he came to *Ziklag*.

Ver. 2. *They were armed with bows, and could uſe both the right hand and the left.*] Which gave them a great Advantage in War: And made them more valuable Soldiers. See *Judges* xx. 16.

In hurling ſtones, and ſhooting arrows out of a bow.] They were excellent Slingers, as well as Archers.

Even of Sauls brethren of Benjamin.] There was ſome extraordinary Cauſe which moved ſome of *Saul*'s Kindred, as well as of his Tribe to deſert him, and go over to *David*. Either the great Virtue of *David* attracted them, or they abhorred to ſee an innocent Perſon ſo violently perſecuted; or, perhaps, they were pi-

ous Persons, who had a great Regard to the Words of *Samuel*, concerning *David*'s Right to the Kingdom.

Ver. 3. *The chief was Ahiezer, then Joash, the sons of Shemaah the Gibeathite, and Jeziel and Pelet, the sons of Azmaveth, and Berachah, and Jehu the Antothite.*] There is mention before of *Asmaveth* (*ch.* viii. 36.) as descended from *Micah* the Son of *Mephibosheth*, the Grand-Son of *Saul*.

Ver. 4. *And Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among the thirty, and over the thirty.*] I suppose there were thirty *Benjamites* came over to *David* at one time, and this was their Leader.

And Jeremiah, and Jahaziel, and Johanan, and Josabad the Gederathite.

Ver. 5. *Eluzai, and Jerimoth, and Bealiah, and Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Haruphite.*

Ver. 6. *Elkanah, and Jesiah, and Azareel, and Joezer, and Jashobeam the Korhites.*

Ver. 7. *And Joelah, and Zebadiah, the sons of Jeboram of Gedor.*] These were the principal Persons among the thirty, mentioned *ver.* 4. the rest perhaps were not of such Note.

Ver. 8. *And of the Gadites there separated themselves*] From their Countrymen and Families, which they left to follow *David*.

Unto David, into the hold of of the wilderness.] There are several *Holds*, or inaccessible Places mentioned, where *David* secured himself from *Saul*'s Persecution. See 1 *Sam.* xxii. 4. xxiii. 14. xxiv. 22. But some think he still speaks of those that came to *David* at *Ziklag*: Which may be called *a Hold*, they think, as the *City of David* is (*ch.* xi. 7.) because he fortified it.

Men of might, and men of war, fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler.] Under these are comprehended all Weapons of War, which they could manage skillfully; being bred to it, and wanting no courage to engage any Enemy.

Whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes upon the mountains.] They had a Fierceness in their Countenances; which terrified their Enemies: Who durst not look them in their Face, but ran away as soon as they saw them. But they could not save themselves by flight, being pursued so swiftly by these Men, that they overtook them and slew them. *Bochart* observes out of *Aristotle*, that Lions have Faces more like Men, than any other Creatures, but very stern and terrible.

Ver. 9. *Ezer the first, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third.*] They are reckoned up thus distinctly, according to the Dignity and Precedence which they had in their own Country; or according to the Order wherein they came to *David*.

Ver. 10. *Mishmannah the fourth, Jeremiah the fifth,*

Ver. 11. *Attai the sixth, Eliel the seventh,*

Ver. 12. *Johanan the eighth, Elzabad the ninth,*

Ver. 13. *Jeremiah the tenth, Machbani the eleventh.*

Ver. 14. *These were the sons of Gad, captains of the host: one of the least was over an hundred, and the greatest over a thousand.*] They did not bring an Host of Men with them, but they had been Commanders of the Army in their own Country. Or, when *David* came to the Crown, he thought them worthy to be preferred, and the lowest of them was made a Centurion.

Ver. 15. *These are they that went over Jordan in the first month, when it had overflowed all his banks.*] This is an Instance of their fearless Valour, that they ventured over *Jordan* in the most dangerous Season: And perhaps swam over, when the Stream was most rapid and violent, to help their Brethren. See *Josh.* iii. 15.

And they put to flight all them of the vallies, both toward the east, and toward the west.] When *Saul* was engaged to attend the Motions of the *Philistines*, it is likely some People both of the Eastern and Western Countries, which bordered upon *Jordan*, laid hold of this Opportunity to invade and spoil the Land thereabout; which moved these Men to go to their Relief, and God gave them a great Victory over them. Where these Valleys lay, and what Enemies these Men encountred, is no where recorded.

Ver. 16. *And there came of the children of Benjamin, and Judah, to the hold unto David.*] Besides those of *Saul*'s Kindred before mentioned, there were others of that Tribe, together with some of *Judah*, who came to him when he was in the Hold, mentioned *ver.* 8. which I conjectured might be *Ziklag*; but I rather think it was some of the Holds he was in, when he lay in the Wilderness.

Ver. 17. *And David went out to meet them.*] They were so considerable, either for their Number, or Quality, that *David* went out (attended no doubt with some of his Men) to meet them, before they came to the Hold.

And answered and said unto them.] After the first Salutation which they made him, he replied in the following Words.

If ye be come peaceably unto me to help me, my heart shall be knit unto you.] As much as to say, if you be really Friends, you are welcome, and I will make a League with you.

But if ye be come to betray me to mine enemies, seeing there is no wrong in my hands, the God of our fathers look thereon, and rebuke it.] He knew himself to be so innocent, both with respect to *Saul* and all other Men, whom he had no way injured, that he doubted not God would protect him, and do him right against these Men, if they came with bad Intentions to him. What should make him suspect there might possibly be some Treachery designed, is not now to be known. Perhaps some had before this come with Pretences of great Kindness to him, whom he had found to be false: Which made him now more cautious whom he entertained.

Ver. 18. *Then the spirit came upon Amasai, who was chief of the captains.*] The Spirit of Power, saith the *Targum*: That is, God powerfully moved him with an heroical Boldness, and Resolution, in the Name of them all, to profess their Fidelity to *David*, in such pathetical Words, as convinced him they were Friends. *Rasi* compares with this, those Words in *Judges* vi. 34. But none hath discoursed so well upon these Words as *Maimonides*, who observes, that by

by *the Spirit* in ſuch Places as this, is not to be underſtood, a Power to ſpeak or declare any thing: But only to excite thoſe who felt it, to do ſome excellent thing either for particular Perſons, or the whole Church. With this Power *Moſes* was endued, when he came to Man's Eſtate, and was moved to ſmite the *Egyptian* who injured one of his Brethren. Which Power did not leave him, but remained ſtill with him when he fled into *Midian*. See *Exod.* ii. 17. This Power exerted it ſelf in *David* after he was anointed, 1 *Sam.* xv. 13. xvii. 34. See *More Nevochim*, Par. ii. cap. 45.

And he ſaid, thine are we, David, and on thy ſide thou ſon of Jeſſe:] He ſeems to have broken out out into this Speech with a ſudden Violence, being unable to hear with Patience their Fidelity queſtioned. For the Words *and he ſaid*, are not in the *Hebrew* Text; nor thoſe *are we:* But only, *Thine, David*, &c. Which is a broken Speech, expreſſing great Paſſion.

Peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thine helpers.] He moſt affectionately wiſhes all Happineſs to him, and to all that came to his Aſſiſtance: Which implies a Deſire they might not proſper, if they did not now ſincerly come to his Help.

For thy God helpeth thee.] God they ſaw was on his Side, who by his marvellous Deliverances of him, had ſhewn he had a ſpecial Affection to him, and Care of him: And therefore they believed would bleſs thoſe that came to his Help.

Then David received them, and made them captains of the band.] He preferred them to conſiderable Commands in his Army, when he came to be King: For it is not likely he would ſet them above thoſe, who had ſerved him all the Time of his Exile; they being but new Comers.

Ver. 19. *And there fell ſome of Manaſſeh to David (when he came with the Philiſtines againſt Saul to battle, but they helped them not.*] It ſeems they offered their Service to *David*, when he was going with the *Philiſtines* to help them againſt *Saul*, in the laſt Battle which he fought. This ſhews a ſtrange Zeal for *David*, and Abhorrence of *Saul*'s Enmity to him, that they ſhould then join their Forces with him, when he took part with the *Philiſtines*. But neither they, nor the reſt of *David*'s Men were admitted to fight in that Battle.

For the lords of the Philiſtines, upon advertiſement, ſent him away, ſaying, He will fall to his maſter Saul, to the jeopardy of our heads).] Firſt kill them, and then flee to *Saul* and make his Peace with him, at the Coſt of their Heads. See 1 *Sam.* xxix. 3, &c.

Ver. 20. *As he went to Ziklag, there fell to him of Manaſſeh, Adnah, and Jozabad, and Jediael, and Michael, and Jozabad, and Elihu, and Zilthai, captains of the thouſands that were of Manaſſeh.*] Theſe came to him, in that nick of Time, when he went from the *Philiſtines*, in his return to *Ziklag*. Which fell out very opportunely, for they being valiant Men, aſſiſted him againſt that Band of Robbers, the *Amalekites*, who had burnt *Ziklag*, and carried Captive their Wives and Children. He had indeed only ſix hundred Men with him in that Expedition, but theſe were of the Number, who, as it follows, did him great Service in Recovery of his Loſſes.

Ver. 21. *And they helped David againſt the band of the rovers, for they were all mighty men of valour.*] They were not at all diſheartned, when they found *David* in ſuch exceeding great Diſtreſs; but being moſt valiant Captains, offered their Service to him in the Purſuit of his Enemies.

And were captains in the hoſt.] In their own Country they had been Commanders of a Company of Men; many of which, it is likely, they brought over to *David* with them. Or, they followed after them, as is intimated in the following Words.

Ver. 22. *For at that time day by day, there came to David to help him.*] After the Battle wherein *Saul* was ſlain, ſo many reſorted to him every Day, that his Forces grew very conſiderable.

Until it was a great hoſt, like the hoſt of God.] A very formidable Hoſt. Which he compares to the Hoſt of Heaven (the Stars or the Angels) becauſe they were numerous, and many of them illuſtrious Perſons.

Ver. 23. *And theſe are the Numbers of the bands that were ready armed to the war, and came to David to Hebron.*] The great Reſort to him at *Ziklag*, mentioned in the foregoing *Verſe*, made greater Numbers flock to him, when by God's Direction he went to *Hebron:* And they brought their Arms with them, that they might be ready to fight for him.

To turn the kingdom of Saul to him, according to the word of the LORD.] They remembred what *Samuel* had ſaid, and reſolved to anoint him King, 2 *Sam.* ii. 4.

Ver. 24. *The children of Judah that bare ſhield and ſpear, were ſix thouſand and eight hundred ready armed to the war.*] In the Place before-named we read, *the Men of Judah came* and anointed him King: Which ſignifies the whole Tribe conſented to it. Therefore theſe ſix thouſand and eight hundred Men were only the firſt that came, and perhaps appeared in the Name of the reſt.

Ver. 25. *Of the children of Simeon, mighty men of valour for the war, ſeven thouſand and one hundred.*] Tho' *David* was anointed King only over the Tribe of *Judah*, (one of *Saul*'s Poſterity reigning over *Iſrael*) yet ſome of other Tribes came and owned *David* for their King; particularly a great Number of the Tribe of *Simeon*, who were near Neighbours to *Judah*.

Ver. 26. *Of the children of Levi, four thouſand and ſix hundred.*] Thoſe came out of ſeveral Tribes, into which they were diſperſed, yet all agreed to ſhew their Affection to *David*.

Ver. 27. *And Jehoiada was the Leader of the Aaronites.*] He was not the High-Prieſt, for *Abiathar* held that Place: But he was Chief, as *Jarchi* thinks, of one of the Courſes of the Prieſts; and now the chief Commander of thoſe of the Family of *Aaron*, who came to invite *David* to take the Government upon him. He was a Man of War alſo, and brought theſe Prieſts armed with him: For it is ſaid, of all

that

that came to *David* to *Hebron*, (*ver.* 23.) that they were ready armed for the War; in Case any should oppose their Design. See *Selden de Succession. ad Pontificatum*, Lib. i. Cap. 3.

And with him were three thousand and seven hundred.] Besides those of the *Levites* before-named.

Ver. 28. *And Zadok a young man, mighty of valour, and of his fathers house twenty and two captains.*] It is likely, he is the same Person who was made High-Priest in *Solomon*'s time who was now very young, but had a great deal of Courage; whom two and twenty of his Family followed, who were Commanders of so many Companies.

Ver. 29. *And of the children of Benjamin, the kindred of Saul, three thousand.*] We read of several of this Tribe, and of *Saul*'s Kindred, that came to *David* before this, (*ver.* 1, 2, 16.) but now a greater Number came over to him: Which shews his Interest to be considerably grown among them.

For hitherto the greatest part of them had kept the ward of the house of Saul.] But still a Multitude of them (as it is in the *Hebrew*) adhered to the House of *Saul*, and endeavoured to keep the Crown in that Family. And, as *Solomon Jarchi*, and *D. Kimchi*, and others understand it, the *three thousand* before-mentioned being of *Saul*'s Kindred, were of that Mind, looking upon his Grand-son as the lawful Heir of the Kingdom, who ought to succeed in it: But now they altered their Opinion, and came to *David*.

Ver. 30. *And of the children of Ephraim, twenty thousand and eight hundred, mighty men of valour, famous throughout the house of their fathers.*] This was so great a Number, that by their Defection from the House of *Saul*, it must needs be extremely weakned: Especially since they were Men of such great Account in that Tribe.

Ver. 31. *And of the half tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand.*] He speaks of those on this Side *Jordan* for of those beyond it on the other Side, he speaks afterward, *ver.* 37.

Which were expressed by name, to come and make David king.] These were appointed to go in the Name of the rest of their Brethren, and assure *David* of their Affection to him: Being picked (as we speak) out of the whole Tribe, for this Purpose. And some think the Names of these Men were set down in the publick Register of the Kings of *Judah*: From which this Author transcribed it.

Ver. 32. *And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times.*] The *Targum*, and many of the *Jews*, (particularly *Maimonides* in *Rosch Hashanah*) take this to signify their Skill, in computing the Beginning of their Years, and Months, and Intercalations, that it might be certainly known when their Feasts were to celebrated. Others think they were great *Astronomers*: Whence the *Hebrew* Doctors say, that the name of this Tribe was engraven in the Saphire in the High-Priest's Breast-plate, and that their Banner was of a Sky-Colour, having the Figures of the Sun, Moon, and Stars wrought in it, because of their Skill in the Motions of the Heavenly Bodies. Others take it to signify their Skill in the Weather, whereby they knew the proper Season for Sowing, Planting, Reaping, and Navigation. Many such like Fancies there are, which seem impertinent to the present Business: Which required Men of great Abilities in political Affairs; who could discern what was fit to be done in the various Cases of human Life: And particularly what was good for the Commonwealth in all Turns of Affairs. Thus *Solomon Jarchi* himself. *They knew how to advise and give Counsel, according to the Nature and Circumstances of all Cases: Which sort of Men* David *stood in great need of at this time, to consult the best means to confirm him in his kingdom.*

To know what Israel ought to do.] These Words shew they were Men skillful in secular Affairs: And now, I suppose, told the *Israelites* it was the proper Time to think of *David*, and make him their King; after the *Philistines* had gained so great a Victory over *Saul*, and destroyed his Family. For none was so likely to quell the *Philistines* as he, who had so often beaten them.

The heads of them were two hundred, and all their brethren were at their commandment.] These two hundred were eminent Persons among them; and were of such known Wisdom and Judgment, that they had all the rest of their Tribe at their Beck.

Ver. 33. *Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand.*] This is the greatest Number of any Tribe that went over to *David:* That is, gave him Assurance of their Readiness to assist him to make him King of *Israel*. For it is not likely, that so many as are here mentioned, went to *Hebron*, as soon as *David* came thither.

Which could keep rank.] Men well disciplined, Or, as some understand it, Men that would stand their ground, and not flinch, when they were assaulted by their Enemies.

They were not of double heart.] But all sincerely affected to *David*, tho' there were so many of them. Thus some understand it; but others think, it rather relates to the foregoing Words, that they had not a counterfeit Courage, but would stand to it (as we speak) with a firm Resolution, to die rather than stagger in their Undertaking. For this is affirmed of them all, that they *came with a perfect Heart unto David*, (*ver.* 38.) and therefore needs not to be said of these in particular, there being no Reason to suspect their Loyalty.

Ver. 34. *And of Naphtali, a thousand captains, and with them, with shield and spear, thirty and seven thousand.*

Ver. 35. *And of the Danites expert in war, twenty and eight thousand and six hundred.*

Ver. 36. *And of Asher, such as went forth to battle, expert in war, forty thousand.*

Ver. 37. *And on the other side of Jordan, of the Reubenites, and of the Gadites, and of the half tribe of Manasseh, with all manner of instruments of war for the battle, an hundred and twenty thousand.*] Here were so many thousands of valiant Men expert in War, reckoned up in the several Tribes of *Israel*; that *Saul* could not well have been overthrown in Battle by the *Philistines*, if God had not forsaken him, and the Hearts of his People had not been alienated from him.

Ver. 38. *All these men of war that could keep rank, came with a perfect heart to Hebron, to make David king over all Israel: and all the rest of Israel were of one heart to make David king.*] After the Death of *Ishbosheth* (see 2 *Sam.* v.) all *Israel*, *communi consilio*, with one Consent (as *Maimonides* explains this Phrase, *with one Heart*, *More Nevochim*, P. i. Cap. 39.) came and joined with their Brethren, who were gone over to him. And they were such a Number, Men of such undaunted Spirits and expert in war, who crouded in to him, that the like is not to be found in any History. For, as *Herodotus* saith in his *Polyhymnia*, in the Army of *Xerxes* there were πολλοὶ μὲν ἄνθρωποι, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἄνδρες, *a World of People, but few Men*; that is, Men of Courage and Conduct: With which *David*'s Army so abounded, that every one of this vast Number seems to have been fit to command in an Army.

Ver. 39. *And there they were with David three days eating and drinking.*] The famous Historian *Dion* (as *Victorinus Strigelius* here observes) saith, he never saw a more splendid and pompous Show than that was, when the Emperor *Severus* entred *Rome*. But here was a far more noble Feast, which lasted three Days, for three hundred forty eight thousand and eight hundred brave Men.

For their brethren had prepared for them.] They who were before actually gone over to *David*, and others about *Hebron*, hearing of such a great Concourse of People, had made a Preparation for their Entertainment.

Ver. 40. *Moreover, they that were nigh, even unto Issachar, and Zebulon, and Naphtali.*] All the neighbouring Countries brought in Provisions for those who dwelt more remote: Their common Concernments begetting great Love and Kindness (as there ought always to be, especially on such Occasions) for all their Brethren, tho' never so distant from them.

Brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen.] Whom they employed in that Country, in carrying Burdens: For Horses were very scarce among them. So *Bochart* observes, that they did not only ride upon Mules; but some of them were ἀχθαφόροι, imployed in carrying Burdens, as these were: Others were ζευγῖται, yoaked to draw Chariots, *Lib.* II. *Hieroz. P.* i. *Cap.* 19. The same he observes of Oxen, that tho' they seem made rather for the Plough, yet they made them serve for the other Purpose also, of bearing Burdens.

And meat, meal, cakes of figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly] All sort of Provisions for a great Feast.

For there was joy in Israel.] Their Hearts were enlarged with Joy, to see an End of their Division, by their Union under such a King; as they might reasonably hope would procure great Happiness to them.

CHAP. XIII.

Verse 1. *AND David consulted with the captains of thousands, and hundreds, and with every leader.*] With all the principal Persons in Authority, who had any Command over others. For it is a dangerous thing for a Prince, especially in the Beginning of his Reign, to rely wholly upon himself alone, and not advise with others.

Ver. 2. *And David said unto all the congregation of Israel.*] Who were represented by those great Men, whom he had called together for their Advice.

If it seem good unto you, and that it be of the LORD our God.] Whom, I suppose, he intended to consult, as well as them.

Let us send abroad unto our brethren every where, that are left in the land of Israel.] Who were not there present.

And with them also the priests and Levites which are in the cities and suburbs, that they may gather themselves unto us.] Whose Assistance was very necessary, in the sacred Work which he intended.

Ver. 3. *And let us bring again the ark of our God to us.*] In the Book of *Samuel* this is said to have been done after that which here follows, in the next *Chapter*, concerning *Hiram* and *David*'s Wars with the *Philistines*; and so it was. Only *David* (as became a good King, whose first Care is about Religion) took Advice with the Elders of the People, as soon as he came to the Crown, concerning the bringing up of the Ark of God. Which was put in Execution afterward, when they had gone to their several Countries, and spoken with the People about it; and a Time was appointed for their meeting to do it. In the mean time *Hiram* sent his Ambassadors to him, and the *Philistines* came twice to disturb him, and were beaten by him: And then all the People met in a vast Number (it is probable at some solemn Festival) to bring the Ark to its Place.

For we enquired not at it in the days of Saul.] They were not sollicitous in his Days to find a fit Place, for the Residence of the Ark of God, where they might conveniently attend upon his Worship and Service. For they were hindered by perpetual Wars, and contented themselves with going to *Gibeon*, where the Tabernacle was; tho' without the Presence of God in it. But it is probable, that *Saul*, after *David* fled from him, and he was haunted by that evil Spirit that oft came upon him, grew so prophane that he was not concerned about Religion. So the Words are in the *Hebrew*, *We enquired not of it*, or, *about it*.

Ver. 4. *And all the congregation said, that they would do so: for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people.*] They were convinced of their Negligence, and piously disposed to comply with the King's Desire.

Ver. 5. *So David gathered all Israel together.*] Some chosen Persons out of all the Tribes with their Attendants: (who represented all the rest) which were thirty thousand, 2 *Sam.* vi. 1.

From Shihor of Egypt, even to the entring of Hemath.] The former of these, *Shihor* was the Southern Bounds, as *Hemath* was the Northern of the Land of *Canaan*. And by *Sihor* (called in other Places the River of *Egypt*) the *Targum*, and most of the *Jews*, even *Abarbinel* himself, understand the River *Nile*. But there is great Reason to take it for a little Branch of that River, as I have shewn upon *Gen.* xv. 18. And see upon *Num.* xxxiv. 5. *Josh.* xiii. 3.

To bring the ark of God from Kirjath-jearim.] Where it had been a long time, ever ſince it returned out of the Land of the *Philiſtines*. See 1 *Sam.* vi. *ult.* vii. 1.

Ver. 6. *And David went up, and all Iſrael to Baalah, that is, to Kirjath-jearim, which belongeth to Judah, to bring up thence the ark of the* LORD, *that dwelleth between the cherubims, whoſe name is called on it.*] See 2 *Sam.* vi. 1.

Ver. 7. *And they carried the ark of God in a new cart, out of the houſe of Abinadab: and Uzza and Ahio drave the cart.*] They had ſo long been without it, that they had forgot, how it ought to be carried. See 2 *Sam.* vi. 3.

Ver. 8. *And David and all Iſrael played before God with all their might, and with ſinging, and with harps, and with pſalteries, and with timbrels, and with cymbals, and with trumpets.*] See there, *Verſe* 5.

Ver. 9. *And when they came to the threſhing-floor of Chidon, Uzza put forth his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen ſtumbled.*

Ver. 10. *And the anger of the* LORD *was kindled againſt Uzza, and he ſmote him, becauſe he put forth his hand to the ark: and there he died before God.*

Ver. 11. *And David was diſpleaſed, becauſe the* LORD *had made a breach upon Uzza; wherefore that place is called Perez-uzza to this day.*] All this hath been explained in the forenamed place, *ver.* 6, 7, 8.

Ver. 12. *And David was afraid of God that day, ſaying, How ſhall I bring the ark of God home to me?*] See there, *v.* 9. It is an old Obſervation that *pœna ad unum, metus ad plures pervenit*, Puniſhment falls upon one, the Fear of it falls upon all: Which juſtifies the Severity of God, as not contrary to his Mercy, in ſuch Caſes.

Ver. 13. *So David brought not the ark home to himſelf to the city of David, but carried it aſide into the houſe of Obed-edom the Gittite.*] See there alſo *ver.* 10.

Ver. 14. *And the ark of God remained with the family of Obed-edom in his houſe three months: And the* LORD *bleſſed the houſe of Obed-edom, and all that he had.*] See there *ver.* 11. The *Targum* here pretends to give us an Account how God bleſſed this Family, by increaſing it prodigiouſly with a numerous Iſſue; of which the *Jews* were ſo deſirous, that they could think of no greater Bleſſing. For his Wife and eight Daughters (ſays that *Paraphraſt*) the Wives of his Sons, brought each of them at one Birth eight Sons: So that Fathers and Sons made up fourſcore and one. But tho' Hiſtory acquaints us with wondrous Births of many Children at a Time; yet there is no Ground to believe this of ſo many in one Family.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. NOW *Hiram king of Tyre ſent meſſengers to David, and timber of cedars, with maſons and carpenters, to build him an houſe.*

Ver. 2. *And David perceived that the* LORD *had confirmed him king over Iſrael, for his kingdom was lift up on high, becauſe of his people Iſrael.*] See both theſe *Verſes* explained in 2 *Sam.* v. 11, 12. where the ſame Thing is related, almoſt in the ſame Words.

Ver. 3. *And David took more wives at Jeruſalem: and David begat more ſons and daughters.*] After he came from *Hebron*, and had poſſeſſed himſelf of *Jeruſalem*, he took more Wives and Concubines alſo, as we read 2 *Sam.* v. 13. But they are all here called *Wives*, for ſo they were: Tho' not principal Wives (as *Pellicanus* notes) that is, not ſuch as governed the Family, for that the Concubines did not.

Ver. 4. *Now theſe are the names of his children which he had in Jeruſalem; Shammua, and Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon,*

Ver. 5. *And Ibhar, and Eliſhua, and Elpalet.*

Ver. 6. *And Nogah, and Nepheg, and Japhia,*

Ver. 7. *And Eliſhama, and Beeliada, and Eliphalet.*] In 2 *Sam.* v. 14, 15, 16. there are but eleven mentioned, whereas here are thirteen; of which I gave ſome Account in that Place. To which I ſhall here add, that ſome of them died in their Childhood, which are reckoned here, but not in the other Place. For here are two *Eliphalets*, the firſt of which dying young, the laſt was ſo called to preſerve his Memory. So *Kimchi* writes very judiciouſly; perhaps neither the firſt *Eliphalet*, nor *Nogah*, are mentioned in the Book of *Samuel*, becauſe they were not then living, but they are recorded here: Becauſe the Author of this Book propoſed to himſelf to give an Account of all *David*'s Sons born at *Jeruſalem*, as he ſaith *ver.* 4. As for the Difference between *Elpalet* ver. 5. and *Eliphalet in this Verſe*, *Simeon de Muis* hath well obſerved, it ought not to make any one think there is an Error either here or in any other Place: For that King of *France* who is commonly called *Clodovæus*, is called by *Caſſiodore Luduinus*, *Ludovicus*, and in *Hincmar Hludovicus*: Such Differences there are in the Pronunciation of the ſame Name, the Examples of which are infinite, as he ſpeaks in his *Varia Sacra*.

Ver. 8. *And when the Philiſtines heard that David was anointed king over Iſrael, all the Philiſtines went up to ſeek David: and David heard of it, and went out againſt them.* See 2 *Sam.* v. 17.

Ver. 9. *And the Philiſtines came and ſpread themſelves in the valley of Rephaim.*] This Phraſe *ſpread themſelves*, ſeems to import that they were very numerous, and aſſured themſelves of Victory. See there *ver.* 18.

Ver. 10. *And David enquired of God, ſaying, ſhall I go up againſt the Philiſtines? And wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the* LORD *ſaid unto him, go up, for I will deliver them into thine hand.*

Ver. 11. *So they came up to Baal-perazim, and David ſmote them there. Then ſaid David, God hath broken in upon mine enemies by mine hand, like the breaking forth of waters: therefore they called the name of that place, Baal-perazim.*] See theſe *Verſes* explained in 2 *Sam.* v. 19, 20.

Ver. 12. *And when they had left their gods there, David gave a commandment, and they were burnt with fire.*] No wonder they could not preſerve ſuch Gods as could not preſerve them. Which *David* would not honour, as they had done the Ark when they took it, but burnt them. See there, *ver.* 21.

Ver. 13. *And the Philiſtines yet again ſpread themſelves abroad in the valley.*

Ver. 14. *Therefore David enquired again of God; and God ſaid unto him, go not up after them, turn away from them, and come upon them over againſt the mulberry-trees.*

Ver. 15. *And it ſhall be, when thou ſhalt hear a ſound of going in the tops of the mulberry-trees, that then thou ſhalt go out to battle: for God is gone forth before thee, to ſmite the hoſt of the Philiſtines.*

Ver. 16. *David therefore did as the Lord commanded him: and they ſmote the hoſt of the Philiſtines from Gibeon even to Gazer.*] See there, 2 *Sam.* v. 22, 23, 24, 25.

Ver. 17. *And the fame of David went out into all lands, and the* LORD *brought the fear of him upon all nations.*] Upon all thoſe, upon whom the Fame of him came: That is, all the neighbouring Countries.

CHAP. XV.

Verſe 1. *AND David made him houſes in the city of David.*] He had need of many Houſes, becauſe he had many Wives and Children, as we read before: Who could not all well live in one Houſe, unleſs we ſuppoſe it to be very large, and to contain many Apartments, which may be called *Houſes*.

And prepared a place for the ark of God, and pitched for it a tent.] As we read in 2 *Sam.* vi. 17. For he did not think fit to bring the Tabernacle from *Gibeon*, becauſe he intended ſhortly to build an Houſe for the Ark. Or, as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks, the Tabernacle of *Moſes*, having been long neglected, was grown ruinous: And he thought it better to prepare a new Tabernacle, than repair the old.

Ver. 2. *Then David ſaid, none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites: for them hath the* LORD *choſen to carry the ark of God, and to miniſter unto him for ever.*] The former Miſcarriage, when they brought up the Ark from *Kirjath-jearim*, had taught him to uſe it with greater Reverence, according to the Preſcription of the Law; which ordered the *Levites* to carry it upon their Shoulders. See *Numb.* iv. 15. vii. 9.

Ver. 3. *And David gathered all Iſrael together to Jeruſalem, to bring up the ark of the Lord unto his place, which he had prepared for it.* See 2 *Sam.* vi. 15.

Ver. 4. *And David aſſembled the children of Aaron and the Levites.*] Whom he ordered ſhould be ſent for before, when he firſt attempted to bring up the Ark, but we do not read that they came, (*ch.* xiii. 2, 5.) therefore now he actually got them together.

Ver. 5. *Of the ſons of Kohath: Uriel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and twenty.*] The Sons of *Kohath* are mentioned in *Exod.* vi. 17, 18. and *Uriel* is none of them: Therefore he was his Grand-Son, who proved ſo famous, that his Deſcendants are rekoned in the firſt Place.

Ver. 6. *Of the ſons of Merari; Aſaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred and twenty.*

Ver. 7. *Of the ſons of Gerſhom; Joel the chief, and his brethren an hundred and thirty.*

Ver. 8. *Of the ſons of Elizaphan: Shemaiah the chief, and his brethren two hundred.*] He was the Son of *Uzziel*, the youngeſt Son of *Kohath*. See *Exod.* vi. 18, 23. *Num.* iv. 3.

Ver. 9. *Of the ſons of Hebron: Eliel the chief, and his brethren fourſcore.*

Ver. 10. *Of the ſons of Uzziel: Amminadab the chief, and his brethren, an hundred and twelve.*] Theſe two laſt named were the Sons of *Kohath*.

Ver. 11. *And David called for Zadok and Abiathar the prieſts.*] I have obſerved here before, that *Zadok* was in the greateſt Favour with *David*: And therefore is mentioned firſt, tho' *Abiathar* was the High-Prieſt, and *Zadok* only the ſecond Prieſt. See upon 2 *Sam.* xv. 27, 29.

And for the Levites, for Uriel, Aſaiah, and Joel, Shemaiah, and Eliel, and Amminadab.] The ſix Perſons mentioned in the foregoing Verſes.

Ver. 12. *And ſaid unto them, ye are the chief of the fathers of the Levites: ſanctify your ſelves, both ye and your brethren, that you may bring up the ark of the* LORD *God of Iſrael, unto the place that I have prepared for it.*] This Sanctification was by waſhing their Bodies, and Garments, abſtaining from their Wives, and other Purifications. See *Exod.* xix. 10, 15.

Ver. 13. *For becauſe ye did it not at the firſt, the* LORD *our God made a breach upon us.*] It ſeems that *Prieſts* and *Levites* were not well acquainted with the Law; or, the Ark having been very long in one Place, they had forgot how it ought to be removed: And did not ſanctify themſelves, and ſeriouſly conſider their Duty. At leaſt, they that were then preſent (for the Chief were not then aſſembled, as I ſaid *v.* 4.) were ignorant, or careleſs.

For that we ſought him not after the due order.] This good King doth not wholly excuſe himſelf, and lay all the Blame on them: But puts himſelf into the Number of thoſe, who were negligent in this Matter. For it was his Duty as well as theirs, to look into the Law, and pray to God for his Direction. There were four Faults committed. *Firſt*, In putting the Ark into a Cart, which ſhould have been carried by the *Levites* on their Shoulders. *Secondly*, The *Levites* were not permitted to touch the Ark, as *Uzza* did. *Thirdly*, He was no *Levite*, and therefore more grievouſly offended. (*Numb.* xvi. 28.) *Laſtly*, He wanted Faith, that God would take Care of the Ark. This laſt *David* could not help: But the three firſt he might have prevented.

Ver. 14. *So the prieſts and the Levites ſanctified themſelves, to bring up the ark of the* LORD *God of Iſrael.*] From this Place, and ſome others, (as *Joſh.* iii. 3.) *Buxtorf* truly infers, I think, that all the Tribe of *Levi* had a Right to carry the Ark, the Prieſts as well as others. But while they were in the Wilderneſs, they that were bare *Levites* commonly did it, becauſe the *Prieſts* were few, and had other Employment. But the *Prieſts* being *Levites* might do it when they pleaſed, or were appointed to it. See *Hiſtor. Arcæ*, cap. viii. ſect. 2.

Ver. 15. *And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their ſhoulders, with the ſtaves thereon, as Moſes commanded, according to the word*

word of the LORD.] The Children of *Kohath* had this peculiar Privilege: Who are the *Levites* here mentioned, *Numb.* iv. 4.

Ver. 16. *And David ſpake to the chief of the Levites.*] To thoſe ſix Perſons before mentioned, *ver.* 5, 6, &c.

To appoint their brethren to be ſingers with inſtruments of muſick, pſalteries, and harps, and cymbals.] They that were Chief among them, knew who could ſing well, and play upon ſuch Inſtruments as are here mentioned: The beſt of which were to be ordered to perform this Service.

Sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.] Singing ſo loud that all might hear, and have their Hearts lifted up with Joy in God. See 2 *Chron.* xx. 19. Here it may be obſerved, that tho' *David* did not build the Temple, yet he ordered how the Service of God ſhould be performed there, in a more ſolemn Manner than it had been hitherto, with ſinging and muſical Inſtruments. Which began now when the Ark was brought to the Place prepared for it; and was ordered afterwards to be conſtantly performed every Day, *ch.* xvi. 4, 42. And indeed there was ſcarce any ſolemn Service performed to their Gods, either by *Greeks* or *Barbarians*, without both Vocal and Inſtrumental Muſick, as the illuſtrious *Ezekiel Spanhemius* hath obſerved out of *Strabo*, L. x. p. 467. See him upon *Callimachus* his Hymn to *Diana*, *ver.* 245. where he notes out of *Plutarch*, that their Muſical Inſtruments were three (as they were here) and upon *ver.* 245. that Muſick was thought to be a thing ſo heavenly, that their Gods were accounted the Inventors of the principal Inſtruments of it. See upon *ver.* 295. Certain it is that the *Greeks* were not the Inventors of them, but they had them out of the Eaſt, as he ſhews upon *ver.* 249. Which appears by the Names of ſome of them, which are plainly extant in the Bible, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved.

Ver. 17. *So the Levites appointed Heman the ſon of Joel: and of his brethren, Aſaph the ſon of Berechiah: and of the ſons of Merari their brethren, Ethan the ſon of Kuſhaiah.*] Theſe three were the Principal who were appointed to govern the reſt.

Ver. 18. *And with them their brethren of the ſecond degree, Zechariah, Ben, and Jaaziel.*] The LXX take *Ben* for an Appellative, and join it with the next, as if he had ſaid, *Zechariah the Son of Jaaziel.* But the *Jews* take it for a proper Name of one of the Singers (as we do) and *David Kimchi* thinks this is the Perſon to whom *David* directed the *Ninth Pſalm* to be ſung by him, upon the Occaſion of the Death of *Saul*; for it is ſaid to be *Laben*, which he underſtands to be *to Ben* the Singer.

And Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah, and Maaſeiah, and Mattithiah, and Eliphaleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, the porters.] This was the Office of theſe of the ſecond Degree: Who were alſo, when their Attendance was over, inſtructed in Muſick, and aſſiſted in it when they were not in the other Employment.

Ver. 19. *So the ſingers, Hemen, Aſaph, and Ethan, were appointed to ſound with cymbals of braſs.*

Ver. 20. *And Zechariah, and Aziel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Unni, Eliab, and Benaiah.*] Here is no mention made of *Ben*; which ſome imagine is, becauſe before they came to execute their Office, he fell ſick, or died: And *Azaziah*, who was not mentioned before, came in his Room: But was not ſo eminent as he, and therefore put in the laſt Place.

With pſalteries on Alamoth.] Or, *with Alamoth.* Which being joined with Pſalteries, is thought by ſome to be a muſical Inſtrument. But *Strigelius*, from the Derivation of the Word, thinks that *Alamoth* ſignifies that theſe Men ſung the *Baſe*, as thoſe in the next *Verſe* did the *Treble.*

Ver. 21. *And Mattithiah, and Eliphaleh, and Mikneiah, and Obed-edom, and Jeiel, and Azaziah, with harps on the Sheminith.*] Some take *Sheminith* to ſignify an Harp with eight Strings.

To excel.] The *Hebrew* Word *Lenatzeach*, coming from *Natzach*, *to ovecome*, is thought by *Strigelius* to ſignify a Voice higher than all the reſt.

Ver. 22. *And Chenaniah chief of the Levites.*] A principal Perſon among them, but not before-mentioned: So that it doth not appear of what Family he was.

Was for ſong.] Or, as it is tranſlated in the Margin, *was for Carriage*; that is, for managing of the Voice. He taught them how to ſing, as the following Words tell us, *he inſtructed about the Song, becauſe he was skilful.* Being a great Artiſt in ſinging, he was the *Præcentor*: For *ver.* 27. he is called *Maſter of the Song.* Which *Lud. Cappellus* thinks ſignifies as much, as that he guided them to keep time, by the Elevation of his Hand, or of a Wand. So the LXX. ἄρχων τῶν ᾠδῶν, who is properly called the *Præcentor* among us: Who among the ancient *Salii* was called *Vates*: He being the prime Singer while they were dancing; as *Gutberletius* obſerves in his Book *De Saliis*, cap. xi.

Ver. 23. *And Berechiah, and Elkanah were door-keepers for the ark.*] Their Office at preſent was, to guard the Ark as it paſſed along, that none might touch it.

Ver. 24. *And Shebaniah, and Jehoſhaphat, and Nethaneel, and Amaſai, and Zechariah, and Benaiah, and Eliezer the prieſts, did blow with the trumpets before the ark of God.*] For this was the Office of the Prieſts, as we read in *Numbers* x. the beginning.

And Obed-edom, and Jehiah were door-keepers for the ark.] When it was ſettled at *Jeruſalem*, they kept the Door of the Tent prepared for it; that none might approach it but the High-Prieſt at proper Seaſons.

Ver. 25. *So David and the elders of Iſrael, and the captains over hundreds, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the* LORD, *out of the houſe of Obed-edom with joy.*] With Muſick and Dancing. See 2 *Sam.* vi. 5, 12, 15.

Ver. 26. *And it came to paſs when God helped the Levites that bare the ark of the covenant of the* LORD, *that they offered ſeven bullocks and ſeven rams.*] Some underſtand this of the Strength that God gave them to carry the Ark without fainting, tho' they went up a

ſteep

ſteep Hill, to ſettle it in the Place, where it was to reſt. But it is not likely, God impoſed ſuch great Burdens on them in his Service, that it was hard to bear them, without an extraordinary Aſſiſtance. I think the Meaning rather is, that he preſerved them from committing any Error, ſo that they carried it without Offence. Or, as *Junius* takes it, God gave them Eaſe, and others were ordered to take their Place, when they had gone ſome Part of the Way. For, tho' it was not an heavy Burthen, yet they could not but proceed with Fear and Trembling, leſt they ſhould incur God's Diſpleaſure, as *Uzzah* did. Then *they*, that is, the *Levites*, offered upon their own Account the Sacrifices here mentioned; beſides thoſe which the King offered, as we read 2 *Sam.* vi. 13. And ſeven Bullocks, and as many Rams being offered, ſome think, that every time the Ark reſted, for the *Levites* to reſt themſelves, a Bullock was offered with a Ram: Which was *ſeven* times between the Houſe of *Obed-edom*, and the City of *David*.

Ver. 27. *And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen.*] Pure white Garments were proper (as *Grotius* here notes) in Divine Miniſtrations. And *Kimchi* thinks, that the *Levites*, who bare the Ark, and the Singers, being thus clothed upon this ſolemn Occaſion, *David* being Muſical, and bearing his Part among them, choſe to appear in the very ſame Habit. Juſt, ſaith he, as among Chriſtians, their Kings and Princes, when they go in Proceſſion with the Clergy, are clothed like them. And by this perhaps may be underſtood what *Michal* meant when ſhe found fault with *David* for *uncovering himſelf:* Which does not ſignify, that he appeared naked, but put off his Royal Robes, and put on thoſe that did not belong to him. But it muſt be confeſſed, that fine Linen was the Apparel of Kings, and great Men.

And all the Levites that bare the ark, and Chenaniah the maſter of the ſong, with the ſingers.] Theſe were all clothed in fine Linen.

David alſo had upon him an ephod of linen.] Which was an honorary Veſtment allowed to thoſe who were not *Levites*, as I have ſhewn upon 1 *Sam.* ii. 18. See my Notes there, and upon 2 *Sam.* vi. 14.

Ver. 28. *Thus all Iſrael brought up the ark of the covenant of the* LORD, *with ſhouting, and with ſound of the cornet, and with trumpets and with cymbals, making a noiſe with pſalteries and harps.*] See upon 2 *Sam.* vi. 15.

Ver. 29. *And it came to paſs as the ark of the covenant of the* LORD *came to the city of David, that Michal the daughter of Saul looking out at a window, ſaw king David dancing and playing: and ſhe deſpiſed him in her heart.*] And expreſſed as much, when he came to his Houſe, in Words of great Contempt. See 2 *Sam.* vi. 16, 20. She was a proud Woman, and 'tis likely had no great Senſe of Religion, which in the Reign of *Saul* (as we read before, xiii. 3.) was much neglected.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *SO they brought the ark of God, and ſet it in the midſt of the tent that David had pitched for it: and they offered burnt-ſacrifices, and peace-offerings before God.*

Ver. 2. *And when David had made an end of offering the burnt-offerings, and the peace-offerings, he bleſſed the people in the name of the* LORD.] The *Targum* tranſlates it, *in the name of the* WORD *of the* LORD. Which ſhews that Interpreter took the WORD to be *Jehovah*.

Ver. 3. *And he dealt to every one of Iſrael, both man and women, to every one a loaf of bread, and a good piece of fleſh, and a flagon of wine.*] Theſe *three Verſes* have been explained upon 2 *Sam.* vi. 17, 18, 19. See there.

Ver. 4. *And he appointed certain of the Levites.*] In their Courſes.

To miniſter before the ark of the LORD, *and to record, and to thank, and praiſe the* LORD *God of Iſrael.*] To declare unto the People the wonderful Works God had done for *Iſrael* (for that is to record) and to give him Thanks, and to extol his Almighty Goodneſs, and all his glorious Perfections. As none could ſacrifice but the *Prieſts* of the Seed of *Aaron*; ſo none could miniſter in the Temple but the *Levites:* Which was unalterably eſtabliſhed by the Law of God. But it was in the Power of their King to aſſign the *Prieſts* or *Levites* ſeveral Functions in the Service of God, as *Grotius* obſerves from this Place. They were appointed to be Singers, with Inſtruments of Muſick, by the Prophets, as we are told in 2 *Chron.* xxix. 25. and *David*, as a Prophet, not as a King, appointed this Divine Service, xxiii. 2. But the Application of Perſons to their ſeveral Offices is every where aſcribed to King *David*, and afterwards to *Solomon*; and *Jehoſhaphat*, who was no Prophet, ordered the *Prieſts* and *Levites* to go and teach the People. So *David* here appointed who ſhould ſing, who ſhould be Porters, and diſcharge other Duties. See *De Imper. ſum. poteſt. circa ſacra*, Cap. x. p. 270. Edit. *Pariſ.*

Ver. 5. *Aſaph the chief.*] Some of whoſe Divine Compoſures we have in the Book of *Pſalms*.

And next to him Zechariah, Jeiel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehiel, and Mattithiah, and Eliab, and Benaiah, and Obed-edom: and Jeiel, with pſalteries, and with harps: but Aſaph made a ſound with cymbals.] By whom all the reſt were directed to take their ſeveral Parts in this Service.

Ver. 6. *Benaiah alſo, and Jahaziel the prieſts, with trumpets continually before the ark of the covenant of God.*] At the Morning and Evening-Service theſe *Prieſts* attended with Trumpets, as the *Levites* did with other Muſical Inſtruments.

Ver. 7. *Then on that day David delivered firſt this pſalm.*] Or, as it may be plainly tranſlated out of the *Hebrew*, *This David appointed* (or ordained) *in the firſt place at that time*; viz. that God ſhould be praiſed by *Aſaph* and his Collegues in the Manner following. Which ſolemn Service began on the Day when he brought up the Ark, and ever after was continued.

To thank the LORD, *into the hand of Aſaph and his brethren.*] To give him Thanks (as *Conradus Pellicanus* well gloſſes) for all his Benefits he had beſtowed on his People *Iſrael*, and which he intended to beſtow upon all the People of this World by his Son *Chriſt*.

Ver. 8.

Ver. 8. *Give thanks unto the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the people.*] Out of *Psalm* xcvi. and cv. which, I suppose, *David* had made before this Time, he now composed one Hymn to be daily used in the Divine Service: Wherein the Divine Perfections are admirably set forth, that the People might be excited to his Fear, Love, and Obedience. I have sufficiently explained the Sense of every Verse in my *Paraphrase upon the Psalms*: But shall here touch upon them again, out of that good, and truly great Man now mentioned, who thus glosses upon this Verse. O ye Ministers and Worshippers of the most High, celebrate with Heart and Voice all the Benefits you have received from him the Fountain of all Good; and if you suffer any Evil, or want any Thing, pray to him for Relief; and being taught by happy Experience how good he is, proclaim it to all the World, and teach them, that all Things depend upon his Pleasure and Order.

Ver. 9. *Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk you of all his wondrous works.*] Praise him with Heart and Voice: Declare his wonderful Works, wherein he hath testified his Omnipotence, and his Wisdom to be faithful.

Ver. 10. *Glory ye in his holy name, let the heart of them rejoyce that seek the LORD.*] Look upon this as your highest Happiness, and make your Boast of it, that he is your God: And let their Heart rejoyce who seek his Favour as their chiefest Good.

Ver. 11. *Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.*] Being sensible of your own Weakness, depend upon his power for help: And seek his Clemency and Mercy with humble Prayer on all Occasions. The Ark is called *God's Strength* in other Places, 2 *Chron.* vi. 41. *Psalm* lxxviii. 61. and therefore here they are exhorted to fall down before it and implore his Mercy.

Ver. 12. *Remember his marvellous works that he hath done.*] For the Preservation of his People, and the Punishment of their Enemies.

His wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.] He would have them reflect upon the Plagues of *Egypt*, which came upon them in a wonderful Manner, at the Command of *Moses*. Or perhaps, he means by *Judgments* the Laws he gave them at Mount *Sinai*, *Exod.* xxi. 1.

Ver. 13. *O ye seed of Israel his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen ones.*] This is your Duty, as you are the Off-spring of a most faithful Servant of his: O ye Posterity of *Jacob*, whom God hath chosen for his People; not for your Merits, but out of his free Love to one that loved him.

Ver. 14. *He is the LORD our God, his judgments are in all the earth.*] The great LORD of all Things, the God of *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* is our God: Who rules the whole World by his Providence.

Ver. 15. *Be ye mindful always of his covenant, the word that he commanded to a thousand generations.*] Never forget his most gracious Covenant, wherein he promises to be ever propitious to you, if you keep his Law.

Ver. 16. *Even of the covenant whith he made with Abraham, and of his oath unto Isaac.*] This Covenant he made with your Fathers, and confirmed it with an Oath, that it should never fail.

Ver. 17. *And hath confirmed the same to Jacob for a law, and to Israel for an everlasting covenant.*] And what he first promised to *Abraham*, and confirmed to *Isaac* by a solemn Oath, he establish'd to *Jacob* by an inviolable Law, to endure for ever. See *Gen.* xvii. 1, 2. xxii. 16, &c. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13.

Ver. 18. *Saying, unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the land of your inheritance.*] He gave him an undoubted Title to that good Land; and afterward put his Posterity into actual Possession of it.

Ver. 19. *When ye were but few, even a few, and strangers in it.*] Remember your former Condition, when you were the smallest of all Nations, poor and little esteemed; were Strangers in the Land, which now you enjoy.

Ver. 20. *And when they went from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another people.*] When you wandred up and down, from one Country to another: Having no settled Dwelling-place.

Ver. 21. *He suffered no man to do them wrong.*] Tho' they were in Danger to be oppressed by those who had not the Fear of God before their Eyes, yet they were safe every where under the divine Protection.

Yea, he reproved kings for their sakes.] When great Princes did but attempt to offer any Violence to them, he presently made them feel his Hand against them.

In *Seder Olam Rabba* they say, that thus far they sung in the Morning.

Ver. 22. *Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*] So that they durst not so much as touch them, but used them as if they had been Kings and Lords of the Land. *So precious were you in his Eyes, as if to do them the least harm had been the Crime of Treason against the Divine Majesty.*

Grotius thinks, they are called God's *anointed*, because they had in their Family, *Jus Regium*; and therefore *Nicolaus Damascenus* and *Justin* call them Kings. *Kimchi* more plainly translates the Word *anointed*, *My great Men*, or *Princes*: For *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, were honoured by Kings, *Abimelech* and *Pharaoh*, as if they had been anointed Kings. Whence the Children of *Heth* say to *Abraham*, thou art *a Prince of God*, that is, a great Prince, *in the midst of us*, *Gen.* xxiii. 6. St *Hierom* thinks, that all the *Israelites* when they came out of *Egypt*, were called *God's anointed*, because they were under his special Protection, by the Cloud that covered them, as *Cyrus* was called his *anointed*, because he was chosen by him to a special Office, to be the Deliverer of his People, and restore them to their own Land.

Ver. 23. *Sing unto the LORD all the earth: shew forth from day to day his salvation.*] Let not only the *Israelites* praise him, but all the People of the Earth acknowledge their great Creator; proclaim his promised Salvation by *Christ*, without Intermission.

Here began the Song between the two Evenings (if we may believe the *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba*) unto those Words, *ver.* 36. *Let all the People say Amen.*

Ver. 24.

Ver. 24. *Declare his glory among the heathen: his marvellous works among all nations.*] Let them ſpread his Fame among all Nations, and celebrate every where his aſtoniſhing Works.

Ver. 25. *For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praiſed: he alſo is to be feared above all gods.*] He is the great Creator of all Things, and the Donor of all Good, who therefore cannot be ſufficiently magnified and praiſed: And none ought to ſhare with him in his Worſhip and Service.

Ver. 26. *For all the gods of the people are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.*] For all the Gods which the Heathen worſhip, are empty Names, who can do nothing: It is the LORD God of *Iſrael*, who made the Sun, Moon, and Stars, (which the *Gentiles* worſhip) who therefore only is to be adored.

Ver. 27. *Glory and honour are in his preſence, ſtrength and gladneſs are in his place.*] To him only we ought to aſcribe Glory, Honour, and Power: In him alone we ought to confide, to him we ought to cleave, and in his Clemency and Favour perpetually rejoyce.

Ver. 28. *Give unto the LORD, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the LORD glory and ſtrength.*] Let not his Worſhip be confined to the People of *Iſrael*, but let all ſorts of People, from one End of the World to the other, acknowledge him to be the Great GOD, who governs the whole World.

Ver. 29. *Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him, worſhip the LORD in the beauty of holineſs.*] Acknowledge all his glorious Attributes, wherein he excels all Beings: Offer unto him the Sacrifice of Praiſe and Thankſgiving; proſtrate yourſelves before him in the humbleſt Manner, and adore his moſt holy and gracious Majeſty.

Ver. 30. *Fear before him all the earth.*] Let all the Inhabitants of the Earth tremble before him, and humble themſelves unto him.

The world alſo ſhall be ſtable, that it be not moved.] For if they humbly ſubmit themſelves to his Goſpel, and implore his Grace, he will amend the World, and confirm them in all that is good; and not ſuffer ſo many Nations to wander in ſuch Labyrinths of Error.

Ver. 31. *Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoyce: and let men ſay among the nations, the LORD reigneth.*] Let all the Inhabitants in Heaven and Earth be glad and rejoyce: For the Lord will not only be known in *Judæa*, but moſt gloriouſly reign in all Nations.

Ver. 32. *Let the ſea rore, and the fulneſs thereof.*] By *the fulneſs* of it, is meant its ſwelling to the very Top of the Banks, as *Bochartus* obſerves.

Let the Fields rejoyce, and all that is therein.

Ver. 33. *Then ſhall the trees of the wood ſing out at the preſence of the LORD, becauſe he cometh to judge the earth.*] Theſe two Verſes he thus paraphraſes, Let the vaſt Sea, and all that live in the Waters triumph; let the dry Land and all living Creatures therein exult for Joy: Let the Trees and all the Fruit that grows on them, ſing to the Lord for his Benefits. For the Creator of all comes to reſtore Mankind, and reſume them into his Favour; for whom all theſe Things acknowledge they were created.

Ver. 34. *O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.*] Whatſoever we are or can do, we owe it to his Divine Bounty: Unto whom we ought to give perpetual Thanks, and hope in his Mercy for ever.

Ver. 35. *And ſay ye, Save us, O God of our ſalvation, and gather us together, and deliver us from the heathen, that we may give thanks to thy holy name, and glory in thy praiſe.*] Let all, both *Jews* and *Gentiles* ſay, Save us, O LORD our God, moſt Juſt, Merciful, and Powerful: and gather thoſe who now are diſtant from, and oppoſite to one another, by Variance and Hatred, into the Unity of Faith and Charity: That all Nations may unanimouſly give Thanks unto thee, and glory in this, that they are always praiſing thee.

Some have imagined, that *Ezra* added theſe Words after they came out of Captivity: But *David* rather uttered them by the Spirit of Prophecy, concerning the happy Union of *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

Ver. 36. *Bleſſed be the LORD God of Iſrael for ever and ever.*] Unto the great Creator and Sovereign of the World, God moſt bleſſed for ever, let all Men every where never ceaſe to give Bleſſing and Praiſe.

And all the people ſaid Amen, and praiſed the LORD.] At the End of this Hymn (the two laſt *Verſes* of which are the Concluſion of *Pſalm* cvi. 47, 48.) all the people expreſſed their Deſire that God might be for ever praiſed in this manner, by ſaying, *Amen*. From whence *Vitringa* obſerves the great Antiquity of this ſacred Rite, of ſaying *Amen* at the Concluſion of all our Prayers, and Benedictions. Which was continued after the Captivity, as we find *Nehem.* viii. 6. And he notes there Rules which the *Jewiſh* Doctors give concerning the Pronunciation of this Word, by the People, *Firſt*, That it be not pronunced too haſtily and ſwiftly, but with a grave and diſtinct Voice. And then not louder than the Tone of him that bleſſed. And *laſtly*, It was to be expreſſed *in Faith*: With a certain Perſuaſion, that God would bleſs them and hear their Prayers. *De Synag. Veteri*, Lib. iii. Par. ii Cap. 18.

Ver. 37. *So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, Aſaph and his brethren to miniſter before the ark continually, as every days work required.*] To ſing Hymns proper to the Seaſon.

Ver. 38. *And Obed-edom, with their brethren threeſcore and eight.*] He was one of the principal Singers under *Aſaph*, *ver.* 5.

Obed-edom alſo the ſon of Jeduthun, and Hoſah to be porters.] This is another *Obed-edom*: Who is joined with *Jehiah*, as Door-keeper for the Ark, xv. 24. But *Jehiah*, I ſuppoſe, was alſo called *Hoſah*.

Ver. 39. *And Zadok the prieſt.*] He was the ſecond Prieſt, as I have often noted, Deputy to the High-Prieſt.

And his brethren the prieſts, before the tabernacle of the LORD, in the high places that was in Gibeon.] As *Aſaph* and his Brethren miniſtred at *Jeruſalem*: So others were appointed to miniſter

ſter a *Gibeon*: Where the Tabernacle of *Moſes* was, and the Altar of Burnt-offering, ever ſince the Slaughter of the Prieſts by *Saul*. See 2 *Chron.* i. 3. Here the ordinary Worſhip of God was performed, and therefore the *Prieſts* attended at this Place to offer Sacrifice, which the *Levites* could not do, *ver.* 40. But the extraordinary Worſhip was where the Ark was placed, at *Jeruſalem*; where *Abiathar* the High-Prieſt attended upon *David*: That if he had any Occaſion to conſult the Divine Majeſty, (which could be done only before the Ark) he might be ready to do it for him. But *Zadok*, the Chief of the Secondary Prieſts, always attended at *Gibeon*.

Ver. 40. *To offer burnt-offerings unto the* LORD *upon the altar of the burnt-offering continually, morning and evening, and to do according to all that is written in the law of the* LORD, *which he commanded Iſrael.*] For this Part of the Divine Service could be performed no where but there where the Altar was, nor by any body but by the Prieſts: And therefore *David* took care it ſhould be conſtantly performed here, tho' he was not preſent every Day at thoſe Sacrifices, which were offered for all the People of *Iſrael*, whereſoever they were. The Prieſts alſo took care to trim the Lamps, and ſet the Shew-bread on the Table, and to do all other things which the Law required.

Ver. 41. *And with them Heman and Jeduthun, and the reſt that were choſen, who were expreſſed by name, to give thanks to the* LORD, *becauſe his mercy endureth for ever.*] As *Aſaph* and his Brethren took care of the Muſick at *Jeruſalem*, where no Sacrifices were offered, but only Hymns ſung, and Prayers made: So did *Heman* and *Jeduthun* (who were with *Zadok*) at *Gibeon*, where they ſung and played on Inſtruments when the Morning and Evening Sacrifices were offered.

Ver. 42. *And with them Heman and Jeduthun, with trumpets and cymbals.*] It ſhould be tranſlated, *with them (Heman and Jeduthun) there were trumpets and cymbals.*

For thoſe that ſhould make a ſound, and with muſical inſtruments of God.] All the Utenſils of the Tabernacle and Temple were ſacred and ſet apart for that Uſe: Not only thoſe of the Altar, but even theſe Inſtruments of Muſick, which *David* ordained to praiſe the Lord withal. They were not common, but conſecrated to God to be uſed in his Service alone: And therefore called *muſical inſtruments of God*, both here and in 2 *Chron.* vii. 6. that is, ſacred ones: Whence thoſe that ſung the Song of Victory over the Beaſt, *Revel.* xv. 2. are ſaid to have in their Hands *the harps of God*: That is, not profane or common, but ſacred Harps, the Harps of the Temple, for there they ſung their Anthem, as Mr *Mede* obſerves, *Book* i. *Diſcourſe* 2.

And the ſons of Jeduthun were porters.] To the Tabernacle, as others of them were to the Ark, *ver.* 38.

Ver. 43. *And all the people departed every man to his houſe: and David returned to bleſs his houſe.*] See 2 *Sam.* vi. 19, 20.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs as David ſat in his houſe, that David ſaid to Nathan the prophet, Lo, I dwell in an Houſe of cedars, but the ark of the covenant of the* LORD *remaineth under curtains.*

Ver. 2. *Then Nathan ſaid unto David, Do all that is in thine heart, for God is with thee.*

Ver. 3. *And it came to paſs the ſame night, that the word of God came to Nathan, ſaying,*

Ver. 4. *Go and tell David my ſervant, Thus ſaith the* LORD, *thou ſhalt not build me an houſe to dwell in.*] Theſe *four* Verſes have been explained before, 2 *Sam.* vii. in the five firſt Verſes.

Ver. 5. *For I have not dwelt in an houſe ſince the day that I brought up Iſrael, unto this day, but I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.*] This *Verſe* is the very ſame with the *ſixth Verſe* of that *Chapter* in *Samuel*: Only there it is ſaid, *I have walked in a tent, and in a tabernacle*; and here, *I have gone from tent to tent, and from one tabernacle to another.*] Both which ſignify, that he had no ſettled Place wherein to dwell, but walked or went, where the Tent, or Tabernacle, was pitched for him. For the Words may be tranſlated, *I went out of the tent into the tent*: That is, when they marched in the Wilderneſs, the Ark was taken out of the Tent, and when they reſted it was put into the Tent again: And not into a Houſe built of Cedar. Or, this may refer to the Tranſlation of the Ark from the Tabernacle by *Moſes*, unto the Tent made for it by *David*.

Ver. 6. *Wherefore I have walked with all Iſrael, ſpake I a word to any of the judges of Iſrael, (whom I commanded to feed my people) ſaying, Why have ye not built me an houſe of cedars?*] See 2 *Sam.* vii. 7.

Ver. 7. *Now therefore thus ſhalt thou ſay unto my ſervant David, thus ſaith the* LORD *of hoſts, I took thee from the ſheep-cote, even from following the ſheep, that thou ſhouldeſt be ruler over my people Iſrael.*

Ver. 8. *And I have been with thee whitherſoever thou haſt walked, and have cut off all thine enemies from before thee, aad have mad e hee a name like the name of the great men that are in the earth.*

Ver. 9. *Alſo I will ordain a place for my people Iſrael, and will plant them, and they ſhall dwell in their place, and ſhall be moved no more; neither ſhall the children of wickedneſs waſte them any more: (as at the beginning*] He ſpeaks here, as if now, and not before, they were poſſeſſed of the Land of *Canaan*: For under *David*'s Government they were ſettled and flouriſhed; whereas under the *Judges* they had no reſt.

Ver. 10. *And ſince the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Iſrael:) moreover, I will ſubdue all thine enemies. Furthermore I tell thee, that the* LORD *will build thee an houſe.*

Ver. 11. *And it ſhall come to paſs, when thy days be expired, that thou muſt go to be with thy fathers, that I will raiſe up thy ſeed after thee, which ſhall be of thy ſons, and I will eſtabliſh his kingdom.*

Ver. 12. *He ſhall build me an houſe, and I will eſtabliſh his throne for ever.*

Ver. 13. *I will be his father, and he ſhall be my ſon, and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee.*] All theſe Verſes, which are ſet down almoſt in the ſame Words, in 2 *Sam.* vii. from *ver.* 7. to *ver.* 16. are there explained.

Ver. 14. *But I will ſettle him in mine houſe, and in my Kingdom for ever, and his throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for evermore.*] That is, *in my Church*, which is the Houſe of God, wherein he dwelt; and which he governed, ruled, and protected as his peculiar People. It is very obſervable, that in 2 *Sam.* vii. 16. ſpeaking to *David*, he calls them, *thine houſe*, and *thy Kingdom*: But here, *mine houſe*, and *my kingdom*. Which confirms, what I noted upon the former Place, that this principally belongs to the *Meſſiah*, of whom *David* was but a Figure.

Ver. 15. *According to all theſe words, and according to all this viſion, ſo did Nathan ſpeak unto David.*] See there, 2 *Sam.* vii. 17.

Ver. 16. *And David the king came and ſat before the LORD, and ſaid, who am I, O LORD God, and what is mine houſe, that thou haſt brought me hitherto?*] He came and took his Place before the Ark, and then ſtood up, and made the following Prayer to God, as I have explained it 2 *Sam.* vii. 18.

Ver. 17. *And yet this was a ſmall thing in thine eyes, O God, for thou haſt alſo ſpoken of thy ſervants houſe for a great while to come, and haſt regarded me according to the eſtate of a man of high degree, O LORD God.*] This is likewiſe explained there, *ver.* 19. but the latter Part of that Verſe is expreſſed in different Words, for there he ſaith, *Is this the manner of men, O LORD*, but here, *thou haſt regarded me according to the eſtate of a man of high Degree, O LORD God.* This was not after the manner of Men, to treat a poor Shepherd, as if he were a great Prince: But ſo he had dealt with *David*. But *Victorinus Strigelius* thinks, the *Hebrew* Words will bear this Tranſlation, which in his Opinion is better than our own, *Thou haſt looked upon me in the form of a man, who art in the higheſt the LORD God.* Which he looks upon as a Prophecy of the *Meſſiah*, who was really the LORD God, but appeared in the Form of a Man. The LXX come near this Senſe in the former Part of the Words, ἐπεῖδές με ὡς ὄρασις ἀνθρώπου, *Thou haſt look'd upon me, as the aſpect of man.* So *Chriſtophorus Helvicus* interprets it in his *Elenchus Judæorum.*

Ver. 18. *What can David ſpeak more to thee for the honour of thy ſervant? for thou knoweſt thy ſervant.*] He could deſire no more for the Increaſe of his Honour: Which is an Explication of what is ſaid 2 *Sam.* vii. 20. See there.

Ver. 19. *O LORD, for thy ſervants ſake, and according to thine own heart, haſt thou done all this greatneſs, in making known all theſe great things.*] In 2 *Sam.* vii. 21. it is ſaid *for thy Word's ſake*, that is, for the ſake of thy promiſe to thy Servant, as this Place explains it. He had paſſed his Word to *David* by his Prophets out of his own mere Goodneſs, without any other Motive. See there. It may be alſo thought to ſignify, *for the ſake of the Meſſiah*, who is *the Word of God*: And by Way of Eminence is called *his ſervant*, *Iſaiah* xlii. 1. xlix. 5.

Ver. 20. *O LORD, there is none like thee neither is there any God, beſides thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.*] This is more fully expreſſed in 2 *Sam.* vii. 22.

Ver. 21. *And what one nation in the earth is like thy people Iſrael, whom God went to redeem to be his own people, to make thee a name of greatneſs and terribleneſs, by driving out nations from before thy people whom thou haſt redeemed out of Egypt?*] See 2 *Sam.* vii. 23. As in the former Verſe he acknowledges his Happineſs, in being beloved of God; ſo in this, the great Honour God had done him, in making him King of ſuch a People.

Ver. 22. *For thy people Iſrael didſt thou make thine own people for ever, and thou, LORD, becameſt their God.*] See there, *Verſe* 24.

Ver. 23. *Therefore now, LORD, let the thing that thou haſt ſpoken concerning thy ſervant, and concerning his houſe, be eſtabliſhed for ever, and do as thou haſt ſaid.*] See *ver.* 25.

Ver. 24. *Let it ever be eſtabliſhed, that thy name may be magnified for ever, ſaying, the LORD of hoſts is the God of Iſrael, even a God to Iſrael: and let the houſe of David thy ſervant be eſtabliſhed before thee.*] See *ver.* 20. where the ſame Thing is ſaid, only the Title of God is a little here enlarged. For there it is only ſaid, *The LORD of hoſts is the God of Iſrael*; but here, *The LORD of hoſts is the God of Iſrael, ever a God to Iſrael.* Or, as it may be tranſlated, *The LORD of hoſts the God of Iſrael, is a God to Iſrael*, that is, moſt Gracious and Merciful, as appeared in many Things, particularly in beſtowing ſuch a King upon them.

Ver. 25. *For thou, O my God, haſt told thy ſervant, that thou wilt build him an houſe: therefore thy ſervant hath found in his heart to pray before thee.*] See there, *ver.* 17.

Ver. 26. *And now, LORD, thou art God, (and haſt promiſed this goodneſs unto thy ſervant.)*] See *ver.* 28.

Ver. 27. *Now therefore let it pleaſe thee to bleſs the houſe of thy ſervant, that it may be before thee for ever: for thou bleſſeſt, O LORD, and it ſhall be bleſſed for ever.*] this is delivered a little more largely in 2 *Sam.* vii. 29. See there.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. NOW *after this it came to paſs, that David ſmote the Philiſtines, and ſubdued them, and took Gath and her towns out of the hand of the Philiſtines.*] This *Chapter* hath been fully explained in 2 *Sam.* viii. What Differences there are in any Expreſſion, is there noted, and an Account given of them, to which I refer the Reader. Only it may be obſerved upon this *Verſe*, that in the Book of *Samuel* it is ſaid, he took *Metheg-ammah* out of their Hand; but here *Gath and her Towns*: Which are all one in *Abarbinel*'s Account, who takes *Metheg-ammah* for a Region or Province, which comprehended *Gath* and her Towns. We may obſerve alſo in *ver.* 11. the great Piety of *David*, who had in his Heart to build a ſplendid Houſe for God's Habitation: And when he was prohibited by God to do it (becauſe he had been engaged in ſo many Wars,

and

and ſhed a great deal of Blood) he could not ſatisfy himſelf without doing ſomething towards it: By preparing Materials for it, and conſecrating a great deal of Treaſure to be employed in the Building, and no other Uſe. For that's the Meaning of what is here ſaid, *that he dedicated unto the LORD the gold and ſilver* which he brought from ſeveral Nations: That is, he conſecrated, or ſolemnly deputed them to this holy Uſe, that it might not be lawful hereafter to employ them to any other.

Ver. 16. It is obſerved by *Druſius*, that there were two *Ahimelechs*; one the Grand-ſon of *Ahitub*, the other the Son of *Abiathar*: Who by the Change of a Letter is here called *Abimelech*. *Miſcel.* Cent. I. cap. 46.

CHAP. XIX.

THIS Chapter alſo hath been ſo fully explained in 2 *Sam.* x. that there is no need of adding any thing. Unleſs I obſerve, that the Country which there is called ſimply *Maacah*, is here called *ver.* 6. *Aram-maachah*. Which is the Foundation of their Opinion who think this was in *Syria*, as I there obſerved. But it is plain the Scripture makes *Maacah* a City of *Canaan*, *Deut.* iii. 14. *Joſhua* xii. 4, 5. and other Places. But it lying beyond *Jordan* on the Borders of *Syria*, it had the Name of *Aram* added to it: Becauſe the People were in their Manners more *Syrians* than *Canaanites*, as *Bochartus* conjectures. In like manner, *Aram Bethrehob* he thinks belonged to *Canaan*, in the North Part of it, not far from *Emath*, that is, *Epiphania*. See *Numb.* xiii. 41. And *Maachah* was in the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, as *Rehob* in the Tribe of *Aſher*, Joſh. xiii. 11. xix. 28. As for what is ſaid here, that *they hired thirty two thouſand chariots*, the meaning muſt be, ſo many Men, who fought in Chariots, when they ſaw Cauſe. For in the Book of *Samuel*, it is ſaid expreſly that they hired twenty thouſand Footmen from *Zoba*, and twelve thouſand Men of *Aſhtoh*: Which make up the thirty two thouſand here mentioned. Which if it ſhould be underſtood of ſuch a Number of Chariots, there would have been no Footmen in their whole Army, which is incredible: As it is that they ſhould have ſo many Chariots. See 1 *Sam.* xiii. 5.

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs after the year was expired, at the time that kings go out to battle, Joab led forth the power of the army, and waſted the country of the children of Ammon, and came and beſieged Rabbah, (but David tarried at Jeruſalem) and Joab ſmote Rabbah and deſtroyed it.*] See 2 *Sam.* xi. 1. where the Hiſtory of *David*'s Adultery with *Bathſheba*, and the Murder of *Uriah* follows: Which is here omitted, it being there ſo largely related, that nothing could be added to it.

Ver. 2. *And David took the crown of their king from off his head, and found it to weigh a talent of gold, and there were precious ſtones in it, and it was ſet upon Davids head; and he brought alſo exceeding much ſpoil out of the city.*

Ver. 3. *And he brought out the people that were in it, and cut them with ſaws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes: even ſo dealt David with all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to Jeruſalem.*] See 2 *Sam.* xii. 30, 31. where theſe two Verſes are explained.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs after this, that there aroſe war at Gezer with the Philiſtines, at which time Sibbechai the Huſhathite ſlew Sippai that was of the children of the giant, and they were ſubdued.*] An Account is given of this in 2 *Sam.* xxi. 11. where this Giant is called *Saph*; who was, as I obſerve there, of the Race of the *Anakims*. See *Deut.* ix. 2.

Ver. 5. *And there was war again with the Philiſtines, and Elhanan the ſon of Jair ſlew Lahmi the brother of Goliah the Gittite, whoſe ſpears ſtaff was like a weavers beam.*] See there, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 19.

Ver. 6. *And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great ſtature, whoſe fingers and toes were four and twenty, ſix on each hand, and ſix on each foot: and he alſo was the ſon of the giant.*

Ver. 7. *But when he defied Iſrael, Jonathan the ſon of Shimea, Davids brother, ſlew him.*

Ver. 8. *Theſe were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his ſervants.*] Theſe three Verſes are explained in the fore-named Place, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 20, 21, 22. After which follows the Hymn which *David* compoſed in Commemoration of his many Deliverances from theſe and other Enemies, eſpecially from *Saul*: Which is here omitted, becauſe not only there largely recorded, but alſo in the Book of *Pſalms*.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *AND Satan ſtood up againſt Iſrael, and provoked David to number Iſrael.*] It is ſaid in 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 1. that God being angry with *Iſrael*, moved *David*: That is, ſuffered *Satan* to move him. This is ſufficiently explained there: Only here the Phraſe *ſtood up* is to be obſerved. Which was the Poſture of thoſe who charged and accuſed any Perſon of a Crime, in a Court of Juſtice. See 1 *Kings* xxii. 21. Thus *Satan* is repreſented as the *Accuſer of the Brethren*, in the Book of the *Revelation*: And here to lay ſome Sin to the Charge of the *Iſraelites*, which he repreſented to God as a Reaſon to puniſh them: For it is the way of the Holy Scripture thus to bring down theſe Things, and accommodate them to the loweſt Capacities.

Ver. 2. *And David ſaid to Joab, and to the rulers of the people.*] Who, it is plain by 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 4. were with *Joab* when the King gave this Command.

Go, number Iſrael from Beerſheba even unto Dan; and bring the number of them to me, that I may know it.

Ver. 3. *And Joab anſwered, The LORD make his people an hundred times ſo many as they be: but my lord the king, are they not all my lords ſervants? why then doth my lord require this thing? why will he be a cauſe of treſpaſs to Iſrael?*] See what I have noted upon 2 *Sam.*

xxiv. 3. It is ſomething ſtrange that *Joab* ſhould ſee the Danger of this, and *David* not think of it; no not when it was ſo plainly repreſented to him. But the beſt Men are ſometimes very drowſy, and apprehend not thoſe Things which plainly appear to thoſe who are not ſo good.

Ver. 4. *Nevertheleſs, the kings word prevailed againſt Joab: wherefore Joab departed, and went thro' all Iſrael, and came to Jeruſalem.*] Unto which they came at the End of nine Months and twenty Days, as is more largely related in 2 *Sam.* xxiv. from *ver.* 4. to *ver.* 9.

Ver. 5. *And Joab gave the ſum of the number of the people unto David. And all they of Iſrael were a thouſand thouſand and an hundred thouſand men that drew ſword: and Judah were four hundred threeſcore and ten thouſand men that drew ſword.*] This Account of their Number differs much from that given in 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 9. concerning which ſee what I have there noted.

Ver. 6. *But Levi and Benjamin counted he not among them.*] Some think he took no Account of *Levi* becauſe they were not Warriors, and ſuch only as were fit for War, *David* deſired to be ſatisfied how many they were. And *Benjamin* they think was ſo diminiſhed in the Time of the *Judges*, that they were to be ſpared. But theſe, it were eaſy to ſhew, are not good Reaſons; and no other Reaſon is to be ſought for, than that given here in the very next Words.

For the kings word was abominable to Joab.] He did all this againſt his Will, and at laſt the Work was ſo odious to him, that he was quite tired with it: And therefore broke off before he took the Number of theſe two Tribes.

Ver. 7. *And God was diſpleaſed with this thing, therefore he ſmote Iſrael.*] He reſolved to puniſh them, becauſe it was for their Sins that God permitted *David* to indulge himſelf in this Vanity.

Ver. 8. *And David ſaid unto God, I have ſinned greatly, becauſe I have done this thing: but now, I beſeech thee, do away the Iniquity of thy ſervant, for I have done very fooliſhly.*] See 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 10. where I have explained this, and given the beſt Account I could of the Nature of this Sin.

Ver. 9. *And the LORD ſpake unto Gad, Davids ſeer, ſaying.*] This is expreſſed a little more largely in 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 11. See there.

Ver. 10. *Go and tell David ſaying, Thus ſaith the LORD, I offer thee three things, chuſe thee one of them, that I may do it unto thee.*] He ſpeaks to him ſo ſolemnly in the Name of the *LORD*, that he might attend the more ſeriouſly to what he ſaid, and look upon it as peremptorily reſolved.

Ver. 11. *So Gad came to David, and ſaid unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD, chuſe thee*

Ver. 12. *Either three years famine, or three months to be deſtroyed before thy foes, (while that the ſword of thine enemies overtaketh thee) or elſe three days the ſword of the LORD, even the peſtilence in the land, and the angel of the LORD deſtroying throughout all the coaſts of Iſrael: now therefore adviſe thy ſelf, what word I ſhall bring again to him that ſent me.*] In the Book of *Samuel* it is ſaid, the Prophet propounded *ſeven* Years of Famine, and here but *three*. Of which Difference I have given an Account upon 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 13.

Ver. 13. *And David ſaid unto Gad, I am in a great ſtrait: let me fall now into the hand of the LORD, (for very great are his mercies) but let me not fall into the hand of man.*] See there upon *ver.* 14. I only add here, that the Peſtilence is more propely called *the Hand of the LORD*, than other common Calamities: For they have viſible Cauſes, but none know whence this ſudden Deſtruction comes, but immediately from the Hand of God; when there is no Alteration that we can ſee in the Air, or other Elements (as we call them). And therefore the Angel of the LORD is ſaid to have ſmote the Army of *Sennacherib*, with ſuch a Peſtilence, as *Joſephus* reaſonably conjectures.

Ver. 14. *So the LORD ſent a peſtilence upon Iſrael: and there fell of Iſrael ſeventy thouſand men.*] This is more largely expreſſed in 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 15. See my *Annotations* there.

Ver. 15. *And God ſent an angel unto Jeruſalem to deſtroy it: and as he was deſtroying, the LORD beheld.*] This ſeems to import that there were more Angels than one employed to deſtroy in ſeveral Places of the Country: And that the Angel ſent to *Jeruſalem* had begun to ſlay ſome of the Inhabitants: But God took pity of them; beholding, perhaps, their ſerious Repentance.

And he repented him of the evil, and ſaid to the angel that deſtroyed, It is enough, ſtay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD ſtood by the threſhing-floor of Ornan the Jebuſite.] See there upon *ver.* 16.

Ver. 16. *And David lift up his eyes, and ſaw the angel of the LORD ſtand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn ſword in his hand.*] Whence the Peſtilence is called, *ver.* 12. *the ſword of the LORD.*

Stretched out over Jeruſalem.] As ready to do Execution upon the People there.

Then David and the elders of Iſrael, who were clothed in ſackcloth, fell upon their faces.] It appears by their Habit, that they (and the People of *Jeruſalem* with them, *ver.* 15.) were humbling themſelves before God for their Sins, and deprecating his Diſpleaſure: For Mourners were wont to clothe themſelves in Sackcloth.

Ver. 17. *And David ſaid unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbred? even I it is that have ſinned, and done evil indeed; but as for theſe ſheep, what have they done? let thine hand, I pray thee, O LORD my God, be on me, and on my fathers houſe; but not on thy people, that they ſhould be plagued.*] See 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 17.

Ver. 18. *Then the angel of the LORD commanded Gad to ſay to David.*] This ſeems to ſignify that *Gad* was ſent upon his former Meſſage (*ver.* 9.) by an Angel, who came with that Command from God.

That David ſhould go and ſet up an altar unto the LORD, in the threſhing-floor of Ornan the Jebuſite.] See there, *ver.* 18.

Ver. 19. *And David went up at the ſaying of Gad, which he ſpake in the name of LORD.*] See there, *ver.* 19.

Ver. 20.

Ver. 20. *And Ornan turned back, and saw the angel; and his four sons with him hid themselves.*] Or, when he saw the Angel, he turned his Face from him; (as did his four Sons, who likewise saw him) being afraid at so glorious an Appearance.

This Book, as I observed in the beginning, supplies some Things omitted in the Book of *Samuel*, among which this is one. For nothing is said there of *Araunah*'s seeing the Angel, but only of *David*'s seeing him.

Now Ornan was threshing wheat.] For the greatest Persons did not, in those Days, disdain such Employments.

Ver. 21. *And as David came to Ornan, Ornan looked, and saw David, and went out of the threshing-floor, and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground.*] See 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 20.

Ver. 22. *Then David said to Ornan, Grant me the place of this threshing-floor, that I may build an altar therein unto the* LORD.] This he said, after *Ornan* had first desired, to know the Cause of his coming to him.

Thou shalt grant it me for the full price, that the plague may be stayed from the people.] By offering a Sacrifice to appease the Divine Anger. See *ver.* 21.

Ver. 23. *And Ornan said unto David, Take it to thee, and let my lord the king do that which is good in his eyes: lo, I give thee the oxen also for burnt-offerings, and the threshing-instruments for wood, and the wheat for the meat-offering, I give it all.*] He offered the Ground to the King, as a free Gift; with every thing that was necessary for Sacrifice. See 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 22, 23.

Ver. 24. *And king David said to Ornan, Nay, but I will verily buy it for the full price: for I will not take that which is thine for the* LORD, *nor offer burnt-offerings without cost.*

Ver. 25. *So David gave to Ornan for the place six hundred shekels of gold by weight.*] This confutes their Opinion, who think there were no Shekels but of Silver. See 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 24. where I have shewn, that this Account of the Sum of Money which he paid, doth not disagree with that which is given there in that Place.

Ver. 26. *And David built there an altar unto the* LORD, *and offered burnt-offerings, and peace-offerings.* See there, *ver.* 25.

And called upon the LORD.] By Thanksgivings for his Mercy, beseeching the Continuance of it.

And he answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering.] This was the highest Token of God's gracious Acceptance of any Sacrifice. See *Lev.* ix. 24. The *Jews* say thus God consumed the Sacrifices of *Abel*, and of *Noah*, and of *Abraham*, when they first dedicated Altars to him. It is certain from the Holy Scriptures, thus God testified his Acceptance of the Sacrifices of *Gibeon* and *Elijah* in antient Times. Which *Julian* himself had not the Hardiness to deny. See St *Cyril*, *contra Julianum*, L. x. And indeed this was known by the Heathen: For *Servius* upon *Virg. Æneid.* xii. *ver.* 200. saith, that in the old Temples Sacrifices were no other ways consumed, *quam igne divino precibus impetrato*, than by Divine Fire obtained by Prayers. See other Testimonies out of Heathen Antiquity, in *Huetius* his *Quæst. Alnetanæ*, p. 216, &c.

Ver. 27. *And the* LORD *commanded the Angel, and he put up his sword into the sheath thereof.*] Which it seems was brandished over *Jerusalem*, till this Sacrifice was offered.

Ver. 28. *At that time when David saw that the* LORD *had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there.*] That is, he continued to offer his Sacrifices in that Place, where there was such a manifest Appearance of God, and a Testimony of his Acceptance of his Sacrifices. So that from this time he did not go to *Gibeon*, where Sacrifices were wont to be offered upon the brazen Altar. Which, as it follows, was then there, together with the Table, the Candlestick, and the Fire that came down from Heaven in the Days of *Moses* (as *Seder Olam Rabba* saith *cap.* xiv.) And here *Zadok* and his Brethren ministred, while the ark was in *Zion*, and with them *Heman* and others, xvi. 29, 40, 41.

Ver. 29. *For the tabernacle of the* LORD *which Moses made in the wilderness, and the altar of the burnt-offering, were at that time in the high place at Gibeon.*] The *Targum* calls this high Place, *the Sanctuary in Gibeon:* For this Word comprehended the whole sacred House, as in 1 *Sam.* ix. 13.

Ver. 30. *But David could not go before it to enquire of God.*] He thought it not fit to go thither at this Time, tho' that was the Place to which they alway resorted to beg Mercy of God by Sacrifice.

For he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the LORD.] As he thought God had consecrated this Place for his Service, and that he ought immediately to sacrifice here, and not stay till he could go to *Gibeon:* So perhaps he thought there might still be Danger, that the Angel might smite *Jerusalem*, if he did not continue to worship God here. Where he knew, by some means or other, God intended his Temple should be built for his perpetual Honour in this Place. The Altar also now erected here, was set up by the Command of God, as well as that of *Moses:* So that he thought he might most acceptably serve God here.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. THEN *David said, this is the house of the* LORD *God.*] He seems to have been inspired by God with this Thought, that here he would have his Temple to be built. At least, he concluded this, because the Angel bad him build an Altar here, which was for Sacrifice: And here God testified his Presence, as he did at the Erection of the first Altar, *Lev.* ix. 24. He seems to have respect to the Words of *Jacob*, *Gen.* xxviii. 16, 17.

And this is the alter of burnt-offering for Israel.] That is, here all their Sacrifices shall be offered, when the Temple is built. From which Words *Maimonides* concludes, it was utterly unlawful to build God an house any where else, or to offer Sacrifice in any other Place but this.

Ver. 2.

Ver. 2. *And David commanded to gather together the ſtrangers that were in the land of Iſrael.*] That is, thoſe they called *Proſelytes*, who perhaps were better ſkilled in ſuch Works, as here follow, than the Children of *Iſrael*. Or, as *R. Solomon Jarchi* thinks, theſe being ſervile Works, he would not employ the free People of *Iſrael* therein: Which Example *Solomon* afterward followed, 1 *Kings* v. 15. ix. 22. 2 *Chron.* ii. 1. viii. 7. But we muſt not from hence infer, as ſome have done, that *Proſelytes* were not as free as other Subjects: For they did not ſettle among the *Jews* upon any Condition, of being under any kind of Servitude.

And he ſet maſons to hew wrought ſtones to build the houſe of God.] Tho' God had forbidden him to build him an Houſe, yet he thought he might prepare Materials for the Building: Which God ſo much approved, that he was pleaſed to ſhew him a Model of ſuch an Houſe as he would have, as we read *ch.* xxviii. 19.

Ver. 3. *And David prepared iron in abundance, for the nails for the doors of the gates, and for the joinings; and braſs in abundance without weight.*] The Word which we tranſlate *joinings*, the *Targum* tranſlates *hinges*.

Ver. 4. *Alſo cedar trees in abundance: for the Zidonians, and they of Tyre brought much cedar wood to David.*] There being great Friendſhip between them and *David*.

Ver. 5. *And David ſaid, Solomon my ſon is young and tender, and the houſe that is to be builded for the LORD, muſt be exceeding magnifical, of fame, and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore now make preparation for it. So David prepared abundantly before his death.*] He conſidered with himſelf theſe two things, the Youth of *Solomon* (of which ſee 1 *Kings* iii. 7.) and then the Magnificence of the Structure that was to be built; both which he thought required his Care, to make what Preparation he could for ſuch an Undertaking. For young Men are wont to be careleſs, and rarely capable of great Deſigns. Learned Men have obſerved, that this Temple was ſo ſtately and rich, that it exceeded all others in the World: The famous Temple of *Diana* at *Epheſus*, being not to be compared with it. See Dr *Spencer*, L. iii. de Leg. Hebr. cap. 2. Diſſert. 6.

Ver. 6. *Then he called for Solomon his ſon, and charged him to build an altar for the LORD God of Iſrael.*] By this it was apparent, and, I ſuppoſe, well known, that he intended him for his Succeſſor: Which made the Crime of *Adonijah* the greater, who endeavoured to put him by.

Ver. 7. *And David ſaid to Solomon, My ſon, as for me, it was in my mind to build an houſe unto the name of the LORD my God.*] See in 2 *Sam.* vii 1, 2.

Ver. 8. *But the word of the LORD came to me, ſaying, Thou haſt ſhed blood abundantly, and haſt made great wars: thou ſhalt not build an houſe unto my name, becauſe thou haſt ſhed much blood upon the earth in my ſight.*] This Reaſon is not mentioned in the Book of *Samuel*, but here is recorded to ſhew, that tho' *David*'s Wars were warranted, and ſucceeded by God, in an extraordinary Manner, yet it did not ſuit ſo well with the Divine Majeſty, to have an Houſe built him by one who had ſhed ſo much blood, as by one that reigned in Peace and Quietneſs. That he might be an Emblem of the King of peace, the LORD of the Church, who was prefigured in all ſuch great Tranſactions. There may be reſpect alſo here, to the Blood of *Uriah*, and thoſe worthy Men ſlain together with him, by the Contrivance of *David*: Which made him unworthy to be honoured with ſuch an Undertaking as this. *David* himſelf takes Notice of this Blood-guiltineſs, as a Thing which was always in God's Eye, *Pſal.* li. 4. where he ſaith, *I have done this evil in thy ſight*: As God here ſaith, *thou haſt ſhed blood in my ſight*. See more below, *chap.* xxviii. 3.

Ver. 9. *Behold, a ſon ſhall be born to thee, who ſhall be a man of reſt, and I will give him reſt from all his enemies round about: for his name ſhall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietneſs unto Iſrael in his days.*] Here are two Reaſons, why his Son ſhould have this Honour: Becauſe God would give him Reſt from all his Enemies, and *Iſrael* ſhould live in Peace and Quietneſs in his Days. Which made his Reign a proper Seaſon for this great Work.

Ver. 10. *He ſhall build an houſe for my name, and he ſhall be my ſon, and I will be his father, and I will eſtabliſh the throne of his kingdom over Iſrael for ever.*] This can belong to none in the proper and full Senſe of the Word, but *Chriſt* alone. For *Solomon* reigned but forty Years, and after that his Kingdom was torn in Pieces. Therefore to Chriſt the Author to the *Hebrews* applies them, *Hebr.* i. 5.

Ver. 11. *Now, my ſon, the LORD be with thee, and proſper thou, and build the houſe of the LORD thy God, as he hath ſaid of thee.*] He would not have him doubt, but be as confident as he was, that God would proſper him in this Work; becauſe he ordered him to undertake it.

Ver. 12. *Only the LORD give thee wiſdom and underſtanding, and give thee charge concerning Iſrael, that thou mayeſt keep the law of the LORD thy God.*] When he committed *Iſrael* to his Care.

Ver. 13. *Then ſhalt thou proſper, if thou takeſt heed to fulfil the ſtatutes and judgments which the LORD charged Moſes with concerning Iſrael: be ſtrong, and of good courage, dread not, nor be diſmayed.*] Nothing gives a man ſuch an undaunted Courage, as a Conſcience of well doing, in exact Obedience to God's Commands.

Ver. 14. *Now behold, in my trouble,*] In a tumultuous Reign, full of various Troubles,

I have prepared for the houſe of the LORD an hundred thouſand talents of gold, and a thouſand thouſand talents of ſilver; and of braſs and iron without weight (for it is in abundance:) timber alſo and ſtone have I prepared, and thou mayeſt add thereto.] His Heart was ſo bent to ſhew his Gratitude to God, that he would have done a great Deal more for him, if he had been able. Tho' this was ſuch a vaſt Treaſure which he amaſſed (not out of Covetouſneſs, but purely for the Honour and Service of

of God) that it hath ſeemed to ſome incredible. For if we take this to be meant of the greater Talent, it makes ſuch an immenſe Sum, that it exceeds the Riches of any of the *Roman* Emperors, or other former Monarchs. For in the Time of *Trajan*, when that Empire was largeſt, the Money that was in his Treaſury, did not exceed ſeventy three thouſand Talents, as *Bodinus* obſerves in his Book *de Republ.* L. vi. cap. 2. But a better Man than he, our *Brerewood*, hath computed theſe Talents to make ſo many Millions, that he thinks the Word *Kikkar* ſhould not be tranſlated *Talent* in this Place; but only a *Maſs*, or *Cake* of Gold and Silver. And ſo *Guil. Budæus* obſerves in his Book *de Aſſe*, that there was in *Homer*'s Time a Talent of leſſer Value: For he ſpeaks of two Talents, which were given, with other Things, as a Reward of a Victory obtained in ſome Exerciſes. Such Talents, he thinks, we are to underſtand in this place: For *David* reigned about the Time of the Kingdom of the *Aſſyrians*, which was near the Time of *Homer*. See *Beckius* upon the *Targum* in this Place. Of the ſame Opinion is *Jacobus Capellus*, and *Junius* and *Tremellius*, as appears by the Sum to which they make theſe Talents to amount, *viz.* five hundred thouſand Dollars of Gold, and as much of Silver. And more lately *Hermannus Witſius* hath computed, that half ſo many Talents of the Sanctuary (as ſome call them) amounts to *twenty thouſand five hundred eighty five Tuns of Gold.* Which he ſhews *David* had Opportunity to heap together, in his *Miſcell. Sacra*, Tom. 2. Exerc. x. Sect. 17, 18.

Ver. 15. *Moreover, there are workmen with thee in abundance, hewers and workers of ſtone and timber, and all manner of cunning men for every manner of work.*] Who were all to be paid, as well as the Labourers, and Carriers of Burdens, out of this Money: Which required a very great Sum.

Ver. 16. *Of the gold, the ſilver, and the braſs and the iron, there is no number.*] The Meaning is, the Quantity of Braſs and Iron was not numbred, as that of the Gold and Silver was.

Ariſe, therefore, and be doing, and the LORD be with thee.] He would not have him now go about the Work, but begin it when he was ſettled on his Throne: Nothing doubting the Lord would proſper it.

Ver. 17. *David alſo commanded all the princes of Iſrael to help Solomon his ſon, ſaying.*] By adviſing him, and encouraging the People in their Labours.

Ver. 18. *Is not the LORD your God with you? and hath he not given you reſt on every ſide?*] What God hath already done for them, was a Ground of Hope he would further them in this Work; which was for his Service.

For he hath given the Inhabitants of the land into mine hand, and the land is ſubdued before the LORD and before his people.] For God was the Author of all thoſe Wars, and gave them all their Victories.

Ver. 19. *Now ſet your heart and your ſoul to ſeek the LORD your God, ariſe therefore, and build ye the ſanctuary of the LORD your God, to bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and the holy veſſels of God, into the houſe that is to be built to the name of the LORD.*] He beſeeches them not to neglect this Opportunity, which he ſpake of in the foregoing Verſe, *viz.* the Time of Peace which God had given them; which was fit for ſuch a Work. *Strigelius* compares theſe Words with thoſe of Chriſt, *while ye have the Light, walk in the Light.* And indeed the Ark and the Tabernacle had been too long ſeparated, and therefore ſuch Preparation, being made for it, it was time to bring the Ark with all the holy Veſſels, in the Tabernacle, together into a ſettled Place, by building the Sanctuary for them.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *SO when David was old, and full of days, he made Solomon his ſon king over Iſrael.*] Declared him his Succeſſor, but did not reſign his Throne to him, nor make him his Coadjutor.

Ver. 2. *And he gathered together all the princes of Iſrael with the prieſts and the Levites,*] It is likely he took this Opportunity to declare before them all, that *Solomon* ſhould be King after his Deceaſe. But the principal End of this Aſſembly was, that he might acquaint them with a new Regulation of the *Prieſts* and *Levites* in their Miniſtration: Which he intended to eſtabliſh by a Divine Direction, as we read xxviii. 12, 13. This was a Work becoming his elder Years, after he had long obſerved and weighed the Inconveniencies of their preſent Method, and the Neceſſity of putting Things into a better Order. For nothing is more uſeful or more beautiful than good Order, as *Strigelius* obſerves out of *Xenophon* in his *Oeconomicks*. And therefore the Church of God was highly obliged to *David*, for diſtinguiſhing the Degrees and Offices of the *Levites:* Appointing ſome to take Care of the Divine Rites and Ceremonies (as his Words are); others to govern the publick Judgments; others to watch and guard the Temple; others to celebrate the Praiſes of God with Singing and Inſtruments of Muſick.

Ver. 3. *Now the Levites were numbred from the age of thirty years and upward.*] So *Moſes* appointed, *Numb.* iv. 3. for then they were come to their full Strength, and fit for Service: Which laſted till they were fifty years old, and no longer. For then they generally began to decay, and grew leſs able to bear Burdens: Which was their Work then, to carry the Tabernacle when it was to be removed, and all the Utenſils belonging to it. Which Work being now at an End, they ſeem to have continued till their Death to diſcharge their Buſineſs at the Temple: Which was more eaſy, after that was built, and required leſs Labour.

And their number by their polls, man by man, was thirty and eight thouſand.] The Prieſts are not included in this Number: Which is ſo great that it may very well incline us to think, that many of them ſerved rather for State and Ornament, than for Neceſſity. *Abarbinel* here cries out, "See whether in all the Countries there "were ſo many Singers and Muſicians, and "other Officers employed in their Temples, "as there was in the Houſe of the Sanctuary.

"Who

" Who ever ſaw the like? Who ever beheld " ſuch Sanctity, ſuch Ornaments, and ſuch " Praiſing of God?

Ver. 4. *Of which twenty and four thouſand were to ſet forward the work of the houſe of the LORD.*] Theſe were employed about the Sacrifices and Offerings, which they killed, and ſlayed, and waſhed: And ſerved the Prieſts in all other Parts of their Miniſtry about them. Which being very numerous, there were the greater number of *Levites* to attend this Work, *viz.* a thouſand every Week: For they took their Courſes, which being twenty and four, in ſo many Weeks they came about again. See their Buſineſs, *ver.* 28, 29.

And ſix thouſand were officers and judges.] God appointed Judges and Officers to be ſettled in all their Gates, *Deut.* xvi. 18. but many think, there had been a long Neglect in this Matter: And that *David* himſelf could not reſtore their Judicatures to their ancient Order, and Dignity, till the latter End of his Reign. For being hindred by perpetual Wars, he was forced to be content with ſuch Judicatures as had been wont to be executed (which in many Things was very defective) only reſerving Appeals to himſelf, in Cauſes of great Moment, 2 *Sam.* xv. 2. But now he takes Care of this ſo neceſſary a Part of Government, and having numbred the *Levites*, appointed them their certain Buſineſs, which had been before unſettled and undetermined: Employing them both in Eccleſiaſtical and Civil Affairs, as *Bertram* diſcourſes in his Book *De Republ. Jud.* p. 124. But a late Writer makes a doubt, whether the *Iſraelites* obſerved that Command of *Moſes* at all, when they came into the Land of *Canaan*; the Heads of their Tribes taking upon them, for a long Time, to determine all controverted Matters. But now the *Levites* were conſtituted, in the Cities where they dwelt, to be both *Officers and Judges.* All agree, that *Shoterim* commonly ſignify ſuch Officers as execute the Sentence of the Judges. See my *Notes* upon *Deut.* xvi. 18. and other places. But here, being placed before *Judges*, we are not to take them for ſuch inferior Perſons, but for Men of greater Authority; whom the *Targum* calls *Governors:* Such as our Juſtices of the Peace are, who ſaw good Order kept according to the Law: As the Judges were ſuch as decided Cauſes in their ſeveral Courts. See *Campegius Vitringa*, in his Book, *De Synag. Veteri*, Lib. I. Par. ii. Cap. 8.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, four thouſand were porters.*] Who were to take Care that no unclean Perſon entred into the Temple; or any thing brought into it which ought not to be there; or any thing carried out of it which belonged only to that Place: And that nothing was done about the Door of the Court, which might diſturb the People at their Prayers.

And four thouſand praiſed the LORD with the inſtruments which I made (ſaid David) to praiſe therewith.] Thus he hath given an Account how the whole thirty eight thouſand (mentioned *v.* 3.) were diſpoſed of to their Offices. And this laſt four thouſand had ſome among them that were more eminent than the reſt; being their Inſtructors, both in Singing and Playing upon Inſtruments: And perhaps ſome of them, being very ſkillful in Muſick, contrived Inſtruments, and commanded them to be made.

Ver. 6. *And David divided them into courſes among the ſons of Levi, namely Gerſhon, Kohath, and Merari.*] They took their Turns of waiting, ſome going off, and others coming on, to perform all the fore-mentioned Duties: Which *David, the man of God*, ordered (as he ſpeaks 2 *Chron.* viii. 14.) by the Direction of *Gad* and of *Nathan* the Prophets, who had a Command for it from God, as we read in this Book, *ch.* xxix. 25.

Ver. 7. *Of the Gerſhonites were Laadan and Shimei.*] Who were their immediate Anceſtors, is not ſaid, nor is it material to be known.

Ver. 8. *The ſons of Laadan; the chief was Jehiel, and Zetham, and Joel, three.*] It is likely they were not his Sons, but ſome of his Poſterity: For ſo the Word *Sons* ſignifies in the Verſes following.

Ver. 9. *The ſons of Shimei; Shelomith, and Haziel, and Haran, three. Theſe were the chief of the fathers of Laadan.*] This *Shimei* was deſcended from one of the three Sons of *Laadan.*

Ver. 10. *And the ſons of Shimei were Jahath, Zina, and Jeuſh, and Beriah. Theſe four were the ſons of Shimei.*] That is, the Sons of that *Shimei*, Brother of *Laadan*, mentioned *ver.* 7.

Ver. 11. *And Jahath was the chief, and Zizah the ſecond.*] He is called *Zina* in the foregoing Verſe.

But Jeuſh, and Beriah had not many ſons.] As their two elder Brothers had.

Therefore they were in one reckoning, according to their fathers houſe.] They were accounted but as one Family: And not called by the Name of their Fathers, *Jeuſh*, and *Beriah*; but by the Name of *Shimei* their Grand-father.

Ver. 12. *The ſons of Kohath; Amram, Izhar, Hebron, Uzziel, four.*] See *Exod.* vi. 18.

Ver. 13. *The ſons of Amram; Aaron and Moſes.*] Exod. vi. 20.

And Aaron was ſeparated, that he ſhould ſanctify the moſt holy things, he and his ſons for ever, to burn incenſe before the LORD, to miniſter unto him, and to bleſs in his name for ever.] The Buſineſs of *Aaron* and his Sons was very different from the reſt of the *Levites:* For they were ſet apart for the ſpecial Services of the Prieſthood; to *ſanctify*, that is, to miniſter in an holy Manner, the moſt holy Things. His Sons burnt Incenſe every Day; and the High-Prieſt went into the moſt holy Place, on the great Day of Expiation, with the Blood of Expiation: And when he came out, bleſſed the People, as the Prieſt who offered Incenſe did every Day, at the Concluſion of the Sacrifice.

Ver. 14. *Now concerning Moſes the man of God, his ſons were named of the tribe of Levi.*] Tho' *Moſes* was ſo great a Man, the ſupreme Governor of his People while he lived, and had ſuch Familiarity with the Divine Majeſty; yet his Sons were not advanced to any Dignity, but he left them ſimple *Levites*, not ſo much as *Prieſts.* Such was the wonderful Humility and Modeſty of this holy Man, that he did not aim at great Things for his Poſterity. Which perhaps

haps is here noted, that none might presume, because of their noble Descent to meddle with the Priesthood: Which was settled in the Family of *Aaron*; as the Civil Government of the People was left to *Joshua*, a Man of another Tribe, and *Moses* his Servant.

Ver. 15. *The Sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer, Exod.* xviii. 3, 4.

Ver. 16. *Of the Sons of Gershom, Shebuel was the Chief.*] Who is called *Shobael*, xxiv. 20.

Ver. 17. *The Sons of Eliezer were, Rehabiah the Chief. And Eliezer had none other Sons.*] The Word for *Chief* in the *Hebrew* is, the *first*: That is, the First-born, after whom he had no other Son: But a great many Grand-sons, who are frequently called *Sons*.

But the Sons of Rehabiah were very many.] Which in the *Hebrew* is thus expressed, *were highly multiplied*. From whence the *Targum* took a Conceit (as several Jewish Doctors have done) that they were multiplied to above six hundred thousand: Merely, because the same Phrase is used of the Children of *Israel*, in *Exod.* i. 7. that they *multiplied exceedingly* in *Egypt*; that is, to this Number, *Exod.* xii. 17. Whereby they imagine God fulfilled his Intentions to *Moses*, if he would not intercede for the *Israelites*, that he would make him a great Nation, ix. 14. But these are idle Speculations; wherein they abound, since they were abandoned by God.

Ver. 18. *Of the Sons of Izhar; Shelomith the Chief.*] Who is called *Shelomoth*, xxiv. 22.

Ver. 19. *Of the Sons of Hebron; Jeriah the first, Amariah the second, Jehaziel the third, and Jehaneam the fourth.*

Ver. 20. *Of the Sons of Uzziel; Micah the first, and Josiah the second.*

Ver. 21. *The Sons of Merari; Mahli, and Mushi: The Sons of Mahli, Eleazar, and Kish:*

Ver. 22. *And Eleazar died, and had no Sons, but Daughters and their Brethren, the Sons of Kish took them.*] Their Cousins married them, as the *Targum* expounds it.

Ver. 23. *The Sons of Mushi; Mahli, and Eder, and Jeremoth, three.*

Ver. 24. *These are the Sons of Levi, after the House of their Fathers; even the Chief of the Fathers; as they were counted by Number of Names by their Polls, that did the Work for the Service of the House of the LORD, from the Age of twenty Years and upwards.*] They were numbred twice, as they were in the Time of *Moses*: The first time all from thirty, the second time from twenty. And these here mentioned were of the last sort; who were fit to minister in some Things belonging to the Service of the *Levites*, at twenty Years old: Tho' they were not employed in the rest till thirty. See upon *Numb.* viii. 24. where they are ordered to begin at five and twenty; tho' they did not compleatly minister till thirty.

Ver. 25. *For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath given Rest unto his People, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever.*] That is, constantly attend upon the Service of God there settled. Which was the Reason for this new Order, that the *Levites* should begin their Ministry at twenty Years of Age: Because *Israel* having Rest was very much multiplied, and there being greater Resort to *Jerusalem*, the *Levites* had more Work to do at the Temple. But it must here be noted, that those Words *for ever*, suppose their Obedience to God, (as in Chapter xxviii. 4.) in which if they failed, they were not to continue in *Jerusalem*, but be expelled out of it.

Ver. 26. *And also unto the Levites: they shall no more carry the Tabernacle, nor any Vessels of it for the Service thereof.*] It should rather be translated, *As concerning the Levites:* They were no longer to have that burdensome Work of carrying the Tabernacle and its Vessels when they were removed: But had a much easier Service; which they might begin sooner than formerly: It requiring not so much Strength of Body, as Readiness of Mind.

Ver. 27. *For by the last Words of David, the Levites were numbred from twenty Years old and above.*] This was his last Will about this Matter: after he had well considered what they had to do, and what Number was necessary to perform every Part of this Duty. For some of which they were able enough at twenty Years of Age: When they might be called *Probationers* till they were thirty. And there would not have been a sufficient Number for all the Work, unless they had come to it at the Age of twenty.

Ver. 28. *Because their Office was to wait on the Sons of Aaron,*] Which the *Levites* were able to do at the Age of twenty Years. To attend, for Instance, at the Tabernacle; but not to carry the Ark or the Tabernacle.

For the Service of the House of the LORD.] This is a general Expression of what they were to do; the Particulars of which follow; to assist in the *Courts*, and in the *Chambers*, in making clean the holy Vessels, and cleansing the Courts, and taking Care nothing was wanting for the Service of the Sanctuary.

Ver. 29. *Both for the Shew-bread, and for the fine Flour for the Meat-offering, and the unleavened Cakes, and for that which is baked in the Pan, and for that which is fried,*] They were to prepare the Shew-bread, to be set on the Table every Week by the Priests; and to see that there was a just Quantity of fine Flour, for the Meat-Offering Morning and Evening; and that the unleavened Cakes were rightly made: With every Thing that was to be baked or fried. Of which in the second Chapter of *Leviticus*.

And for all Manner of Measure and Size.] They were to see also that the just Measure for Things liquid, and the just Size for Things dry were exactly kept, and not altered. For all Measures and Weights (by which all that were used in the Country were to be made) were kept in the Sanctuary, in the Custody of the *Levites*. Hence it is, that we read often of the *Shekel of the Sanctuary:* Not that there were two sorts of *Shekels*, one Sacred, and another Civil; but because Weights and Measures were reckoned *inter Sacra*, among holy Things: The Examples, as I said, of them all being kept in the Sanctuary. And so they were in the Temples of the *Pagans*, and afterwards in Christian Churches: As appears by *Justinian's Novels*, cxxviii. Cap. 15. So *Villalpandus* and our Bishop *Walton* have observed. Unto which may be added, that *Constantine* the Great had gone before him in this:

For he commanded the Cubit whereby the *Egyptians* measured the Increase of *Nilus*, and was kept in the Temple of *Serapis*, to be translated into one of the Christian Churches, that there it might be preserved the safer by true Religion; as both *Socrates* and *Sozomen* testify in their *Ecclesiastical History*, Lib. i. Cap. 18. Lib. v. Cap. 3. *Julian* indeed caused it to be restored to *Serapis*: But that Temple being burnt, *Russinus* tells us the Church had it again in its Possession. All which shews, that this ancient Piece of Religion, to preserve Weights, and Measures, as sacred Things, continued after the Time of *David*; and perhaps was before it.

Ver. 30. *And to stand every Morning to thank and praise the LORD, and likewise at Even.*] At the Time when the Priests offered the Morning and Even Sacrifice.

Ver. 31. *And to offer all Burnt Sacrifices unto the LORD in the Sabbaths, in the New-Moons, and on the set Feasts by Number,*] It was no Part of their Business to offer Burnt-Sacrifices, which belonged to the Priests alone. Therefore the Meaning is, to praise and give Thanks to God at the Offering of Sacrifices at those Solemnities, as well as every Morning and Even. And to see there were a just Number of Sacrifices then offered as the Law prescribed.

According to the Order commanded unto them continually before the LORD.] That is, in their Courses, wherein they were commanded to wait continually when their Turn came.

Ver. 32. *And that they should keep the Charge of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and the Charge of the holy Place, and the Charge of the Sons of Aaron their Brethren, in the Service of the House of the LORD.*] These Words belong to those that went just before; signifying, that in their Order, when their Course came to attend, they served either about the Tabernacle, or preparing the Shew-bread in the holy Place, or in any other Things, wherein the Priests had Occasion to employ them: And the rest of their Time they spent at home, in their several Cities; where they studied, and taught the Law.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *NOW these are the Divisions of the Sons of Aaron: The Sons of Aaron; Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.*] To avoid all Confusion, now that they were much increased, *David* distributed the Priests, as he had done the *Levites*, into several Courses. Which, no doubt, was by a Divine Direction as well as the other: Or rather, there was greater Reason he should have God's Order for it: They being higher Ministers of his, than the *Levites* were.

Ver. 2. *But Nadab and Abihu died before their Father, and had no Children: Therefore Eleazar and Ithamar executed the Priest's Office.*] From these two all the Families of the Priests descended, who were now to be disposed into a regular Performance of their Duty.

Ver. 3. *And David distributed them, both Zadok of the Sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the Sons of Ithamar,*] These two (*Zadok* and *Ahimelech*) were the chief Persons, in *David*'s Days, of the Posterity of those Sons of *Aaron*, *Eleazar* and *Ithamar*.

According to their Offices in their Service.] He determined, when they and those Priests who depended on them, should perform their Office in the Temple-Service.

Ver. 4. *And there were more Chief Men found of the Sons of Eleazar, than of the Sons of Ithamar; and thus were they divided.*] Accordingly *David* divided them into certain Classes and Courses, as the *Targum* expounds it.

Among the Sons of Eleazar there were sixteen Chief Men of the House of their Fathers, and eight among the Sons of Ithamar, according to the House of their Fathers.] He appointed therefore sixteen Courses of the Sons of *Eleazar*, under as many Heads of their Families: And half as many of the Posterity of *Ithamar*. Which *Kimchi*, and other *Hebrew* Doctors, explain in this Manner. In the Days of *Moses* there were but *eight* Courses in the whole: Four of *Eleazar*'s Family, and four of *Ithamar*'s. But in *Samuel*'s Days they were grown to *sixteen*: Eight of the one, and as many of the other. But in the End of *David*'s Reign they were enlarged to *twenty four* Courses; two Thirds of which were assigned to the Sons of *Eleazar*, because they were more numerous than the other: And the Sons of *Ithamar* continued as they were before; having eight Courses. But the Holy Scriptures never mention any settled Courses till this Time (as Dr. *Lightfoot* observes in his *Temple-Service*, Chap. vi.) tho' their Doctors assert it to explain that Precept, *Deut.* xxviii. 6.

Ver. 5. *Thus were they divided by Lot,*] That there might be no Occasion for Complaint: When all was ordered by a Divine Disposition, according to very ancient Custom. For the Choice of Persons by Lot, into sacred Offices, was used from the Beginning of the World, as *Grotius* observes in his Book, *De Imper. Sum. Potest. circa Sacra*, Cap. x. Sect. 5.

One Sort with another;] Both the Sons of *Eleazar*, and of *Ithamar* were thus chosen, who should wait together.

For the Governours of the Sanctuary,] The Words in the *Hebrew* are, *Share Kodesh*: Which signify the principal Ministers about Holy Things.

And Governours of the House of God,] There is no Word for *House* in the *Hebrew*; where we only read *Share Elohim*: Which seem to signify the *chief Judges*.

Were of the Sons of Eleazar, and of the Sons of Ithamar.] These two Families had obtained the chief Functions both in the Temple, and in the Civil Government: Wherein they could not be distributed so well any way as by Lot; without Danger of Envy among themselves.

Ver. 6. *And Shemaiah the Son of Nethaneel the Scribe, one of the Levites, wrote them before the King and the Princes, and Zadok the Priest, and Ahimelech the Son of Abiathar, and before the Chief of the Fathers of the Priests and Levites.*] In perpetual Memory of the Thing (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) this Divine Writer sets down the Name of the publick Notary, by whom their Names were written, and put into the Urn, out of which the Lots were to be drawn. Which, that there might be no Suspi-

Suſpicion of Fraud, were drawn before the King, the Princes, both the Chief Prieſts, (the High-Prieſt, and the Sagan) and before the chief Perſons of the ſeveral Families of *Prieſts* and *Levites*. Whence it is reaſonable to conclude, that *David* did not make this Regulation, by his mere Royal Power, but by a Divine Direction. Which he had in this, as in the Order he gave about the building of the Temple; (*chap.* xxviii.) and he ſeems here not to have acted by an abſolute Authority, but to have adviſed with the High-Prieſt, and other Perſons of great Note, how to proceed.

One principal Houſhold being taken for Eleazar, and one taken for Ithamar.] Theſe Words are ſomething obſcure: But the meaning is, that one of the principal Families of *Eleazar* was firſt taken, and then one of *Ithamar*'s; and after that one of *Eleazar*'s again, and ſo by turns till all was done: That is, till there were eight of each. After which, thoſe of *Eleazar* alone were diſtributed under their ſeveral Heads.

Ver. 7. *Now the firſt Lot came forth to Jehoiarib, the ſecond to Jedaiah.*] The firſt Lot that was drawn out of the Urn had the Name of *Jehoiarib* upon it: So that his Family had the Precedence, and waited in the firſt Place. This was eſteemed a great Honour; for *Joſephus* reckons himſelf noble, not only becauſe he was deſcended ἐξ ἱερέων from the Prieſts, but ἐκ τῆς πρώτης ἐφημερίδος τῶν εἰκοσιτεσσάρων, but from the firſt Courſe of the four and twenty. For this made a great Difference: *Mattathias* alſo, the Father of the *Maccabees*, deſcended from *Jehoiarib*, as we read, 1 *Maccab.* ii. 54.

Ver. 8. *The third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim.*] I have nothing to obſerve concerning theſe, and the reſt that follow to *Verſe* 19. but only that *Zachariah* the Father of *John Baptiſt* was of the eighth Courſe of theſe Prieſts, *viz.* that of *Abijah*, mentioned *ver.* 10. as we read in the firſt of St. *Luke*. For as *Joſephus* teſtifies, this Order of the Courſes continued till his Time, that is, till the Deſtruction of the ſecond Temple.

Ver. 19. *Theſe were the Orderings of them in their Service to come into the Houſe of the LORD, according to their manner, under Aaron their Father,*] Under the Inſpection of the High-Prieſt, who being the Succeſſor of *Aaron*, is called by his Name. He took care that this Order ſhould be obſerved in ſuch manner, as is here preſcribed: None of them anticipating their Courſe, nor thruſting in themſelves to attend before their Time, but waiting till their Time came. And then every Courſe ſerved a Week, coming in on the Sabbath; and going out the next before the burning of the Incenſe at the Morning Sacrifice, when the Shew-bread was ſet on the Table, as *Scaliger* obſerves out of the *Jewiſh* Writers, in his *Notes* upon the *Fragments* at the End of his Book *De Emend. Temporum*, p. 54. Upon the three great Feſtivals indeed, when all Prieſts, as well as others, were bound to appear before God, they came out of their Courſe, and, that they might not be idle, officiated in ſuch Things as properly belonged to thoſe Solemnities. But the ordinary Buſineſs, for the daily Burnt-ſacrifice, and the Freewill-offerings, was managed by thoſe only whoſe Courſe it was to wait. And thus the *Jews* underſtand thoſe Words, *Deut.* xviii. 6, 7. *The Levite* (*i. e.* the Prieſts who were of that Tribe) *that ſhall come to the Place which the LORD his God ſhall chuſe*, (that is, at the three ſolemn Feaſts) *then he ſhall miniſter in the Houſe of the LORD his God, as all his Brethren the Levites do*, (which is meant of the Prieſts, for they only miniſtred before God, not the *Levites*) *they ſhall have like Portion to eat*; that is, of the Sacrifices which were then offered at thoſe ſolemn Times, they were to have their Share, with the reſt of the Prieſts then in Attendance, but the *Levites* did not eat of them:

Beſide that which cometh by the Sale of his Patrimony, or, as it is in the *Hebrew*, by *the Sale of his Fathers.*] That is, ſay they, except the Portion of the daily Sacrifices, and Freewill-offerings, which by the Ordinance of their Fathers, *Moſes and Aaron*, belonged only to thoſe Prieſts, who were in their ordinary Attendance in their Week.

As the LORD God of Iſrael had commanded him.] By his Servant *David*.

Ver. 20. *And the reſt of the Sons of Levi were theſe: Of the Sons of Amram; Shubael: of the Sons of Shubael; Jehdeiah.*] Now he ſpeaks of the reſt of the *Levites*, who were not Prieſts, who are mentioned in the foregoing *Chap.* xxiii. 16, 17, &c. and here named again to diſtinguiſh them from the Prieſts, and to ſhew that they alſo had their Places aſſigned them by Lot, *ver.* 31. I have nothing to note concerning thoſe that follow between this *Verſe* and that, but only this: That ſeveral are mentioned as deſcended from *Merari*, who are not mentioned in the foregoing *Chapters*, nor any where elſe. For which, no queſtion, the Author of this Book had good Authority, tho' we cannot, without the Help of ſuch Records as he peruſed, give an Account of it. See *Buxtorf*'s *Anticritica*, p. 1014.

Ver. 31. *Theſe likewiſe caſt Lots over againſt their Brethren the Sons of Aaron, in the Preſence of David the King, and Zadok and Ahimelech, and the Chief of the Fathers of the Prieſts and Levites,*] There was the like Solemnity uſed in their Diſtribution, as there was in that of the Prieſts, by caſting Lots: Whereby they knew what *Levites* ſhould wait, in every Courſe with the Sons of *Aaron*.

Even the principal Fathers over againſt their younger Brethren.] This is expreſſed very obſcurely; but the meaning is, that the elder and younger had their Places by Lots, not by Seniority of Houſes. They that were of greater Dignity drew Lots againſt thoſe that were of leſs: And they were to take their Courſes, as they fell; either to the elder or the younger Family.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *MOreover David, and the Captains of the Hoſt,*] It is abſurd to think, that the Commanders in War meddled with ordering the Tribe of *Levi*, and the Service of the Temple. Therefore by *the Hoſt* we are to underſtand

derſtand (as our Mr. *Thorndike* well obſerves) the Companies of Prieſts, that waited upon the Service of God at the Temple: The *Captains* of whom, (*i. e.* the chief Leaders) together with *David*, divided the Singers, as they had done the Prieſts, *c.* xxiv. 3, 6, 7. Tho' elſewhere *c.* xxiii. 6. *David* alone is mentioned to have done it. *Rights of the Church*, p. 230.

Separated to the Service,] Of God in the Temple.

Of the Sons of Aſaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun,] Theſe were the chief Perſons among the *Levites*, whoſe Families were ſeparated to the following Service.

Who ſhould propheſy,] Sing *Pſalms*, which *David* and other Prophets compoſed. For theſe young Men were not Prophets, as their Fathers were but are ſaid *to propheſy*, becauſe they ſung in the Service of God thoſe Divine Prophetical Hymns, which were compoſed by their Fathers, who were Men divinely inſpired. Thus the *Talmudiſts* ſay in *Bava Bathra*, cap. i. that all the Hymns we find in the Bible were made by *Adam*, *Melchiſedec*, *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Aſaph*, *Heman*, *Jeduthun*, and *David:* Who collected them into one Volume. But this is a fooliſh Tradition and very new.

With Harps, and Pſalteries, and with Cymbals,] There were alſo *Pipes*, or *Hautbois* uſed upon ſeveral Occaſions, together with the Trumpets. The Difference between theſe three here mentioned, is better deſcribed by Dr. *Lightfoot* out of *Joſephus*, than by any I have met withal; who obſerves, that the other *Iſraelites*, if allied to the Prieſts by Marriage, might if they had Skill, join in this Inſtrumental Muſick; but none beſides the *Levites* in the Vocal. See his *Temple Service*, chap. vii. ſect. 2. where he likewiſe notes what *Pſalms* were to be ſung every Day of the Week.

And this was the firſt Office of the *Levites*; the two other are explained in the two following *Chapters*.

And the Number of the Workmen, according to the Service was,] It had better be tranſlated, *the Number of the Men of the Miniſtery* (*i. e.* of thoſe who miniſtred in ſinging and playing on Inſtruments) *according to their Service, was*, as follows.

Ver. 2. *Of the Sons of Aſaph; Zaccur, and Joſeph, and Nethaniah, and Aſrelah, the Sons of Aſaph, under the Hands of Aſaph*,] Under his Government, as their *Præcentor:* Or, who taught and inſtructed them, in Singing and Muſick.

Which propheſied according to the Order of the King.] The *Targum* underſtand this, as if *Aſaph* propheſied by the Holy Ghoſt, and was conſtituted the Head of theſe by the King. But the Word *Prophecy* is of very large Extent; ſignifying ſometimes, as I ſaid before, nothing more, but ſinging divinely inſpired Hymns. Thus *Miriam* is called a *Propheteſs* (*Exod.* xv. 20.) becauſe ſhe led up the Women to praiſe God, with Timbrels and Dances. And indeed Muſick and Singing were in ancient Times had in ſuch Eſteem and Veneration, that they who excelled in this Faculty, were look'd upon as Perſons divinely moved. So *Quintilian* obſerves, as a known Truth, *L.* i. Inſtit. *cap.* 10. *Quis ignorat, muſicen tantum jam illis antiquis temporibus non ſtudii modo, verum etiam venerationis habuiſſe, ut iidem muſici, & vates judicarentur*. Who is ſo ignorant as not to know that Muſick in thoſe ancient Times, was not only ſo much ſtudied, but had in ſuch Veneration, that the ſame Men who were Muſicians, were *accounted Prophets and wiſe Men*.

Ver. 3. *Of Jeduthun: the Sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, and Zeri, and Jeſhaiah, Haſhabiah, and Mattithiah, ſix, under the Hands of their Father Jeduthun*.] Here are but *five* named: But it appears afterward (*ver.* 17. when the Lots were caſt) there was another, whoſe Name was *Shimei*. Who being now very young, and not yet able either to ſing or to play, is not named in this *Verſe*. But that he might be inſtructed and learn both, he is choſen to be the Head of a Courſe, when he ſhould be fit for it. Thus *D. Kimchi* explains this Matter.

Who propheſied with a Harp, to give thanks, and to praiſe the LORD.] The Harp was a moſt noble Inſtrument, in which *Jeduthun* ſeems to be peculiarly ſkilled, and therewith praiſed God; which is called *propheſying*.

Ver. 4. *Of Heman: the Sons of Heman; Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shebuel, and Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, and Romanti-ezer, Joſhbekaſhah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth*.] He had the moſt numerous Iſſue of theſe three; and they all had Families who were employed in this Service.

Ver. 5. *All theſe were the Sons of Heman, the King's Seer*,] He was a Prophet, in whoſe Company the King delighted: And with whom he adviſed in difficult Affairs.

In the Words of God,] Eſpecially in Divine Matters.

To lift up the Horn,] In the Temple they uſed alſo Wind Muſick: Which many think to have been Trumpets made of Horn: But the Prieſts only blew with Trumpets in the Temple, while the *Levites* ſung to thoſe other Inſtruments. Therefore others underſtand this, of the Hymns they ſung to magnify the Power, Greatneſs, and Exaltation of *David*'s Kingdom: Or, rather, of the Kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, whom *Zachary* in his Song, *Luke* i. 69. calls the *Horn of Salvation*. For the Power of any thing in Scripture is expreſſed by *a Horn*; in which lies the Strength of ſome Creatures. And from theſe Words *Victorinus Strigelius* gathers, that *Heman* was *David*'s Seer in politick Affairs, which belonged to the Confirmation and Settlement of his Kingdom. *Cornu enim ſignificat regimen & regnum*; for a Horn ſignifies Government, and Kingdom. But the firſt Senſe ſeems to me to be moſt natural, that at ſtated Times they blew aloud with Trumpets made of Horns: For ſuch, I ſuppoſe, they might uſe, tho' the Prieſts only could blow with the Silver Trumpets. And thus the famous *Bochartus* interprets theſe Words, *at ſet Times to blow aloud with Trumpets made of Horns*. In his Preface to his *Hierozoicon*.

And God gave to Heman fourteen Sons and three Daughters.] Some have fancied there are fifteen mentioned in the foregoing *Verſe:* But the

the *Jews* look upon *Romanti-ezer* as one Name; and ſo we take it: Which is juſtified by *ver.* 31.

Ver. 6. *All theſe were under the Hands of their Father, for Song in the Houſe of the* LORD, *with Cymbals, Pſalteries, and Harps, for the Service of the Houſe of God,*] The whole Number of theſe was four and twenty, who under their ſeveral Fathers, *Aſaph*, *Jeduthun*, and *Heman*, regulated the Choir in their Singing and Muſick: Being the Inſtructors and Governors of thoſe who were under them. It is likely they ſet the Pſalms to Muſick which *David* compoſed: Or, if he himſelf modulated them, they ſung them in the Tunes he directed, with the Muſical Inſtruments here mentioned.

According to the King's Order, to Aſaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.] Theſe were Prophets, who compoſed many of the Songs, which their Sons ſung by their Direction: As appears from 2 *Chron.* xxix. 10. where it is ſaid they ſung Praiſes, *in the Words of David and Aſaph the Seer.*

Ver. 7. *So the Number of them, with their Brethren, that were inſtructed in the Songs of the* LORD, *even all that were cunning, was two hundred fourſcore and eight.*] This was the whole Number of thoſe who were skilful in Singing, who, under the Perſons before-mentioned, were diſtributed (as it here follows) into ſeveral Courſes, after the ſame Manner that the Prieſts had been: With whom they were to attend in their Order. For twelve of theſe Singers, with their Governor, came and waited every Week; at the End of which they were ſucceeded by other twelve, till the Courſe was finiſhed: And then it began again, where it did at firſt. Now twelve times twenty four amount to two hundred fourſcore and eight.

It is no wonder that there were ſo many of them found very ſkilful in Singing and Muſick: For *David* himſelf was a great Muſician and Poet, and every one knows how much the Inclination of the ſupreme Governor ſerves to the promoting of Arts among the People.

Ver. 8. *And they caſt Lots, Ward againſt Ward,*] Being thus diſtributed into twenty four Courſes, they caſt Lots, one Courſe againſt another, which ſhould wait firſt, and in order ſucceed one another.

As well the Small as the Great, the Teacher as the Scholar.] So that they did not begin and ſucceed one another, according to the Order of Age, or of Learning, but as God diſpoſed them by their Lot. The laſt Words [*the Teacher as the Scholar*] the LXX tranſlate τελείων ϗ μανθανόντων, *thoſe that were perfect, and thoſe that were learners.* They were called perfect who were Maſters of their Art, able to inſtruct others, who learnt of them.

Ver. 9. *Now the firſt Lot came forth for Aſaph to Joſeph,*] Who was not his eldeſt Son; ſee *ver.* 2. After the Word *Joſeph*, we are to ſupply the Words that follow, in the reſt of theſe Claſſes, *who with his Brethren and Sons were twelve:* Otherwiſe the Number of *two hundred fourſcore and eight*, ver. 7. will not be compleat.

The ſecond to Gedaliah,] Who was the eldeſt Son to *Jeduthun*, ver. 5.

Who with his Brethren and Sons were twelve.] Theſe Words, as *Raſi* obſerves, are to be referred to *Joſeph* as well as *Gedaliah*: For he mentions them both, in one and the ſame Verſe; and therefore he only ſaith once with reſpect to both, *he and his Sons and Brethren.* Where by *Brethren* is meant their Kindred.

Ver. 10. *The third to Zaccur, he, his Sons and his Brethren were twelve.*] He was the eldeſt Son of *Aſaph*, ver. 2.

Ver. 11. *The fourth to Izri*, &c.] Called *Zeri*, ver. 3. who was the ſecond Son of *Jeduthun.*

Ver. 12. *The fifth to Nethaniah*, &c.] This Lot fell upon the third Son of *Aſaph*, ver. 2.

Ver. 13. *The ſixth to Bukkiah*, &c.] Who was the eldeſt Son of *Heman*, ver. 4.

Ver. 14. *The ſeventh to Jeſharelah*, &c.] Called *Aſarelah*, ver. 2. the youngeſt Son of *Aſaph.*

Ver. 15. *The eighth to Jeſhaiah*, &c.] Who was the third Son of *Jeduthun*, ver. 3.

Ver. 16. *The ninth to Mattaniah*, &c.] Who was the third Son of *Heman*, ver. 4.

Ver. 17. *The tenth to Shimei*, &c.] The youngeſt Son of *Jeduthun*, as I have noted upon *ver.* 3.

Ver. 18. *The eleventh to Azareel*, &c.] The third Son of *Heman*, who is called *Uzziel* in the ſame Verſe.

Ver. 19. *The twelfth to Haſhabiah*, &c.] The fourth Son of *Jeduthun*, ver. 4.

Ver. 20. *The thirteenth to Shubael*, &c.] The fourth Son of *Heman*, called there *Shebuel*, ver. 4.

Ver. 21. *The fourteenth to Mattathiah*, &c.] Who was the fifth Son of *Jeduthun*, ver. 3.

Ver. 22. *The fifteenth to Jeremoth*, &c.] The fifth Son of *Heman*, ver. 4.

Ver. 23. *The ſixteenth to Hananiah*, &c.] The next Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 24. *The ſeventeenth is Joſhbekaſhah*, &c.] Who was the eleventh Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 25. *The eighteenth to Hanani.*] Who was the ſeventh Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 26. *The nineteenth to Mallothi*, &c.] Who was the twelfth Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 27. *The twentieth to Eliathah*, &c.] Who was the eighth Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 28. *The one and twentieth to Hothir*, &c.] Who was the eleventh Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 29. *The two and twentieth to Giddalti*, &c.] Who was the ninth Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 30. *The three and twentieth to Mahazioth*, &c.] Who was the youngeſt Son of *Heman.*

Ver. 31. *The four and twentieth to Romanti-ezer*, &c.] The tenth Son of *Heman.*

Thus all things were diſpoſed, for the preſerving Order, and avoiding all Diſputes about Precedence: There being no Reſpect had in this Divine Diſtribution to their Birth, but the younger in Courſe preceded the elder.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. *Concerning the Diviſions of the Porters.*] As ſome of the *Levites* were choſen to be Singers (of which an Account is given in the foregoing *Chapter*) ſo others were appointed

appointed to be Porters. Which were fixed Offices, (as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves) which they might not change: None of them being permitted to intrude into the Office of the other: And neither of them into the Prieſthood. It was an Office of great Dignity, and Men of the beſt Quality were put into it: They having the Charge of the holy Things, *ver.* 20, 22, 24, 26.

Of the Korhites was Meſhelemiah.] Called *Shelemiah*, ver. 14.

The Son of Kore, of the Sons of Aſaph.] Not of *Aſaph* the Muſician, mentioned in the foregoing *Chapter*, for he was of the Family of *Gerſhon* (ver. 41.) but of another *Aſaph*, called *Eliaſaph*, and ſometimes *Jaſaph*, of the Line of *Kohath*, chap. vi. 23. ix. 19.

Ver. 2. *And the Sons of Meſhelemiah were, Zechariah the firſt-born, Jedaiel the ſecond, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,*

Ver. 3. *Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the ſixth, Elioenai the ſeventh.*

Ver. 4. *Moreover, the Sons of Obed-edom were Shemaiah the firſt-born, Jehozabad the ſecond, Joah the third, and Sacar the fourth, and Nethaneel the fifth,*

Ver. 5. *Ammiel the ſixth, Iſſachar the ſeventh, Peulthai the eighth: for God bleſſed him.*] With a numerous Off-ſpring, as the *Targum* gloſſes upon the laſt Words: Becauſe he entertained the Ark in his Houſe with great Reverence. Upon which Account God did him the Honour to let him ſee of his Sons and Grand-Sons fourſcore and two: Who were chief Men among the *Levites*. This the *Targum* had ſaid before, one only being wanting of this Number. See upon *c.* xiii. 14. But what the Scripture ſaith is ſufficient to ſhew how God bleſſed him with a numerous Poſterity, without the Help of ſuch monſtrous Stories, as ſome of the *Jews* relate.

Ver. 6. *Alſo unto Shemaiah his Son were Sons born, that ruled throughout the Houſe of their Father:*] Being Men of great Authority in that Family.

For they were mighty Men of Valour.] Which was requiſite in Men who had this Office: For they were to watch and guard the Houſe of God, Night and Day. And not only to open and ſhut the Doors of the Mountain of the Houſe, and of the Court of the Women (for the Prieſts opened and ſhut the Gates of the other Courts) but to attend there to prevent any thing that might be done to the Prejudice of the Peace, Safety and Purity of the Place. And likewiſe, as appears by what follows, they had the Guard of ſome Treaſures, which required Men of Courage to defend them.

Ver. 7. *The Sons of Shemaiah; Othni, and Rephael, and Obed, Elzabad, whoſe Brethren were ſtrong Men; Elihu and Semachiah.*] Their Names are recorded, with two of their Brethren, or Couſins; who are likewiſe noted to be *ſtrong Men*. That is, not only Men of great bodily Strength, but of great Courage and Reſolution. So it is tranſlated in the Margin, out of the *Hebrew*, *Sons of Valour*. But Strength of Body was a principal Requiſite in this Service; for the Doors of the Temple were ſo maſſy and weighty, that the Hands of many Men (as *Joſephus* ſaith) were needful to open and ſhut them.

Ver. 8. *All theſe of the Sons of Obed-edom: they and their Sons and their Brethren, able Men for Strength for the Service, were threeſcore and two of Obed-edom.*] This was a great Number, which he lived to ſee deſcended from him, and from his Sons.

Ver. 9. *And Shelemiah had Sons and Brethren, ſtrong Men, eighteen.*] Still their Strength is mentioned, as a Qualification for this Service.

Ver. 10. *Alſo Hoſah of the Sons of Merari had Sons; Simri the Chief (for tho' he was not the firſt-born, yet his Father made him the Chief.)*] Becauſe his elder Brother was feeble, or ſome other way unfit for the Service. For, as *Jacob* gave the Kingdom to *Judah*, and the Prieſthood to *Levi*, and put *Reuben* his firſt-born from his Right, becauſe of his Crime: So there was ſome weighty Cauſe, no doubt, why this Man had the Right of Primogeniture given him, which was not to be altered upon the Account of Affection, *Deut.* xxi. 16, 17.

Ver. 11. *Hilkiah the ſecond, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth: All the Sons and Brethren of Hoſah were thirteen.*] Who are not all named, but theſe who are the Principal.

Ver. 12. *Among theſe were the Diviſions of the Porters, even among the chief Men,*] They were diſtributed into Courſes, as the *Prieſts* and *Levites* were: And theſe were principal Commanders over them: Being the moſt illuſtrious among their Brethren, and therefore particularly named.

Having Wards one againſt another,] Having Charges, or Cuſtodies anſwerable to their Brethren: That is, to the *Levites*, who attended as theſe did.

To miniſter in the Houſe of the LORD.] This was not a vile Miniſtry (as the Word *Porter* ſounds among us) but they were like the ſtanding Guard of a King in his Palace: And ſo the Word, I obſerved before, had better be rendred. See ix. 17. Who kept the Treaſures of the Temple, as it follows, *v.* 20, 26. and Officers and Judges alſo were choſen out of them, (*v.* 29, 30, 32.) which ſhews they were eminent Perſons: Some of them being very learned and wiſe, *ver.* 14. Tho', I ſuppoſe, they were not Judges of the Law, but of other Matters.

Ver. 13. *And they caſt Lots as well the ſmall as the great,*] Without Reſpect to their Age or Dignity.

According to the Houſe of their Fathers.] Every Family having a diſtinct Lot drawn for it.

For every Gate.] That it might be determined at what Gate of the Temple they were to wait.

Ver. 14. *And the Lot Eaſtward fell to Shelemiah;*] Who is called *Meſhelemiah*, ver. 1.

Then for Zechariah his Son (a wiſe Counſellor) they caſt Lots, and his Lot came out Northward.] He was as much reputed for Prudence, as others were for Strength, or Valour: And it was as neceſſary in the Management of many of their Affairs.

Ver. 15. *To Obed-edom Southward, and to his Sons, the Houſe of Aſuppim.*] Many learned Men take *Aſuppim* to ſignify the Treaſury of the Temple, or the Place where Things dedicated were laid up. This they ground, *firſt*, upon the Import of the Word, which betokens Col-

lections, or *Gatherings*, as we tranſlate it in the Margin: And *ſecondly*, becauſe *Obed-edom* (whoſe Sons are here ſaid to be placed at *Aſuppim*) is ſaid in the 2 *Chron.* xxv. to have the Cuſtody of the Treaſures. But tho' this be granted, it remains ſtill a very difficult Matter to find where *Aſuppim* was. After a long Diſcuſſion of it, Dr. *Lightfoot* concludes, that *Aſuppim* were two Gates in the Weſtern Wall, which ſtood moſt South, or neareſt to *Jeruſalem*; and that *the Houſe of Aſuppim* was a large Building which run between them, and was a Treaſury of divers Rooms for laying up Things that ſerved the Uſe of the Temple. See *Temple-Service*, Chap. v. Sect. 3.

Ver. 16. *To Shuppim and Hoſah the Lot came forth Weſtward, with the Gate Shallecheth, by the Cauſey of the going up,*] This Gate which in *Solomon*'s Time was called *Shallecheth*, in the Time of *Herod*'s Temple was called the Gate of *Coponius*. Which is ſaid here to be *by the Cauſey of the going up*: Becauſe it was by that Aſcent which *Solomon* made for his own Paſſage up from his own Houſe to the Temple, 1 *Kings* x. 5. 2 *Chron.* ix. 4. Which *Joſephus* thus expreſſes (as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves) *A Gate led to the King's Houſe from the Temple, the Valley between them being filled up for the Paſſage.* From whence the Gate was called by the Name of *Shallecheth*, which ſignifies *caſting up*; becauſe of the Cauſey that was caſt up to lead to it, from the King's Palace: This being the ordinary Way to the Houſe of God.

Ward againſt Ward.] I ſuppoſe the Meaning is, that they gaurded each of theſe Gates of *Aſuppim:* Or, as others take it, they guarded by Turns; when one went off, another coming on. But the moſt learned Dr. *Alix*, (whom I conſulted about it) thinks theſe Words ſignify, that their Stations were at the four Points of Heaven, oppoſite one to the other.

Ver. 17. *Eaſtward were ſix Levites, Northward four a Day, Southward four a Day, and toward Aſuppim two and two.*] That is, two at each Gate of *Aſuppim*, before-mentioned. The Diſtribution of the Porters into *four* and *twenty* Courſes, is not ſo plainly and diſtinctly ſet down in Scripture, as is the Diſtribution of the Prieſts and Singers. Yet (as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves) it may be fairly concluded, from two Places: whereof this is one, in theſe two Verſes, 16, 17. where the Fathers of the Porters are ſummed up, to the very ſame Number, that the firſt Fathers of the other Courſes were, *viz.* to four and twenty. *Among all the Porters* (ſaith *Kimchi* on this Place) *there where four and twenty, according to the reſt of the Courſes; ſix on the Eaſt-ſide, four on the North, four on the South, at Aſuppim two and two, (four in all) four on the Weſt, and two at Parbar: Behold four and twenty.* The other Place is, 2 *Chron.* viii. 14. where the Porters go in the very ſame Equipage (as he ſpeaks) as to the Matter of Diviſion into Courſes, with the Prieſts, and the Singers. See *Temple-Service*, Chap. vii.

Ver. 18. *At Parbar Weſtward, four at the Cauſey, and two at Parbar.*] This Gate, it appears from this Place, was in the Weſt-Quarter, and the Weſt-gate to the Cauſey or *Shallecheth*. It ſignifies, ſome think, the ſame with *Parvar*, which betokens Suburbs: For it led to the Suburbs, that is, that Part of the City which was called *Millo*. Which was the Valley at the weſt-end of Mount *Moriah*, in which *Jeruſalem*, and *Sion* met: Repleniſhed with Buildings in *David*'s and *Solomon*'s Time, 2 *Sam.* v. 9. 1 *Kings* xi. 27. See Dr. *Lightfoot* in his *Survey of the Temple*, Chap. v. Sect. 2.

Ver. 19. *Theſe are the Diviſions of the Porters among the Sons of Kore, and among the Sons of Merari.*] Theſe Courſes were made up of the *Levites*, of theſe two great Families.

Ver. 20. *And of the Levites, Ahijah was over the Treaſures of the Houſe of God, and over the Treaſures of the dedicated Things.*] By *the Treaſures of the Houſe of God*, are meant ſuch things as were of ordinary Uſe and Employment in the Temple: Such as the Veſſels, Veſtments, Tithes, Wine, Oil, and other Things, that were commonly uſed. Together with ſuch, as were offered to the Treaſury; either as a due (as was the half Shekel) or voluntarily, as Money or Veſſels, for the Repair of the Houſe of God, and Advancement of the Service there. By *the Treaſures of dedicated Things* are meant whatſoever their Kings, or great Commanders had conſecrated and dedicated for Divine Uſes: Which lay as a Stock for the Temple, and Monuments of their Devotion.

Ver. 21. *As concerning the Sons of Laadan: the Son of the Gerſhonite Laadan, chief Fathers, even of Laadan the Gerſhonite, were Jehieli.*] This was an eminent Man of that Family. See xxiii. 7.

Ver. 22. *The Son of Jehieli; Zetham, and Joel his Brother,*] See xxiii. 8. where he is called *Jehiel*.

Which were over the Treaſures of the Houſe of the LORD.] From hence Dr. *Lightfoot* gathers, that as ſome of the *Treaſures of the Houſe of God* were under the Care and Charge of the Porters; (ſee ix. 26.) So the reſt, and the Treaſures of *dedicated Things*, were committed to the Care and Charge of other *Levites*, who were neither Porters, nor Singers.

Ver. 23. *Of the Amramites, and the Izharites, the Hebronites, and the Uzzielites.*] Several Perſons of theſe Families were employed as they that are mentioned in the foregoing Verſe.

Ver. 24. *And Shebuel the Son of Gerſhom, the Son of Moſes, was Ruler of the Treaſures.*] This is the ſole Honour, that we read of hitherto, conferred upon any of the Poſterity of *Moſes*. One of which was advanced to a great Authority, being the Overſeer of all the Treaſures, and their Officers. By *Treaſures*, I ſuppoſe, is here meant thoſe of the Houſe of the Lord; for another was over the dedicated Things, *v.* 26.

Ver. 25. *And his Brethren by Eliezer; Rehabiah his Son, and Jeſhaiah his Son, and Joram his Son, and Zichri his Son, and Shelomith his Son.*] Theſe, I ſuppoſe, were under *Shebuel*, as their chief Ruler.

Ver. 26. *Which Shelomith and his Brethren, were over all the Treaſures of the dedicated Things.*] Here is another of *Moſes* his Poſterity (by his younger Son) preferred to a great Office: To have the Charge of thoſe Things which were dedicated for the Service of God, in which his Brethren were to aſſiſt him.

Which

Which David the King,] Out of his great Piety, had dedicated in Abundance, to the Building of the Temple, xxii. 14.

And the chief Fathers, the Captains over thouſands and hundreds,] Such as by the Counſel of *Jethro* (*Exod* xviii.) were conſtituted to aſſiſt in the Government of the People.

And the Captains of the Hoſt had dedicated.] The great Military Men, imitated the Rulers in the Civil Government, in this Piety. Or ſuch as are called *Captains of the Hoſt*, xxv. 1.

Ver. 27. *Out of the Spoils won in Battles, did they dedicate to maintain the Houſe of the LORD.*] As *David* gave a vaſt Treaſure to the Building of the Houſe; ſo theſe Men dedicated a Part of their Spoil, to the Support and Repair of it, as there ſhould be Occaſion, after it was built.

Ver. 28. *And all that Samuel the Seer, and Saul the Son of Kiſh, and Abner the Son of Ner, and Joab the Son of Zeruiah had dedicated,*] He mentions particularly ſome great Benefactors; to honour their Memory, and to be Examples to Poſterity. And *Samuel* ſeems to have begun, and led the Way to the reſt that followed. For he, I ſuppoſe, by the Spirit of Prophecy, foreſaw the Nation would be ſo well ſettled in the Land, that an Houſe would be built, for the Service of God. And therefore he dedicated Part of the Spoils, which he got, in the Battles he fought, while he was *Judge* of the People of *Iſrael*. Which Example, *Saul*, *Abner*, and *Joab* imitated. And they all took it from the ancient Piety of the great Patriarch *Abraham*; who gave the Tenth of the Spoils which he won to *Melchiſedech* God's High-Prieſt. The like did the Princes of the People of *Iſrael*, after their Victory over the *Midianites*; as we read *Numb.* xxxi.

And whoſoever had dedicated any thing,] There were many, no doubt, who were diſpoſed to the ſame Piety beſides theſe named.

It was under the Hand of Shelomith, and of his Brethren.] He was a Man of eminent Probity and Prudence: Otherwiſe ſo great a Truſt would not have been repoſed in him.

Ver. 29. *Of the Izharites, Chenaiah, and his Sons were for the outward Buſineſs,*] That is, the Buſineſs, without the City of *Jeruſalem*; which neither belonged to the Singers, nor the Porters, whoſe Buſineſs was within the City. But what this *outward Buſineſs* was, is not eaſily reſolved. *Kimchi*, and other *Hebrew* Doctors, think, it was to cut down Trees in the Woods, and to hew Stones, and to ſee the Fields plough'd, and the Vineyards and Gardens planted and dreſſed, which by devout Perſons had been dedicated to the Service of God. But there doth not ſeem to be any thing belonging to ſuch Matters, in theſe Words. For tho' *Shoterim* or Officers, might poſſibly have ſomething to do in ſuch Matters; yet what Buſineſs there was in theſe Things for the *Judges* (on whom theſe Officers attended) none can imagine. And this *outward Buſineſs* being *over Iſrael*, as it here follows, it does not denote their Care of the Fruits conſecrated by the *Iſraelites*, nor the Government of thoſe who gathered thoſe Fruits: But ſome Authority over the *Iſraelites* themſelves; ſuch as is deſcribed in the following Verſe. See *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 26. whoſe Opinion is approved by *Conringius:* Which is, that they were *Aſſeſſors* with the ordinary *Judges*.

Over Iſrael,] Not over all the People of *Iſrael*, but over a Part of them: For thoſe about *Jordan* were under another Juriſdiction, as appears by the next Verſe.

For Officers and Judges.] For ſuch Employments as are mentioned in the following Verſe.

Ver. 30. *And of the Hebronites, Haſhabiah and his Brethren, Men of Valour, a thouſand and ſeven hundred, were Officers among them of Iſrael on this Side Jordan Weſtward,*] This was a vaſt Number: Therefore their Officers were of ſeveral ſorts, (as it follows) not only in Divine, but in Civil Affairs.

In all Buſineſs of the LORD, and in the Service of the King.] The Work or *Buſineſs of the LORD*, was to take Care of all Things belonging to Religion: Among which Divine Employments, no doubt, this was the Chief, to judge the People according to the Law of God; and to ſee their Sentence put in Execution. For their Judges *judged for the LORD*, as *Jehoſhaphat* tells them, 2 *Chron.* xix. 6. And they had Officers, called *Shoterim*, to ſee their Judgment take Effect. But the Word *Shoterim* doth not ſignify merely the Miniſters of the Judges: But alſo ſuch Perſons who had ſome Miniſtry committed to them; to correct Offenders, and to puniſh them; or to bring them before the Judges to be puniſhed by them. For they are not only joined with *Judges* (as I have often before obſerved) but frequently put before them in this Book. And therefore it is hard to find one Word to comprehend the whole Work of theſe *Officers:* Who were employed both in Peace and in War, as our learned *Nicolas Fuller* obſerves in his *Miſcellanies*, Lib. ii. Cap. 20.

As for *the Buſineſs of the King*, ſome think, it was the gathering his Tribute, or perhaps publiſhing his Orders and Commands, and the like. See *Grotius de Jure Sum. Pot. circa Sacra*, p. 390.

Ver. 31. *Among the Hebronites was Jerijah the chief, even among the Hebronites, according to the Generations of their Fathers.*] He was the principal Perſon among the Sons of *Hebron*, as we find before, xxiii. 19.

In the fortieth Year of the Reign of King David, they were ſought for, and there were found among them mighty Men of Valour, at Jazer in Gilead.] In the laſt Year of King *David*'s Reign, not only theſe Things mentioned in this *Chapter* were eſtabliſhed; but all the other Ordinances which we read of in the foregoing, as the *Hebrew* Commentators obſerve. And his Care extended itſelf to the utmoſt Parts of his Dominion, where he ſought for Men fit to be put into theſe Offices, on the other Side of *Jordan:* And found many Perſons of great Courage at *Jazer* in *Gilead*, and the Territory belonging to it; among whom *Jerijah* was the Chief: *Jazer* was a City given to the Children of *Merari*, *Joſh.* xxi. 39.

Ver. 32. *And his Brethren, Men of Valour, were two thouſand ſeven hundred chief Fathers, whom David made Rulers over the Reubenites,*

the Gadites, and the half Tribe of Manasseh,] This was a great Number, to be employed in so small a Country; when on the other Side of *Jordan* (besides those under *Chenaiah*) there were but one thousand and seven hundred. But the Reason was, that they lived a great Way from *Jerusalem*; and therefore needed more to inspect, and admonish them of their Duty; lest they should forget their Relation to the Temple, or grow sluggish in the Worship of God, or embrace the Religion of their Neighbours; as *Pellicanus* observes.

For every Matter pertaining to God, and Affairs of the King.] It was the more necessary, there should be such a Number of Officers among them; to keep them in their Obedience to the King, as well as in their Duty to God. For there was Danger of their Desertion from their Sovereign, who lived at a great Distance, and was separated from them by the River *Jordan*. And nothing could be more pernicious, as he likewise observes, than the Rending of the Kingdom, and Neglect of the Divine Service.

From these Words it appears very plainly, as *Joannes Vorstius* notes, (in his Dissertation *de Synedriis Hebræorum*, Sect. 36.) that the same Persons took Care of the Things, or Causes pertaining to God, and those concerning the King. For nothing hindred, that one and the same College of *Judges* might judge both kind of Things, whether Spiritual, as we distinguish, or Civil. And he thinks, no Interpretation of the *Things of God*, and the *Things of the King*, is so probable, as that which I have given before: That by the *Things of God*, are meant such Things as might be judged by the Divine Law; and the *Things of the King*, such as could not be determined by the Law, but were left to the Judgment of the King. Who could not abrogate the ancient Laws, being bound to study the Book of the Law all the Days of his Life (*Deut.* xvii.) and judge according to it. But all Things being not there defined, or not so clearly and plainly that they could be determined by those Laws, the King, or those whom he intrusted in his stead, gave Sentence in such Matters: And could make new Laws, provided they did not contradict the old.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *NOW the Children of Israel after their Number, to wit, the chief Fathers and Captains of thousands and hundreds, and their Officers, that served the King in any Matter of the Courses, which came in and went out Month by Month, throughout all the Months of the Year, of every Course were twenty and four thousand.*] After the Settlement of Ecclesiastical Affairs, here is an Account given, how the *Militia*, as we may call it, of the Kingdom was settled in such Order, that it might be serviceable. They were distributed into XII Legions, consisting each of twenty four thousand Men; who were commanded by one of the *Chief of the Fathers*: Under whom there were *Captains of thousands*, such as we now call *Colonels*, which were twenty four in every Legion commanding a thousand Men. And then *Centurions* under them, or *Captains of hundreds*; and under them inferior *Officers*. Each of these Generals attended, with the Legions, one Month for the Security of the King and Kingdom: At the End of which they marched off, and another Legion, with their General, succeeded. So that their Course came but once in a Year, for one Month, which made it no considerable Burthen to them: There being so many valiant Men then in the Nation, that without much Damage such a Number might be in Arms, for so short a Season. *Pellicanus* thinks, this Order was instituted in the Beginning of *David*'s Reign, but was interrupted by many Wars he had abroad; and not renewed till his last Years, when he established it again, and left his Kingdom to *Solomon* thus governed. See *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 133. who observes, that after this, we never read of the *Cherethites* and *Pelethites*; these Troops being settled in their room.

Ver. 2. *Over the first Course for the first Month, was Jashobeam the Son of Zabdiel: and in his Course were twenty and four thousand.*] Now he sets down the Names of the chief Commander of every Legion: And *Jashobeam* seems to have been the first of his mighty Men, mentioned xi. 11. 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 8.

Ver. 3. *Of the Children of Perez, was the chief of all the Captains of the Hosts for the first Month.*] The fore-named *Jashobeam* was of the Children of *Pharez*, the Son of *Judah*: Which Tribe had the Honour to have the first chief Commander chosen out of it.

Ver. 4. *And over the Course of the second Month, was Dodai, an Ahohite, and of his Course was Mikloth also the Ruler: in his Course likewise were twenty and four thousand.*] This *Dodo* (as he is called in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 9.) was another of *David*'s mighty Men: Who had for his Lieutenant (when he was absent) *Mikloth*; who, we may suppose, is therefore here mentioned, because he was a Person of great Eminence, and had some considerable Command in this Course.

Ver. 5. *The third Captain of the Host for the third Month, was Benaiah the Son of Jehoiada, a chief Priest:*] Or rather, *a chief Prince*, as the *Hebrew* Word *Cohen* often signifies. See upon 2 *Sam.* viii. 18. xx. 26. For it is certain, neither *Benaiah*, nor his Father were High-Priests, or second Priests; but *Abiathar* and *Zadok* were in those Offices.

And in his Course were twenty and four thousand.

Ver. 6. *This is that Benaiah, who was mighty among the thirty, and above the thirty:*] He was one of *David*'s Worthies, who had done such mighty Acts, that this Divine Writer did not think fit here to mention him, without a Mark of Honour set upon him. See 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 20, 23.

And in his Course was Ammizabad his Son.] He was his Deputy, when his Father could not attend this Duty himself; having another Office of great Dignity, wherein he served, as Captain of the *Cherethites* and *Pelethites*, 2 *Sam.* viii. 18. Of whom, I observed before, we never read after the Time of *David*: But 'tis likely were kept up while they lived, tho' there was no need of them, after these Courses were settled.

Ver. 7. *The fourth Captain for the fourth Month, was Asahel the Brother of Joab,*] This confirms

Pellicanus his Opinion, that *David* inſtituted theſe Courſes in the Beginning of his Reign: For *Aſahel* was killed while *David* reigned in *Hebron*, before he was King over all *Iſrael*, and ſettled at *Jeruſalem*. He alſo was one of *David*'s Worthies, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 24.

And Zebadiah his Son after him.] He had the Honour to ſucceed his Father in this great Command, when he was ſlain.

Ver. 8. *The fifth Captain for the fifth Month, was Shamhuth the Izrahite*, &c.] It is very probable, that this was that valiant Man called *Shammah*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 11. and *Shammath* in this Book, xi. 27.

Ver. 9. *The ſixth Captain for the ſixth Month, was Ira the Son of Ikkeſh the Tekoite*, &c.] He is mentioned among the thirty mighty Men in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 26. and in this Book, *c.* xi. 28.

Ver. 10. *The ſeventh Captain for the ſeventh Month, was Helez the Pelonite of the Children of Ephraim*, &c. He is called the *Paltite* in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 26. and for the Honour of that Tribe, he is ſaid here to be of the *Children of Ephraim*.

Ver. 11. *The eighth Captain for the eighth Month, was Sibbecai the Huſhathite of the Zarhites*, &c.] One of that Family that was eminent in the Tribe of *Judah*, deſcended from *Caleb*, ii. 53. He ſlew one of the Sons of the Giant, in a Battle with the *Philiſtines*, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 18.

Ver. 12. *The ninth Captain for the ninth Month, was Abiezer the Anetothite, of the Benjamites.*] He alſo is mentioned among the thirty mighty Men in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 27.

Ver. 13. *The tenth Captain for the tenth Month, was Maharai the Netophathite of the Zarhites*, &c.] One of the ſame mighty Men, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 28.

Ver. 14. *The eleventh Captain for the eleventh Month, was Benaiah the Pirathonite, of the Children of Ephraim.*] Who is alſo there mentioned, *v.* 36. but here it is added of what Tribe he was.

Ver. 15. *The twelfth Captain for the twelfth Month, was Heldai the Netophathite, of Othniel*, &c.] He is called *Heled* in this Book, Chap. xi. 30. and *Heleb* in 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 29.

Ver. 16. *Furthermore, over the Tribes of Iſrael:*] Beſides the twelve great Captains before mentioned, who commanded, each of them, twenty and four thouſand Men; every Tribe had a Ruler, (who are called *the Princes of the Tribes of Iſrael*, ver. 22.) who had the chief Authority among them, under the King.

The Ruler of the Reubenites was Eliezer the Son of Zichri: of the Simeonites, Shephatiah the Son of Maachah.] He reckons up the Tribes in Order according to their Birth-right, by *Leah*.

Ver. 17. *Of the Levites, Haſhabiah the Son of Kemuel:*] He is mentioned before, xxvi. 30.

Of the Aaronites, Zadok.] They were not a diſtinct Tribe, but of a diſtinct Order, from the reſt of the *Levites*: And therefore had a peculiar Chief to preſide over them, *viz. Zadok*. Who (as *Bertram* thinks) had the chief Authority at the Tabernacle in *Gibeon*, as *Abiathar* had at *Jeruſalem*, where the Ark was.

Ver. 18. *Of Judah, Elihu one of the Brethren of David:*] Called *Eliab* in 1 *Sam.* xvi. 6.

Of Iſſachar, Omri the Son of Michael.] He was the fifth Son of *Leah*, and therefore is reckoned next to *Judah*, who was the fourth, *Gen.* xxx. 17, 18.

Ver. 19. *Of Zebulun, Iſhmaiah the Son of Obadiah:*] He was the next Son of *Leah*, *Gen.* xxx. 20.

Of Naphtali, Jerimoth the Son of Azriel.] Tho' *Dan* was the Firſt-born of *Bilhah*, (*Gen.* xxx. 6.) yet that Tribe is put laſt, and *Naphtali*, who was the next Son, put before him. For what Reaſon we cannot tell.

Ver. 20. *Of the Children of Ephraim, Hoſhea the Son of Azaziah: of the half Tribe of Manaſſeh, Joel the Son of Pedaiah.*] This is meant of that half Tribe, which had its Portion on this Side *Jordan*, near to *Ephraim*.

Ver. 21. *Of the half Tribe of Manaſſeh in Gilead,*] On the other Side *Jordan*, where the *Reubenites* and *Gadites* were.

Iddo the Son of Zechariah:] It doth not appear of what Family he was, but it is likely, one of that Tribe.

Of Benjamin, Jaaziel the Son of Abner.] It ſeems, the Family of *Abner*, who was the greateſt Man in the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, continued in high Authority after his Death.

Ver. 22. *Of Dan, Azareel the Son of Jeroham. Theſe were the Princes of the Tribes of Iſrael.*] That is, of thoſe Tribes before-mentioned. But *Gad* and *Aſher* are omitted, of which we can give no certain Account. Perhaps they were under the Government of the Ruler of ſome neighbouring Tribe. For *Aſher* dwelling in very narrow Bounds between *Naphtali* and *Zebulon*, might be under the Command of him that governed either of them: And *Gad*, ſome think, was comprehended under the *Reubenites*.

Ver. 23. *But David took not the Number of them*] That is, *of Iſrael*, whom he had ſpoken of before.

From twenty Years old and under:] But only of thoſe who were above the Age of twenty Years.

Becauſe the LORD had ſaid he would increaſe Iſrael like to the Stars of the Heavens.] This was the Reaſon, *Pellicanus* thinks, that God was ſo angry with *David* for numbring the People: Which he had promiſed ſhould be ſo many, that they ſhould not be numbred. Which Promiſe God would have to be believed, without attempting to prove the Truth of it. But theſe Words ſeem to me, to confute that Opinion: For they rather ſignify, that *David* forbore to number all the People, becauſe he would not queſtion that Promiſe, and contented himſelf with an Account of thoſe that were fit to go to War, xxi. 4. See my *Notes* upon 2 *Sam.* xxiv. 10.

Ver. 24. *Joab the Son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finiſhed not,*] For he did not number thoſe of *Levi* and *Benjamin*; as we read before in this Book, *c.* xxi. 6.

Becauſe there fell Wrath for it againſt Iſrael,] This ſeems to import, that before *Joab* had finiſhed his Account, the Plague began; which put a Stop to his Proceedings.

Neither was the Number put in the Account of the Chronicles of King David.] An Account of the

the Number as far as he went, was given by *Joab* to the King: But the King being ſenſible of his Error, would not have it recorded in the Publick Regiſters of the Kingdom, as other Things of daily Occurrence were. Yet the Memory of it is preſerved in theſe holy Books, to teach all Poſterity not to put their Truſt in the Arm of Fleſh.

Ver. 25. *And over the King's Treaſure was Azmaveth the Son of Adiel: and over the Store-houſes in the Fields, in the Cities, and in the Villages, and in the Caſtles, was Jehonathan the Son of Uzziah.*] The former of theſe was the principal Officer in the Exchequer, as we now ſpeak, who received the King's Money from the Under-Officers, and was accountable for it; and lived at *Jeruſalem*, where he iſſued it out, according to the King's Orders. But there was another in the Country out of *Jeruſalem*, who received the Tribute of all Kinds, which the People were to pay him: Which he laid up in Store-houſes, that were built in ſeveral Places for that Purpoſe.

Ver. 26. *And over them that did the Work of the Field for Tillage of the Ground, was Ezri the Son of Chelub.*] Beſide the Tribute paid by the People of Corn, Wine, Oil, *&c.* the King had Land of his own; where he kept Servants to till the Ground. And this Perſon was ſet over them, to ſee they were not idle, and that they were honeſt in gathering the Fruits of the Earth, and ſending them to the Store-houſes.

Ver. 27. *And over the Vineyards was Shimei the Ramathite:*] He looked after the Vine-dreſſers.

Over the Increaſe of the Vineyards, for the Wine-Cellars, was Zabdi the Shiphmite.] His Office was to ſee the Wine preſſed out of the Grapes, and carried into the Cellars; where it was laid up.

Ver. 28. *And over the Olive-trees, and the Sycomore-trees that were in the low Plains, was Baal-hanan the Gederite:*] This ſhews, that *David* was a great Husband, as we ſpeak, and had Ground proper for all Sort of Fruits; which was managed by his own Servants. For, as I have often obſerved, the greateſt Men in thoſe Times ſtudied the Improvement of their Ground of what Sort ſoever it was.

And over the Cellars of Oil was Joaſh.] It appears from many Places, that a great Part of their Revenue lay in Oil: Which requir'd great Care, as Wine did, in the looking after it.

Ver. 29. *And over the Herds that fed in Sharon, was Shitrai the Sharonite: and over the Herds that were in the Valleys, was Shaphat the Son of Adlai.*] He had great Store of Cattle alſo in his Paſtures, particularly in *Sharon*, which was a Place noted for its Fruitfulneſs, as we read in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xxxiii. 9. xxxv. 2. And ſo St. *Hierom* teſtifies, *Omnis Regio Saron*, &c. all the Region of *Saron*, about *Lidda*, *Joppa*, and *Jamnia*, was apt for feeding of Flocks. See *Iſaiah* lxv. 10. There was another *Saron* beſides this near the *Mediterranean*, which was in the Eaſt beyond *Jordan*, (as I obſerved upon *c.* v. 16. of this Book) where the *Gadites* inhabited, who abounded in Cattle: And therefore were planted by *Moſes* in this Region, and in *Baſhan*, which was another rich Country for Paſture. See *L'Empereur* upon *Bava Kama*. And therefore here *David*, it is likely, bred a great many Cattle, both in the Mountains, and in the Valleys; and had particular Officers, to look after them, they being very many. For here, as he obſerves out of *Maimonides*, there were great Numbers of Calves bred, which Women had the Care of, and were brought from hence to other Places, to be ſold.

Ver. 30. *Over the Camels alſo, was Obil the Iſhmeelite:*] An *Iſhmeelite* was the fitteſt Perſon to look after the Breed of Camels, becauſe that Country abounded with them, and they beſt underſtood their Nature. And this Perſon ſeems to have had his Name from his Office. For as *Ibil*, in *Arabick* ſignifies a *Camel*, ſo *Abal* and *Abil*, a Keeper of Camels: As *Bochart* notes in his *Hierozoicon*, P. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 2.

And over the Aſſes, was Jehdeiah the Meronothite.] This was a great Part of Men's Riches in old Times; for we find *Ana*, feeding his Father's Aſſes in *Gen.* xxxvi. 24. In which Book we find them reckoned among the Wealth of the antient Patriarchs. And the *Iſraelites* took no leſs than threeſcore and one thouſand of them from the *Midianites*, *Num.* xxxi. 34. And in this Book we read of two thouſand taken from the *Hagarens*, *c.* v. 21. And when the *Jews* returned out of the Captivity of *Babylon*, they were become ſo rich that they brought away with them ſix thouſand ſeven hundred and twenty Aſſes; as *Nehemiah* relates *c.* vii. 69.

Ver. 31. *And over the Flocks, was Jaziz the Hagarite. All theſe were the Rulers of the Subſtance which was King David's.*] The *Flocks* of Sheep, no doubt, were very numerous, but among all the Flocks and Herds there is no mention made of Swine, as *Bochartus* obſerves. Nor had the Patriarchs any, that we read of when mention is made of their Poſſeſſions. Nor had *Job* any in *Arabia*, tho' he had a vaſt Number of other Cattle. Nor did the *Iſraelites* ever take any of theſe, as Spoil from their Enemies. And therefore *Gadara*, where Swine were kept in *Judæa* (as we read in the Goſpel) was a *Greek* City, not a *Jewiſh*, as *Joſephus* tells us. See *Hierozoicon*, P. i. Lib. i. Cap. 51.

Ver. 32. *Alſo Jonathan, David's Uncle, was a Counſellor, a wiſe Man, and a Scribe:*] He was one of the Privy-Council; being a Man of great Wiſdom, and alſo ſkilful in the Law; for ſo the Word *Sopher* (which we render *Scribe*) ſignifies. A very learned Author thinks it ſignifies a *Secretary of State*, or rather a *Chancellor*.

And Jehiel the Son of Hachmoni, was with the King's Sons.] He alſo, no doubt, was a Man of great Underſtanding, being a Tutor, as we ſpeak, or Governor to the King's Sons.

Ver. 33. *And Ahithophel was the King's Counſellor, and Huſhai the Archite was the King's Companion.*] *Ahithophel* ſeems to have been Preſident of the Council: But *Huſhai* was his Favourite (being called *David*'s Friend) in whoſe Company he moſt delighted, and whom he truſted with his greateſt Secrets.

Ver. 34. *And after Ahithophel, was Jehoiada the Son of Benaiah, and Abiathar:*] After *Ahithophel* had made away himſelf, theſe two were the principal Counſellors; as *Kimchi* and other *Jewiſh* Doctors underſtand theſe Words. But

others think, the Meaning is, that next to him these two were accounted the ableſt Men that *David* adviſed withal: But *after him*, for he was eſteemed the Man of greateſt Prudence.

And the General of the King's Army was Joab.] The *Targum* hath a ſtrange Expoſition of this Verſe, which is this; When there was War to be made, they conſulted *Ahithophel*, and after that they aſked Counſel of *Urim* and *Thummim* by *Jehoiada*, the Head of the *Sanhedrin*; and by *Abiathar* the High-Prieſt: And ſo the *Cherethites* and *Pelethites* by the Authority of *Urim* and *Thummim*, went to fight under the Command of *Joab*, the General of the Army. In the Expoſition of which there are a great many fooliſh Deſcants, which I ſhall not mention.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AND David aſſembled all the Princes of Iſrael, the Princes of the Tribes,*] Theſe ſeeem to be the ſame, one being the Explication of the other: And they are thoſe Perſons mentioned *ver.* 16, 17, &c. of the foregoing *Chapter*.

And the Captains of the Companies that miniſtred to the King by Courſe,] That is, thoſe great Commanders, over four and twenty thouſand a-piece, mentioned in the beginning of the foregoing *Chapter*.

And the Captains over the thouſands, and Captains over the hundreds,] The Commanders of every one of thoſe thouſands, with the Centurions who commanded the ſeveral Companies, conſiſting of an hundred.

And the Stewards over all the Subſtance and Poſſeſſion of the King, and of his Sons,] Who are mentioned alſo in *ver.* 25, 26, &c. of the foregoing *Chapter*: And appear by this to have been conſiderable Perſons.

With the Officers,] Who were about his Perſon.

And with the mighty Men, and with all the valiant Men,] Thoſe who were eminent for their Services in War, of whom he had ſpoken in *Chap.* xi. and xii.

Unto Jeruſalem.] All theſe he called to attend him in the chief City of the Kingdom, that he might commend *Solomon* to them as his Succeſſor, and this Government which he had ſettled. See *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 150. This ſeems to have been a diſtinct Aſſembly from that mentioned *c.* xxiii. 2. being more general, and conſiſting of many Perſons, who were not then in ſuch Offices, as are here named.

Ver. 2. *Then David the King ſtood upon his Feet, and ſaid,*] He was ſitting in his Throne, I ſuppoſe, when they came in, but then ſtood up in Reſpect to ſo great an Aſſembly, and that he might be the better heard. When he firſt declared *Solomon* to be his Succeſſor, and cauſed him to be anointed, he lay upon his Bed, being very Palſick and Decrepit, as we read 1 *Kings* i. But intending now to have him anointed again, in the midſt of his Princes, and great Commanders (*c.* xxix. 22.) whom he could not aſſemble, when on a ſudden he commanded him to be anointed before: He rouſed up himſelf, and roſe from his Couch, and came out of his Chamber, and made Orations, and gave Advice for Things to come, as Dr. *Lightfoot* obſerves.

Hear me, my Brethren, and my People,] He calls the great Men his Brethren, both becauſe they had a Share in the Government with him, and to expreſs his Affection to them. 'Tis likely they were attended by ſome other Perſons, whom he calls *my People*.

I had in mine Heart to build an Houſe of Reſt for the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD,] A fixed Place, where the Ark might be ſettled, and not carried about, as it had been hitherto, 2 *Sam.* vii. 1.

And for the Footſtool of our God,] Here the Conjunction *and*, as our Mr. *Mede* obſerves, is *exegetical*, and the ſame with, *that is:* According to which Expreſſion the Prophet *Jeremiah* ſaith, *Lament.* ii. 1. that the LORD had caſt *down the Beauty of Iſrael, and remembred not his Footſtool*, (that is, the Ark of the Covenant, which was their Glory) *in the Day of his Anger*, Book I. p. 500. For the Divine Glory, ſitting upon the Wings of the Cherubims, over the Mercy Seat (*Pſal.* lxxx. 2.) his Feet, as we ſpeak after the Manner of Men, reſted upon the Ark. And therefore the *Targum* thus paraphraſes it, *The Footſtool of the Throne of Glory.* And thence it is ſometimes called, *The Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of Hoſts, who ſitteth upon the Cherubims*, 1 Sam. iv. 4.

And had made ready for the Building.] Laid up great Treaſures, which he deſigned to defray the Charges of the Building. See *chap.* xxii.

Ver. 3. *But God ſaid unto me,*] In the *Targum*, the *Memra*, WORD of the LORD.

Thou ſhalt not build an Houſe for my Name, becauſe thou haſt been a Man of War, and haſt ſhed Blood.] See my *Notes* upon *Chap.* xxii. 8. To which I ſhall here add, that Bloodſhed was accounted a Thing ſo heinous, that tho' one had killed another only accidentally, yet he was bound to flee for it to a City of Refuge, or elſe he might have been killed himſelf. And among the ancient *Greeks* (as *Petitus* ſhews in his Book of the *Attick Laws*, L. vii. p. 512.) he that killed another involuntarily, was baniſhed from his Country for a Year. But *David* is here forbidden to build God a Temple, merely becauſe he had been engaged in War and Bloodſhed, tho' it was on a pious Account. And thus alſo among the ancient *Greeks* (as *Grotius* obſerves) they ſtood in need of an Expiation, who without any Blame had defiled their Hands in Blood. And accordingly among the *Greek* Chriſtians there was a *Canon*, long obſerved in that Church, which kept Men from the Holy Communion for a Time, who had killed an Enemy in any War. See *L.* ii. *De Jure Belli, & Pacis*, cap. xxv. ſect. 9. But *Oſiander*, conſidering this Paſſage in *Grotius*, thinks, that in theſe Words, *David*'s Warring and Bloodſhed is not alledged, *ratione alicujus vitii*, &c. upon the Account of any Blemiſh, which hindred him from building a Houſe for God, but merely upon the Account of the vaſt Buſineſs wherein he was engaged: For being employed continually in warlike Actions, he was not at leiſure for ſuch a Building; which

was

was to be the Work of Peace and Quietneſs. *David* alſo is expreſly ſaid to have managed the Wars of the LORD, being but his Inſtrument to puniſh the Enemies of his People *Iſrael*. And therefore could not be blemiſhed by being thus employed to God, nor made uncapable thereby to build his Temple. For he gloried and triumphed in theſe Wars and in the Victories he got: For which he ſung Praiſe to God, *Pſalm* lx. Add to all this, that the Account which *Solomon* gives to *Hiram*, why his Father did not build God an Houſe, was that he was otherwiſe employed, 1 *Kings* v. 3. But I leave this to better Judgments.

Ver. 4. *Howbeit, the LORD God of Iſrael choſe me before all the Houſe of my Father, to be King over Iſrael for ever:*] See 1 *Sam.* xvi. 13. *Pſal.* lxxviii. 68.

For he hath choſen Judah to be the Ruler;] See *Gen.* xlix. 10.

And of the Houſe of Judah, the Houſe of my Father; and among the Sons of my Father, he liked me, to make me King over all Iſrael.] For till his Days it was not known out of what Family of *Judah* a King ſhould be choſen, from whom the MESSIAH ſhould come.

Ver. 5. *And of all my Sons (for the LORD hath given me many Sons) he hath choſen Solomon my Son, to ſit upon the Throne of the Kingdom of the LORD over Iſrael.*] For he was beloved of God from his Birth, 2 *Sam.* xii. 25. and plainly deſigned by God to be his Succeſſor, 2 *Sam.* vii. 13. and here in this Book, *c.* xxii. 9. So that *David* ſware he ſhould reign after him, and accordingly performed it, 1 *Kings* i. 17, 35. This he declares now to them all, when he was going out of the World: That they might reverence *Solomon* as a Perſon placed upon the Throne by Divine Appointment; and not out of any partial and fond Affection of his to him, preferred before his elder Brethren.

Ver. 6. *And he ſaid unto me, Solomon thy Son he ſhall build my Houſe, and my Courts: for I have choſen him to be my Son, and I will be his Father.*] See 2 *Sam.* vii. 13. and this Book, *c.* xxii. 9.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, I will eſtabliſh his Kingdom for ever, if he be conſtant to do my Commandments, and my Judgments, as at this Day.*] The laſt Words import, that hitherto *Solomon* was very towardly (as we ſpeak) and gave great Hopes he would continue ſtedfaſt in his Obedience to God, as his Father *David* had done.

Ver. 8. *Now therefore in the Sight of all Iſrael the Congregation of the LORD,*] Who were here preſent by their Repreſentatives: To whom he now addreſſes his Speech, that they might give the ſame Exhortation to their Neighbours.

And in the Audience of our God,] Who was preſent in all their publick Aſſemblies, as I have noted upon *Judges* xx. 1. See there.

Keep, and ſeek for all the Commandments of the LORD your God:] It is not enough to know the Will of God, if we do not *keep* it; that is, obſerve his Commands, and live in the Practice of our Duty. But that we may know it, it is neceſſary to *ſeek* it; that is, to enquire after it, and ſtudy the Laws of God. For no Man (as *Grotius* here obſerves) ſhall be excuſed by a ſupine Ignorance.

That ye may poſſeſs this good Land, and leave it for an Inheritance for your Children after you for ever.] It was in vain to expect the Continuance of God's Favour to them; who had brought them into this good Land, unleſs they continued ſtedfaſt in his Obedience. This was the only Way to Settlement in their Poſſeſſions.

Ver. 9. *And thou, Solomon my Son, know thou the God of thy Father,*] To know God is, in Scripture Language, to acknowledge and love him. As God is ſaid *to know the Way* of the Righteous; that is, to approve and love it, *Pſal.* i. *ult.* *Solomon* had the greater Reaſon to do this, becauſe God had been ſo very gracious to his Father *David*, and choſen him, before all his Brethren, to be his Succeſſor.

And ſerve him with a perfect Heart, and a willing Mind:] His Love was to be expreſſed by Obedience to God, and that intirely and chearfully: Out of Choice, not by Conſtraint; not to gain the good Opinion of Men, but the Favour of God. For hearty Piety, and not merely the outward Appearance of it, is the ſureſt Support of a Prince's Power and Authority: And will diſpoſe his Subjects to love and reverence him as ſincerely, as he doth God.

For the LORD ſearcheth all Hearts, and underſtandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts:] He preſſes him with two Arguments unto Sincerity in his Obedience. The firſt is in theſe Words; becauſe God cannot be deceived with external Services; for he looks into the Hearts, and diſcerns the moſt ſecret Motions there: Which cannot be hid from him, but is privy to every Thought, and to the very Beginning of them.

If thou ſeek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forſake him, he will caſt thee off for ever.] This is the other Argument; God is not tied to any Man, but upon Condition of his hearty Obedience. As he behaves himſelf towards God, ſo God will deal with him.

Ver. 10. *Take heed now, for the LORD hath choſen thee to build an Houſe for the Sanctuary:*] That is, for the Ark to dwell in, for that was the principal Furniture of the Sanctuary. The *Targum* thus expreſſes it, The MEMRA, *Word of the LORD hath choſen thee*, &c.

Be ſtrong and do it.] Being a young Man, he might be diſcouraged from undertaking ſo great Work: But he bids him go about it ſtrenuouſly; becauſe God had choſen him to do it.

Ver. 11. *Then David gave to Solomon his Son the Pattern of the Porch, and of the Houſes thereof,*] *Abarbinel* is very confident that the Word *Ulam*, which we tranſlate *Porch*, is a general Word uſed in this Place for the whole Houſe. The Deſcription of which *David* gave *Solomon*, with all the Apartments belonging to it: Eſpecially of the *Houſes thereof*, which were two: The Outward, called *the Holy Place*, and the Inward, called *the Holy of Holies:* Which were diſtinct Houſes, being ſeparated by a Partition: And accordingly the former is called *the geater Houſe*, 2 *Chron.* iii. 5. being much larger in its Dimenſions than the other. At the Entrance of which there was a Porch, the Model of which *David* gave him, as well as of the Houſes.

And

And of the Treaſuries thereof, and of the upper Chambers thereof, and of the inner Parlours thereof,] There were ſeveral Rooms againſt the Walls of the Houſe round about, as we read 1 *Kings* vi. 5. which are here called by ſeveral Names, according to the Uſe wherein they were employed. And the fore-named *Abarbinel* here obſerves, out of *Middoth* and *Tamid*, and other Books, that the Temple was built like an high Tower, reaching up to Heaven, there being three upper Stories one above another, and the firſt Story three times higher than that of *Moſes*, *viz.* thirty Cubits.

And of the Place of the Mercy-Seat.] Where that ſhould be placed, in the *Holy of Holies*.

Ver. 12. *And the Pattern of all that he had by the Spirit,*] in the *Hebrew*, *of all that he had in the Spirit with him:* That is *inſpired into him.* It being an Houſe for God to dwell in, it was fit that it ſhould not be of a mere Human, but of a Divine Contrivance, as the Tabernacle built by *Moſes* was. Therefore God ſuggeſted to *David* by his Spirit, how he would have it made in all the Parts before-mentioned, and in thoſe that follow: For thoſe Words refer to both. See *ver.* 19.

Of the Courts of the Houſe of the LORD, and of all the Chambers round about,] How large the Courts ſhould be, and how many, and what Rooms adjoining to them, was all ordered by a ſpecial Direction from God.

Of the Treaſuries of the Houſe of God, and of the Treaſuries of the dedicate things.] From the laſt Words moſt are of Opinion, it may be concluded, that in theſe Places all the Utenſils belonging to the Tabernacle which *Moſes* made, and the Tabernacle itſelf (which was no longer uſed after *Solomon*'s Temple was built) were laid up and preſerved. By which perhaps was ſignified, as *Conſtantine L' Empereur* conjectures (upon *Middoth*, p. 87.) that all the Ceremonies of *Moſes* ſhould one Day be decently laid aſide, and ſomething better come in their Room.

Ver. 13. *Alſo for the Courſes of the Prieſts, and the Levites, and for all the Work of the Service of the Houſe of the LORD, and for all the Veſſels of Service in the Houſe of the LORD.*] He diſpoſed of the Courſes of the *Prieſts* and *Levites* (before-mention'd) by the ſame Spirit, and how they ſhould be employed, and what Veſſels they ſhould uſe in God's Service.

Ver. 14. *He gave of Gold by weight, for Things of Gold, for all Inſtruments of all manner of Service; Silver alſo for all Inſtruments of Silver, by weight, for all Inſtruments of every kind of Service:*] He gave Materials alſo, in a juſt Proportion to the Inſtruments that were to be made, either of Gold or Silver.

Ver. 15. *Even the Weight for the Candleſticks of Gold, and for the Lamps of Gold, by weight for every Candleſtick, and for the Lamps thereof: and for the Candleſticks of Silver by weight, both for the Candleſtick, and alſo for the Lamps thereof, according to the Uſe of every Candleſtick.*] By this we learn that there were Candleſticks of Silver, as well as of Gold. The former of which were leſſer, to be carried in their Hands from place to place, as there was Occaſion. But the latter were fixed in the Sanctuary, and in *Solomon*'s Houſe were ten in Number, 1 *Kings* vi. 49.

Ver. 16. *And by weight he gave Gold for the Tables of Shew-bread for every Table, and likewiſe Silver for the Tables of Silver;*] There was but one Table for the Shew-bread: but there were ſeveral others attending upon it, whereon were ſet ſuch Veſſels as belonged to it. For as he made more Candleſticks than were in the Tabernacle; ſo, it appears by this, he alſo augmented the Tables, which were no leſs than ten, 2 *Chron* iv. 8.

Ver. 17. *Alſo pure Gold for the Fleſh-hooks, and the Bowls, and the Cups, and for the Golden Baſons he gave Gold by weight for every Baſon; and likewiſe Silver by Weight for every Baſon of Silver:*] Aſſigning ſuch a Portion of Gold or Silver to every Baſon, as would make it as large as he propoſed. Many of the *Jews* by the *Hebrew* Word *Kepuri* (which we tranſlate *Baſons*) underſtand *Spoons*, which had the Figure of Oxen and Lions on the Head of them; which they imagine was the Beginning of *Solomon*'s Offence. But the Word rather imports ſome Veſſel, wherein they received the Blood of the Sacrifice *of Expiation*.

Ver. 18. *And for the Altar of Incenſe, refined Gold by weight;*] It was covered with Gold, as the *Cherubims* were, 1 *Kings* vii. 49.

And Gold for the Pattern of the Chariot of the Cherubims, that ſpread out their Wings, and covered the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.] It ſeems *David* contriv'd theſe two Cherubims, beſides thoſe which *Moſes* had made. Of which ſee what I have noted upon 1 *Kings* vi. 23, 28. They are called the *Chariot*, becauſe God is ſaid not only *to ſit*, but *to ride upon the Cherubims*, (*Pſal.* xviii. 10.) as the LORD of Hoſts: And therefore they are deſcribed in *Ezekiel*, as having Wheels on which they ran. The other made by *Moſes* were moſt properly his Seat, but theſe repreſented him as filling the whole Houſe.

Ver. 19. *All this, ſaid David, the LORD made me to underſtand in writing by his Hand upon me, even of the Work of this Pattern.*] God made him underſtand all this ſo plainly and diſtinctly, as if it had been written on his Mind, as the ten Commandments were upon the Tables of Stone in the Mount. But ſome of the *Jews* think the meaning is, that God revealed theſe Things firſt to ſome of the Prophets, *Samuel* (iv. 22.) or *Nathan*, or *Gad*, who delivered all to *David* in Writing, as the Mind of God. However it was, God was pleaſed thus himſelf to give Inſtructions about the Structure of the Temple, and all belonging to it; that it might breed in the People's Mind a greater Reverence, when they came to worſhip him there: And, as *Joſeph de Voyſon* obſerves, the *Jews* in *Beracoth* ſay, that their Minds might be lifted up when they came to the Temple, from earthly Things, to Things ſpiritual and celeſtial.

Ver. 20. *And David ſaid to Solomon his Son, be ſtrong, and of good Courage, and do it:*] He repeats what he had ſaid before, *ver.* 10. the more to excite and encourage him to this Work, which was to do the Work of God.

Fear not, neither be diſmayed, for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee, he will not fail thee, nor forſake thee, until thou haſt finiſhed

nished all the Work for the Service of the House of the LORD.] He thought that he might possibly fear Disturbance from Enemies abroad, of which *David* had a great many: But he bids him be confident, he should not be disquieted in his Work; which should go on prosperously, by the Blessing of God, till it was finished. Of which he might be the more assured, if he reflected how God had blessed *David* himself all his Life long.

Ver. 21. *And behold, the Courses of the Priests, and the Levites, even they shall be with thee, for all the Service of the House of God, and there shall be with thee for all Manner of Workmanship every willing skilful Man for any Manner of Service: also the Princes and all the People will be wholly at thy Commandment.*] It is a probable Conjecture of *Conradus Pellicanus*, that he now presented *Solomon* with a List of all the Courses of God's Ministers, as God had directed him to establish them: Assuring him, that God would dispose them to be serviceable unto him in all that he had to do, for the carrying on of the Work. Which should have the Help and Assistance of all other skilful Persons, whom he would make willing to further it: And that he would make all the Princes and the People obedient to him in all things. This was one Reason, no doubt, of calling this Assembly together, that they might be engaged to be aiding to *Solomon*, in promoting so pious a Work.

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *Furthermore, David the King said unto all the Congregation, Solomon my Son, whom alone God hath chosen, is yet young and tender, and the Work is great: for the Palace is not for Man, but for the LORD God.*] He stirs them up to the Assistance of his Son, by these Considerations, That he was a Person chosen by God, not by him, for this Work: And yet he needed their Help, because he was but a Youth, (see 1 *Kings* iii. 7.) and the Work itself was to be very magnificent, suitable to the Majesty that was to dwell therein, *viz.* the LORD himself; who dwells not (as the Apostle speaks) *in Temples made with Hands:* But was present there by a glorious Light, which represented his Majesty.

Ver. 2. *Now I have prepared with all my Might, for the House of my God, the Gold for Things to be made of Gold, and the Silver for Things of Silver, and the Brass for Things of Brass, the Iron for Things of Iron, and Wood for Things of Wood; Onyx Stones, and Stones to be set, glistering Stones, and of divers Colours, and all Manner of precious Stones, and Marble Stones in abundance.*] We read of his great Preparation for this Building before, *c.* xxii. 14, *&c.* only nothing is said there concerning *precious Stones:* The Use of which in the Ornament of any Part of the Temple, is not known. *Ludolphus* speaking of the Word *Phuc*, which we translated *glistering*, saith, that as *David* provided all Things for the Fabrick of the Temple, so he provided for the Clothing of the Priests with rich Garments, and also with such Things as were good for bodily Health, as this was, which was not only κοσμητικόν, for Ornament, but θεραπευτικόν, for Medicine and Preservation of Health. But perhaps *Phuc* being famous among those things which Women used for setting off their Beauty, it may possibly here be a metaphorical Word, for all such Stones as may set off the Building. See his *Commentary* upon the *Æthiopick History*, Lib. i. Cap. 7. N. 51.

Ver. 3. *Moreover, because I have set my Affection to the House of my God, I have of mine own proper Good, of Gold and Silver, which I have given to the House of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy House.*] Besides what he had devoted and dedicated to this Use, he gave, out of what remained for his own Occasions, a further Sum for the Building of the House; which is mentioned in the next Verse.

Ver. 4. *Even three thousand Talents of Gold, of the Gold of Ophir,*] The Gold of *Ophir* here mentioned, was that which came out of *Arabia*; where *Bochartus* hath proved, there was a Country of that Name abounding with Gold. For in *David*'s Time the *Ophir* of *India* was not known, *Solomon* being the first that attempted a long Voyage thither. So we are to understand the Word *Ophir* in the Book of *Job*, xxii. 24. xxviii. 16. For in his Time they had not learned to traffick into those far distant Countries, where the other *Ophir* in *India* was. See my *Notes* upon 1 *Kings* ix. 18. This Gold here mentioned, was of a purer Sort than that in *c.* xxii. 14. which was coarser than the Gold of *Ophir*.

And seven thousand Talents of refined Silver, to overlay the Walls of the Houses withal.] There are two Things, which Dr. *Lightfoot* hath remarked in these two Verses. One is, that it is said, this Preparation was above what he had prepared for the holy House, and yet he saith he had prepared it for the House of God. The other is, That mention is made here of Silver to overlay the House withal: Whereas it is evident, that within the House itself, all the Overlaying was of Gold. Therefore it is thus to be understood, That besides the Store of Gold that *David* had provided for the gilding of the House, both in the holy and most holy Place; he had also laid by a Stock both of Gold and Silver, to gild the Chambers over the Porch, (for there were divers Upper-Chambers, the Height of it being an hundred and twenty Cubits) and to beautify the Side-Chambers, and the other Rooms that were about the Courts. All this Gold and Silver amounted to such a vast Sum of our Money, that it is not easy to give an Account of it. See *Calvisius ad Annum Mundi* 2933.

Ver. 5. *The Gold for Things of Gold, and the Silver for Things of Silver, and for all Manner of Work to be made by the Hands of Artificers.*] That there might be enough to pay all sort of Workmen their Wages, as well as to provide them Materials to work withal.

And who then is willing to consecrate his Service this Day unto the LORD?] The *Hebrew* Phrase *to fill his Hand* (as it is in the Margin) signifies to make an Offering: Unto which he excites them by his Example, as a thing which would be very grateful unto God.

Ver. 6. *Then the Chief of the Fathers and Princes of the Tribes of Israel, and the Captains of*

of thouſands, and of hundreds, with the Rulers over the King's Work, offered willingly.] All thoſe great Men, mentioned *Chapter* xxvii. made their cheerful Contributions.

Ver. 7. *And gave for the Service of the Houſe of God, of Gold five thouſand Talents, and ten thouſand Drams; and of Silver ten thouſand Talents; and of Braſs, eighteen thouſand Talents; and one hundred thouſand Talents of Iron.*] What every particular Perſon gave is not here recorded: But the Whole amounted to theſe Sums, which was very great.

Ver. 8. *And they with whom precious Stones were found, gave them to the Treaſure of the Houſe of the LORD, by the Hand of Jehiel the Gerſhonite.*] For he and his Sons were Keepers of the Treaſure of God's Houſe, *c.* xxvi. 21, 22. and were appointed to receive ſuch Offerings.

Ver. 9. *Then the People rejoyced, for that they offered willingly,*] They that made the Offering rejoyced; for they did it with a good Will, and not by Conſtraint.

Becauſe with perfect Heart they offered willingly to the LORD:] This is the Virtue which St. *Paul* calls ἁπλότης, *Singleneſs of Heart:* Which hath Reſpect purely to the Service of God, the Honour of Religion, and the Good of his Church, 2 *Corinth.* viii. 2. ix. 11, 13.

And David the King alſo rejoyced with great Joy.] It was a ſingular Comfort to him in his old Age, to ſee the People ſo well diſpoſed, and his Exhortation ſo effectual upon their Heart: Which gave him a good Hope, this Work would not fail to be ſpeedily accompliſhed.

Ver. 10. *Wherefore David bleſſed the LORD before all the Congregation: and David ſaid, Bleſſed be thou, LORD God of Iſrael our Father, for ever and ever.*] All this he aſcribed to the Grace of God; whom he therefore bleſſed and praiſed, for giving them ſuch an Heart.

Ver. 11. *Thine, O LORD, is the Greatneſs, and the Power, and the Glory, and the Victory, and the Majeſty: for all that is in the Heaven and in the Earth, is thine, thine is the Kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as Head above all.*] This is a moſt noble Declaration of the Senſe he had of the Divine Excellencies and Perfections, with a thankful Acknowledgment of his Immenſity, Power, Goodneſs, Eternity, and Majeſty, which are the Properties or Attributes of God. The *Targum*, and the *Talmudiſts*, apply theſe to the wonderful Works of God, in this Manner, *Thine, O LORD, is the Greatneſs*, for thou createdſt the World; *and the Power*, for thou broughteſt our Fathers out of *Egypt*, and carriedſt them thro' the *Red Sea*; and revealedſt thyſelf in *Glory* upon Mount *Sinai*, to give the Law to thy People; and obtainedſt *Victory* over *Amalek*, *Sion*, *Og*, and the *Canaanites*; and madeſt the Sun and the Moon ſtand ſtill, *by the Spirit of thy Glory*, till thy People were vindicated of their Enemies. For all Things both in Heaven and in Earth, are the Work of thy Hands; thou ſupporteſt and ruleſt all Things; and thou art exalted above all the Angels in Heaven, as well as all the Kings upon Earth.

Ver. 12. *Both Riches and Honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all, and in thine Hand is Power and Might, and in thine Hand it is to make great, and to give Strength unto all.*] The *Targum* thus paraphraſes it; The Riches of the Wealthy, and the Glory of Kings and Dominions is given them by thee; thou ruleſt over all, and they are in thy Power: Who art able to multiply, and ſtrengthen all Things; that is, to increaſe thoſe to great Numbers who are diminiſhed, and to ſtrengthen thoſe who are feeble and weak.

Ver. 13. *Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praiſe thy glorious Name.*

Ver. 14. *But who am I, and what is my People, that we ſhould be able to offer ſo willingly after this ſort?*] In the *Targum* it is thus paraphraſed, *who haſt given ſuch Plenty, that we are able to offer theſe Gifts.* He ſhould have added, and alſo given us an Heart to part with them for thy Service.

For all Things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.] We only return to thee what thine own Hand hath bleſſed us withal, as the *Targum* expreſſes it. And ſo the ancient Chriſtians were wont to ſay at their Offertory, τὰ σὰ ἀπὸ τῶν σῶν, *thine from thine.* That is, thy own Goods from thy own People. In like Manner we ought to acknowledge God in all ſpiritual things; referring every good Thought, good Purpoſe, good Work, to his Divine Grace, from whom we receive it: Beſeeching him, as *David* doth here in this Prayer, (*v.* 18.) to preſerve it in us.

Ver. 15. *For we are Strangers before thee, and Sojourners, as were all our Fathers: our Days on the Earth are as a Shadow, and there is none abiding.*] He acknowledges that there were not Proprietors of that good Land wherein they dwelt but only his Tenants; who held all they had of him: And that but a very ſhort Term; after which they muſt leave all as their Fathers had done. The Words may be thus paraphraſed in ſhort, *We have but the Uſe of theſe Things for a little while, and ſo have parted with no great Matter unto thee.* Thoſe Words, *as a Shadow*, the *Targum* thus paraphraſes. *As the Shadow of a Bird which flieth through the Air, ſo are our Days upon the Earth.* That is, ſoon gone, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks.

Ver. 16. *O LORD our God, all this Store that we have prepared, to build thee an Houſe for thine holy Name, cometh of thine Hand, and is all thine own.*] He could not often enough repeat his Senſe of this, that they had given him nothing but what was his own; which he had moſt bountifully beſtowed on them.

Ver. 17. *I know alſo, my God, that thou trieſt the Heart, and haſt Pleaſure in Uprightneſs. As for me, in the Uprightneſs of mine Heart I have willingly offered all theſe Things.*] But the higheſt Satisfaction was, that God had beſtowed upon him an Heart, to do what he had done willingly, with a ſincere Reſpect to the Service of God, and not out of vain Glory. For the Truth of which he appeals to God himſelf, who could not be deceived with falſe Shews and Pretences.

And now have I ſeen with Joy, thy People which are preſent here, to offer willingly unto thee.] It was a great additional Comfort to him, that God had given ſuch a Heart unto his People.

Ver. 18. *O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel our Father, keep this for ever in the Imagination of the Thoughts of the Heart of thy People, and prepare their Heart unto thee.*] He could not desire a greater Blessing for them, than that he who had given them such a pious Heart, would preserve them in the same good Disposition: And confirm and establish them therein. So the last Words are better translated in the Margin, *establish their Heart unto thee.* Which the *Targum* paraphrases, *dispose their Heart to fear thee.*

Ver. 19. *And give unto Solomon my Son a perfect Heart to keep thy Commandments, thy Testimonies, and thy Statutes, and to do all these Things, and to build the Palace for the which I have made Provision.*] To have a due Respect to all God's Precepts (in the Observation of every one of which, *Perfectness of Heart* consists) he knew would be the best Security for the performing what *David* designed. For then he would not be disobedient to his Father's dying Words.

Ver. 20. *And David said to all the Congregation, Now bless the LORD your God. And all the Congregation blessed the LORD God of their Fathers, and bowed down their Heads, and worshipped the LORD and the King.*] They worshipped both with the same Gesture, but with a different Mind; God with Religious Worship, the King with Civil: Giving God Thanks for all his Benefits, and thanking the King for all the Care he had taken, during his Reign, for their Prosperity. But some think, this Worship was not paid to *David*, but to *Solomon*; it being the Manner thus to acknowledge the King, when he was inthroned. So they bowed their Knees to our Saviour, in Mockery of him, as a pretended King.

Ver. 21. *And they sacrificed Sacrifices unto the LORD, and offered Burnt-offerings unto the LORD on the Morrow after that Day,*] For the Ark was now at *Jerusalem*, where this great Congregation was assembled, *c.* xxviii. 1. and therefore they offered Peace-offerings and Burnt-offerings to God in that Place, on the Morrow after their Meeting: For there was not time to do it on that Day, when the foregoing Things were done.

Even a thousand Bullocks, a thousand Rams, and a thousand Lambs, with their Drink-offerings and Sacrifices in Abundance for all Israel:] That is, together with the numerous Burnt-offerings, a great many Peace-offerings (which are here meant by *Sacrifices*) sufficient for the Entertainment of all the *Israelites*, who were there present, to feast upon; as the Manner was, and as it follows in the next Verse.

Ver. 22. *And did eat and drink before the LORD on that Day with great Gladness,*] For the greatest Part of Peace-offerings were given to the Persons that offered them, to entertain their Friends withal, as hath been often observed. And they are said to eat and drink *before the LORD*, because it was a sacred Feast, kept before the Ark at *Jerusalem*, the Place which God had chosen, according to the Law, *Deut.* xii. 11, *&c.*

And they made Solomon the Son of David King the second time,] This is supposed to have been done after *David*'s Death, when *Solomon* was anointed for himself, as reigning *pleno Jure*, in Subjection to none: As he was anointed the first time by *David*'s Command. But there are great Men of another Opinion; that he was twice anointed while *David* lived: *First*, in the Presence of a few of *David*'s Servants, as we read 1 *Kings* i. and *now*, in the Presence of all the great Men of *Israel*, the Princes of the Tribes, Captains of Thousands and Hundreds. See *Bertram de Repub. Jud.* p. 130, 131. And indeed, we are led to this by the Connexion with the foregoing Words: For the Persons who now made him King the second time, were those before-mentioned, who sacrificed and feasted thereupon with great Joy: After *David*'s long Speech to them. Dr. *Lightfoot* indeed observes, that there is mention three times of *Solomon*'s being made King: Twice in this Book, *c.* xxiii. 1. and here in this Place: And in 1 *Kings* i. So that there may be a Question made, Whether he was made King three times, or only twice. But this Place seems to settle the Doubt; for when upon the Aspiring of *Adonijah*, he was anointed, it was the first time that *David* shewed who should succeed him. See 1 *Kings* i. 21, 27. and that must be concurrent, or the same with that making him King mentioned in this Book, *c.* xxiii. 1. and this anointing in the midst of the Princes and great Commanders, was the second time. *Abarbinel* is of the same Opinion, that he was anointed at first before a few; and now more publickly before the whole Nation.

And anointed him unto the LORD to be the chief Governor,] After the Death of *David*, who perhaps now resigned the Government of the Kingdom to him, finding he had not long to live.

And Zadok to be Priest.] This hath inclined many to think the anointing forementioned was after the Death of *David:* Because *Abiathar* was not put out of his Office till the beginning of *Solomon*'s Reign. But I see no Reason why we may not think he was anointed to be Priest, as *Solomon* was to be King in *David*'s Life-time: Tho' he was not actually put into the Office till after he was dead, when *Abiathar* was thrust out. It was necessary he should be anointed, because the Succession to the High-Priesthood, in the Line of *Eleazar*, had been long interrupted; and *Abiathar* of the Line of *Ithamar* was still alive. This Reason the *Jews* give why he was anointed; which was not necessary, they say, but in this Case: It being sufficient otherwise, only to cloath him with the Priestly Vestments. But see *Selden de Succes. in Pontif.* L. ii. cap. 9. who will incline one to be of another Opinion.

Ver. 23. *Then Solomon sat on the Throne of the LORD*] So the Throne of this Kingdom is called, because this was God's Land, and *Israel* his People, over whom he still remained their King: And *Solomon* reigned over them, not by Inheritance, but by his special Appointment. The *Targum* thus expresses it, *He sat upon the Royal Throne, according to the Word of the MEMRA*, WORD of the LORD.

As King instead of David his Father, and prospered, and all Israel obeyed him.] From the beginning of his Reign, his People were all o-

bedient to him: Whereas, it was a long Time before *Saul* could be ſettled on his Throne; and it was longer before all *Iſrael* ſubmitted to *David*.

Ver. 24. *And all the Princes and the mighty Men,*] All the Soldiery, as well as the Heads of the Tribes, and the great Commanders.

And all the Sons likewiſe of King David] Who were then alive.

Submitted themſelves unto Solomon the King.] Sware Allegiance to him. For ſo the *Hebrew* Phraſe ſignifies, *they gave the Hand under Solomon*. For putting the Hand under the Knee, or the Thigh of a Perſon, was a Token of Subjection to him: And was anciently uſed, when they ſolemnly promiſed any thing to a Superior, by an Oath, *Gen.* xxiv. 2. *c.* xlvii. 29. Which Cuſtom, if it did not continue in Uſe in *Solomon*'s Days, yet that which was ſignified by it, was expreſſed in the ancient Phraſe.

Ver. 25. *And the LORD magnified Solomon exceedingly in the Sight of all Iſrael, and beſtowed upon him ſuch Royal Majeſty, as had not been on any King before him in Iſrael.*] Which appears from the foregoing Books, which ſhew, that neither *David*, nor *Saul*, nor any of the *Judges*, (who governed before them) lived in ſuch Splendor, as was in the Court of *Solomon*.

Ver. 26. *Thus David the Son of Jeſſe reigned over all Iſrael.*] That is, this is a brief Account of what *David* did during his Reign, eſpecially in the latter End of it.

Ver. 27. *And the Time that he reigned over Iſrael, was forty Years; ſeven Years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three Years reigned he in Jeruſalem.*] See 2 *Sam.* v. 5.

Ver. 28. *And he died in a good old Age, full of Days, Riches, and Honour:*] Abundantly ſatisfied, that he had lived long enough, in as great Plenty and Glory as he could deſire.

And Solomon his Son reigned in his ſtead.] Having this particular Satisfaction, to ſee his Son ſit on his Throne, likely to reign in greater Glory than he had done. This was the LORD's doing, who diſpoſes the Hearts of all the great Men, and his elder Brethren, and the whole Kingdom to ſubmit to him, who was but a young Man.

Ver. 29. *Now the Acts of David the King firſt and laſt,*] A larger Account of all that he did, from the Beginning to the End of his Reign.

Behold, they are written in the Book of Samuel the Seer, and in the Book of Nathan the Prophet, and in the Book of Gad the Seer.] Here are three diſtinct Titles given to thoſe three Perſons: *Samuel* being called *Roeh*, and *Nathan* is called *Nabi*, and *Gad* is called *Choſeh*. But whether they have diſtinct Significations, denoting ſeveral Ways of receiving Divine Inſpirations, or ſeveral Degrees of it, I am not able to determine. But this we may certainly affirm, with *Theodoret* (in his Preface to the Book of the *Kings*) that the Prophets beſides the Edition of their Prophecies, publiſhed alſo very frequently the Hiſtory of their own Times. And *Samuel* began to write the Life of *David*, which *Nathan* and *Gad* finiſhed: Out of which theſe Things here recorded were extracted.

Ver. 30. *With all his Reign and his Might,*] That is, how he governed his People, and how he warred with their Enemies; and got glorious Victories over them: With all the reſt that he did, both as a Prophet, and as a King.

And the Times that went over him, and over Iſrael,] All the Troubles which he endured, and which befel the People of *Iſrael* (which are called *Times* in *Pſalm* xxx. 16.) or, more ſimply the meaning may be, all the Revolutions that were in publick Affairs, in his Days.

And over all the Kingdoms of the Countries.] That is, the neighbouring Countries, ſuch as the *Philiſtines*, *Moab*, *Amalek*, *Syria*, *Damaſcus*, the *Ammonites*, &c. The Loſs of which Hiſtory is very much bewailed, but God knows better than we, what was fit to be preſerved for the Uſe and Benefit of his Church.

A COM-

J. Cole scalp.

6

A COMMENTARY UPON THE SECOND BOOK OF THE *CHRONICLES.*

AS there are ſome Things here omitted, which are recorded in the firſt Book of the *Kings:* So there are ſeveral Things contain'd in this Book, of which no mention is made there; particularly in the Hiſtory of *Jehoſhaphat*, and *Hezekiah.* And many other Things there mentioned, are here more fully and clearly explained; as will be obſerved in the Acts of *Abijah*, *Aſa*, *Joaſh*, and other Kings of *Judah:* Upon which Account St. *Hierom* ſaith of this Book, it is ſuch, and of ſo great Uſe, that he, who without it, will pretend to the Underſtanding of the Prophets, will expoſe himſelf to Scorn.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *AND Solomon the Son of David was ſtrengthened in his Kingdom,*] After the Death of *Adonijah* and *Joab*, he was confirmed in his Authority and Government.

And the LORD his God was with him, and magnified him exceedingly.] In the *Targum* it is paraphraſed, *The WORD of the LORD was his Helper, and raiſed him to a great Height of Glory.*

Ver. 2. *Then Solomon ſpake unto all Iſrael, to the Captains of Thouſands, and of Hundreds, and to the Judges, and to every Governor in all Iſrael, the Chief of the Fathers.*] Before that great Aſſembly, mentioned in the foregoing *Chapter*, in the Midſt of which he was anointed, went home, *Solomon* diſcourſed with them about his Intentions of going to *Gibeon* to worſhip God, by offering a great Sacrifice, and deſired them to accompany him.

Ver. 3. *So Solomon and all the Congregation with him, went to the High Place that was at Gibeon,*] This Verſe ſhews, that this was the Thing about which he ſpake unto them. See 1 *Kings* iii. 4.

For there was the Tabernacle of the Congregation of God, which Moſes the Servant of the

LORD had made in the Wilderneſs.] But it was there without the Ark, which was in the City of *David*, while the Tabernacle was in *Gibeon*. How theſe came to be ſeparated, ſo that the Ark was without the Tabernacle and its Veſſels; and the Veſſels, and the Altar with the Tabernacle without the Seat of the Glory of God, is not eaſy to be reſolved. *Conradus Pellicanus* ſuppoſes, that even then, in thoſe Days, God would have them to know, he did not regard the ceremonious Worſhip, when the People were under the Government and Inſtruction of ſuch Men as *Samuel* and *David*: And they were free from Idolatry. Then the LORD did not exact ſo ſtrictly the legal Services, as he did in Times of Peace and Tranquillity, when they were moſt neceſſary for the People; leſt, after their Cuſtom, when they lived in Eaſe and Proſperity, they ſhould fall into Superſtition, and admire the Rites of the *Gentiles*. And with ſuch Queſtions as theſe he thinks the *Jews* may be very ſtrongly urged, How came it to paſs that in the Days of *Samuel* and *David*, the legal Worſhip was not obſerved more preciſely? How came the Ark to be ſeparated from the Altars, which were made for the Ark, and not the contrary? Who diſpenſed with *David* to build another Tabernacle for the Ark, and neglect that built by *Moſes?* And how came *Solomon* to ſacrifice in another Place, than that which the LORD had choſen?

Ver. 4. *But the Ark of God had David brought up from Kirjath-jearim, to the Place which David had prepared for it: for he had pitched a Tent for it at Jeruſalem.*] See 2 *Sam.* vi. 2, 17.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, the brazen Altar that Bezaleel the Son of Uri, the Son of Hur, had made, he put before the Tabernacle of the LORD:*] One would think that this Altar did not ſtand in its right Place, till *Solomon* ſet it where it uſed to ſtand: But the Words may be tranſlated as in the Margin, *was there* before the Tabernacle.

And Solomon and the Congregation ſought unto it.] I think this is better tranſlated by *Victorinus Strigelius, Solomon and the Congregation were wont to frequent it*; with Sacrifices by which they ſought the Favour of God.

Ver. 6. *And Solomon went up thither to the brazen Altar before the LORD, which was at the Tabernacle of the Congregation,*] This is ſaid to be *before the LORD*, tho' the Ark was not there, becauſe God was pleaſed graciouſly to accept the Sacrifices offered before the Place, where he was wont to dwell, tho' wanting the Token of his glorious Preſence.

And offered a thouſand Burnt-offerings upon it.] He offered them by the Miniſtry of the Prieſts. And Burnt-offerings here ſignifies (as *Pellicanus* with great Reaſon thinks) the Sacrifice of Peace-offerings, the general Name being put for the ſpecial. For it is not reaſonable to think, a thouſand Offerings were wholly burnt upon the Altar: But in all Probability he made a Feaſt for all that were there preſent, as had been done when this great Aſſembly offered ſo freely at his Inauguration, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 22.

Ver. 7. *In that Night did God appear to Solomon,*] Immediately after the Offering of theſe Sacrifices.

And ſaid unto him, Aſk what I ſhall give thee.] See 1 *Kings* iii. 5. This was a Declaration that he accepted his Prayers which accompanied thoſe Sacrifices, and would grant whatſoever he deſired.

Ver. 8. *And Solomon ſaid unto God, Thou haſt ſhewed great Mercy unto David my Father, and haſt made me to reign in his Stead.*] An admirable Example unto thoſe who make Petitions unto God, that they ſhould in the firſt Place thank him for the great Benefits they have received, 1 *Kings* iii. 6.

Ver. 9. *Now, O LORD God, let thy Promiſe unto David my Father be eſtabliſhed:* Viz.] That God would be a Father to him, and make him his Son, 2 *Sam.* vii. 14.

For thou haſt made me King over a People, like the Duſt of the Earth in Multitude.] 1 *Kings* iii. 8.

Ver. 10. *Give me now Wiſdom and Knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this People:*] This is a proverbial Speech, for governing the People, both at Home and Abroad, in Peace and in War. See *Num.* xxvii. 17. *Deut.* xxxi. 2.

For who can judge this thy People, that is ſo great?] Among ſuch a numerous People, he knew there would be ſo many, and ſo various and many Times difficult Cauſes brought before him, that it would be impoſſible to hear them and judge aright, without a Divine Spirit. See upon 1 *Kings* iii. 9.

Ver. 11. *And God ſaid to Solomon, Becauſe this was in thine Heart, and thou haſt not aſked Riches, Wealth or Honour, nor the Life of thine Enemies neither yet haſt aſked long Life, but haſt aſked Wiſdom and Knowledge for thy ſelf, that thou mayeſt judge my People, over whom I have made thee King:*

Ver. 12. *Wiſdom and Knowledge is granted unto thee, and I will give thee Riches, and Wealth, and Honour, ſuch as none of the Kings have had that have been before thee, neither ſhall there any after thee have the like.*] Theſe two *Verſes* have been ſufficiently explained in the ſame *Chapter*, 1 *Kings* iii. 11, 12, 13. only it may be obſerv'd he doth not ſay he would give him *the Life of his Enemies*, becauſe he was to be a peaceable King.

Ver. 13. *Then Solomon came from his Journey to the High Place that was at Gibeon, to Jeruſalem, from before the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and reigned over Iſrael.*] We put in theſe Words, *from his Journey*, which was not needful, for the Words may be tranſlated exactly, *Solomon came from the High Place*, &c. and ſo it follows, *from before the Tabernacle.* For the Particle *Lamed* ſignifies not only *to* but *from.* So, *R. Jonas*, whom *Kimchi* calls a famous Grammarian, ſaith that it is here put for *Mem*, i. e. *from.* But *Kimchi* himſelf is Author of our Tranſlation, who is followed by *Junius* and *Tremellius*, and others, but comes to the ſame Purpoſe.

Ver. 14. *And Solomon gathered Chariots and Horſemen: and he had a thouſand and four hundred Chariots, and twelve thouſand Horſemen,*] See upon 1 *Kings* x. 26.

Which

Which he placed in the Chariot-Cities, and with the King at Jeruſalem.] The *Chariot-Cities* were ſuch wherein there was good Paſturage for the Horſes.

Ver. 15. *And the King made Silver and Gold at Jeruſalem as plenteous as Stones, and Cedar-trees made he as the Sycomore-trees that are in the Vale for Abundance.*] See there, *v.* 27.

Ver. 16. *And Solomon had Horſes brought out of Egypt, and Linen Yarn: the King's Merchants received the Linen Yarn at a Price.*

Ver. 17. *And they fetcht up, and brought forth out of Egypt a Chariot for ſix hundred Shekels of Silver, and an Horſe for an hundred and fifty: and ſo brought they out Horſes for all the Kings of the Hittites, and for the Kings of Syria, by their Means.*] Theſe two Verſes are there alſo explained. See 1 *Kings* x. 28, 29. From this Place the famous *Bochartus* gathers, that the Chariots of *Egypt* in *Solomon*'s Time were drawn by four Horſes: For the Tribute which was exacted for a Chariot, was four Times as much as was paid for a ſingle Horſe. See his *Hierozoicon*, P. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 9.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND Solomon determined to build the Houſe for the Name of the LORD,*] Wherein the LORD ſhould be worſhipped: As his Father *David* had deſigned and directed.

And an Houſe for his Kingdom.] A Royal Palace for himſelf, and thoſe who ſhould ſucceed him. But he finiſhed God's Houſe before he began his own.

Ver. 2. *And Solomon told out threeſcore and ten thouſand Men to bear Burdens, and fourſcore thouſand to hew in the Mountain, and three thouſand and ſix hundred to overſee them.*] Here are three hundred more than are mentioned in the Book of the *Kings:* Concerning which Difference, ſee what I have noted there, (*v.* 13.) and need not be repeated here.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon ſent to Huram the King of Tyre, ſaying, As thou didſt deal with David my Father, and didſt ſend him Cedars to build him an Houſe to dwell therein, even ſo deal with me.*] *Hiram* (as he is called in the Book of the *Kings*) firſt ſent to him, to congratulate his Succeſſion to the Throne, and then *Solomon* ſent to him: As I have noted there. See 1 *Kings* v. 1.

Ver. 4. *Behold, I build an Houſe to the Name of the LORD my God,*] That is, he purpoſed to build, as it is expreſſed 1 *Kings* v. 5. and he had alſo diſpoſed things ſo, that he was ready to go about it.

To dedicate it to him,] For his Worſhip and Service.

And to burn before him ſweet Incenſe, and for the continual Shew-Bread,] So this Bread is called in *Numb.* iv. 7. becauſe it ſtood before the LORD continually, being renewed every Week, as we read *Exod.* xxv. 30. and other Places.

And for the Burnt-offerings Morning and Evening, on the Sabbaths, and on the new Moons, and on the ſolemn Feaſts of the LORD our God:] He reckons up ſeveral Parts of the Divine Service, which was there to be performed: *Hiram*, as I have elſewhere obſerved, being no Stranger to the God of *Iſrael.*

This is an Ordinance for ever to Iſrael.] Which God himſelf had appointed.

Ver. 5. *And the Houſe which I build is great: for great is our God above all Gods.*] It was no large Structure which he built, but very magnificent; ſuitable to the glorious Majeſty of him that dwelt therein.

Ver. 6. *But who is able to build him an Houſe, ſeeing the Heaven, and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain him?*] He would not have *Hiram* imagine, that he had ſuch low Notions of God, as to think he could be confined and comprehended in any Houſe, tho' ever ſo large, being immenſe beyond all Conception.

Who am I then that I ſhould build him an Houſe, ſave only to burn Sacrifice before him?] It would have been an high Preſumption then, for him, or any Man elſe, to build him an Houſe, for any other End, but only for his Worſhippers to aſſemble there; he being pleaſed in a ſpecial Manner to be preſent in that Place. The *Targum* thus paraphraſes this, *The Heavens are the Throne of his Glory, the Earth is his Footſtool, the Abyſs, and all People are ſupported by the Spirit of his WORD.* Which carries in it a Notion which the Author had of the ever-bleſſed Trinity.

Ver. 7. *Send me now, therefore, a Man cunning to work in Gold, and in Silver, and in Braſs, and in Iron, and in Purple, and Crimſon, and Blue, and that can ſkill to grave with the cunning Men that are with me in Judah and in Jeruſalem, whom David my Father did provide.*] There were admirable Artiſts in all theſe Works, at *Tyre:* Whom he deſired to be ſent to him; that they might aſſiſt thoſe whom *David* had provided, but were not ſo ſkilful as thoſe of *Tyre.*

Ver. 8. *Send me alſo Cedar-trees, Fir-trees, and Algum-trees out of Lebanon:*] Or, *Almug-trees*, concerning which, ſee what I have noted upon 1 *Kings* x. 11. To which may be added, that *Beckius* hath lately conjectur'd, This was a Tree brought originally out of *Arabia*, as the Prefix *al* notes. And then it was brought out of that *Ophir* which was in *Arabia*, and planted in *Lebanon.* For there, this Place tells us, theſe Trees grew, as well as Cedars and Firs.

(For I know, that thy Servants can ſkill to cut Timber in Lebanon) and behold my Servants ſhall be with thy Servants.] The *Tyrians* were more expert in cutting down and hewing Timber (they dealing much in it) and therefore he deſires to entertain them as his principal Workmen, with whom he ſhould join.

Ver. 9. *Even to prepare me Timber in Abundance: for the Houſe which I am about to build, ſhall be wonderful great.*] In the *Hebrew*, *Great and wonderful.* This relates not ſo much to the Bigneſs of it (tho' taking in all the Courts belonging to it, it was of large extent) but to the admirable Contrivance, and Riches of it.

Ver. 10. *And behold, I will give to thy Servants the Hewers, that cut Timber, twenty thouſand Meaſures of beaten Wheat,*] That is, of Wheat ground, or fine Flour, as *R. Jonas*, a famous Grammarian, expounds it; whom many Chriſtians follow.

And twenty thouſand Meaſures of Barley, and twenty thouſand Baths of Wine, and twenty thou-

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ſand Baths of Oil.] All this was Proviſion for the Workmen; for whoſe Subſiſtence *Solomon* took Care, during their Labour: Beſides what he gave to *Hiram* every Year, for his Houſehold. See upon 1 *Kings* v. 11. What this Meaſure, called *Corus*, was, is uncertain: But many learned Men think it the ſame with an *Omer*; which was the moſt ancient Word. For, we never find the other uſed in the Books of *Moſes*, nor in the Prophets; but only in *Ezekiel* (xlv. 14.) and in the Books of the *Kings*, *Chronicles*, and *Ezra*. But *Joſephus* and the LXX often have the Word *Corus* inſtead of *Omer*, which was the largeſt Meaſure of dry Things, containing, as *Epiphanius* ſaith, thirty Buſhels.

Ver. 11. *Then Huram, the King of Tyre, anſwered in Writing, which he ſent to Solomon, Becauſe the Lord hath loved his People, he hath made thee King over them.*

Ver. 12. *Huram ſaid moreover, Bleſſed be the LORD God of Iſrael, that made Heaven and Earth, who hath given to David the King a wiſe Son, endued with Prudence, and Underſtanding, that he might build an Houſe for the LORD, and an Houſe for his Kingdom.*] From theſe two Verſes, *Victorinus Strigelius* thought it certain, that *Huram* was a Proſelyte to the true Religion: Becauſe he *firſt* of all, owns the God of *Iſrael* to be JEHOVAH, the Maker of Heaven and Earth; for none but the *Iſraelites* called God by that Name, and when they would diſtinguiſh him from Idols and all Creatures, they confeſs him to be the Creator of the World, as *Huram* here doth. And, *ſecondly*, he congratulates the *Iſraelites* the Happineſs they enjoy'd under ſuch a King, which was the Effect of his Love to God and his Church. And, *laſtly*, he declared his Love to the Church, not only in Embaſſies, and Letters, but in real Acts of Kindneſs, ſending to *Solomon* Materials to build the Houſe of God, and Artificers the beſt in the World. But the firſt of theſe Reaſons is not good; for as my moſt learned Friend Dr. *Alix* hath obſerved to me, the Name of *Jehovah* was known to the *Tyrians* from the Time of *Gideon*, as we learn from the Words of *Sanchoniathon*.

Ver. 13. *And now I have ſent a cunning Man (endued with Underſtanding) of Huram my Fathers.*] A Man of great Skill and long Experience, being the principal Workman employed by his Father. So the *Targum* ſeems to underſtand the Word *Abi* to ſignify a *Maſter* or chief Workman. But *Beckius* upon this Place, thinks it moſt probable, that *Abi* was his Surname, as we call it: And tranſlate this Verſe, *He ſent him a Man of great Skill*, viz. *Huram Abi*. For it was very common among the Eaſtern People, to call Men by the Name of *Ab*, and *Abi*, or *Aba*, and *Abu*, as he obſerves. And thus *Luther* tranſlates theſe Words, *Huram Abi*; to whom may be added *Emanuel Sa*, a Perſon very ſkilful in this Language.

Ver. 14. *The Son of a Woman of the Daughters of Dan, and his Father was a Man of Tyre,*] The *Targum* ſaith, ſhe was *a Woman of the Tribe of Naphtali*; becauſe 'tis ſaid ſo in 1 *Kings* vii. 14. and therefore he reconciles theſe two Places; by *a Daughter of Dan*, he means of a Man called *Dan*, who was of the Tribe of *Naphtali*: Which being near to *Tyre*, ſhe married one of that Nation. Or, as *Jarchi* and *Kimchi* will have it, he was a *Jew*, but dwelt at *Tyre*: As *Obed-edom* was called a *Gittite*, becauſe he dwelt in *Gath*, but was a *Levite*. See my Notes upon 1 *Kings* vii. 14.

Skilful to work in Gold, and in Silver, in Braſs, in Iron, in Stone, and in Timber, in Purple, in Blue, and in fine Linen, and in Crimſon: alſo to grave any Manner of Graving, and to find out every Device which ſhall be put to him,] Theſe laſt Words argue this Man to have been a great Artiſt, who could contrive any Thing that was propounded to him, though never wrought before.

With thy cunning Men, and with the cunning Men of my Lord David thy Father.] This ſeems another Argument, that *Huram* was of the true Religion, becauſe he honoured *David* with the Name of his Lord; as he doth *Solomon* in the next Verſe. Or, as others think, he was become tributary to them; his Country very much depending upon them for Corn.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore, the Wheat and the Barley, and the Oyl, and the Wine which my Lord hath ſpoken of, let him ſend unto his Servants:*] For their Support in their Labour.

Ver. 16. *And we will cut Wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou ſhalt need, and we will bring it to thee in Flotes by Sea to Joppa, and thou ſhalt carry it up to Jeruſalem.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Rapſodoth* (which we tranſlate *Flotes*) is of the ſame Signification with *Daberoth*, 1 *Kings* v. 9. as a learned *Jew* notes. By which are meant, Timber bound together, which was drawn thro' the Sea and thro' Rivers. Such Flotes were uſed, eſpecially in the River *Tygris* (as *Beckius* here notes out of an *Hebrew* Author) which was ſo ſwift, that Veſſels were wont to be overturned by the Stream: And therefore they employed theſe Flotes alone, made of Reeds tied cloſe together; upon which both Men and Burdens went down the River. See my *Notes* upon 1 *Kings* v. 9.

Ver. 17. *And Solomon numbred all the Strangers that were in the Land of Iſrael, after the numbring wherewith David his Father had numbred them; and they were found an hundred and fifty thouſand, and three thouſand and ſix hundred.*] Theſe were the Reliques (as *Kimchi* thinks) of the *Amorites*, *Hittites*, *Perizzites*, *Hivites*, and *Jebuſites*, mentioned afterwards *c.* viii. 7. But they were not Idolaters; for then *David* would not have ſuffered them to dwell in the Land: But they worſhipped God alone, tho' they did not embrace the *Jewiſh* Religion wholly, by being circumciſed. Thoſe *David* had numbred, that he might know their Strength and their Condition. Which did not proceed from ſuch Vanity, as moved him to number his own People, but out of a prudent Care, that they might be diſtinguiſhed from *Jews*, and be employed in ſuch Work, as he did not think fit to put upon the *Iſraelites*. See 1 *Chron.* xxii. 2.

Ver. 18. *And he ſet threeſcore and ten thouſand of them to be Bearers of Burdens, and fourſcore thouſand to be Hewers in the Mountain, and three thouſand and ſix hundred Overſeers to ſet the People a-work.*] This he had ſaid before, *v.* 2. but now relates of what Condition they were, who were put to theſe ſervile Employments. They

that

that were the Overſeers (whom the LXX call ἐργοδιώκται) were, I ſuppoſe, of the Children of *Iſrael*.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN Solomon began to build the Houſe of the LORD at Jeruſalem in Mount Moriah,*] See what I have noted concerning *Moriah*, upon *Gen.* xxii. 2. To which may be here added, That Part of this Mountain was in the Tribe of *Judah*, and Part of it in the Tribe of *Benjamin:* So that the Temple is aſcribed to them both. To *Judah*, in *Pſalm* lxxviii. 68, 69. to *Benjamin*, *Deut.* xxxiii. 12. For the greateſt Part of the Courts were in the Tribe of *Judah:* But the Altar, the Porch, the moſt holy Part of the Temple, where the Ark and the Cherubims were, in the Tribe of *Benjamin*.

Where the LORD appeared unto David his Father, in the Place that David had prepared in the Threſhing-floor of Ornan the Jebuſite.] The *Targum* here derives the Sanctity of this Place from many noble Things that were done there in ancient Times. For in this Place, ſaith he, *Abraham* worſhipped the Name of the LORD, and here he offered up his Son *Iſaac*, but he was delivered by the MEMRA (the WORD) of the LORD, and a Ram ſubſtituted in his Place. Here *Jacob* prayed when he fled from his Brother *Eſau*; and here the Angel appeared to *David*, and ordered him to offer Sacrifice in the Threſhing-floor of *Ornan*. By which Appearance and Sacrifice this Mountain was conſecrated to be a Place where the Temple ſhould be built. See 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26. But *Maimonides* (in his Treatiſe of the Building of the Temple) carries this a great deal higher. For here, ſaith he, *Noah* built an Altar when he came out of the Ark, (as *Abraham* did when he offered his Son) yea, here *Cain* and *Abel* offered their Sacrifices, as *Adam* the firſt Man had done before them. And more than that, he will have it, that he was created in this Place; whence the Saying of their wiſe Men, *Man was made in the very Place of his Expiation*. But this is unworthy of *Maimonides*, who is not wont to follow ſuch Conceits as this, which is borrowed from a fooliſh Book called *Pirke Elieſer*.

Ver. 2. *And he began to build in the ſecond Day of the ſecond Month, in the fourth Year of his Reign.*] See 1 *Kings* vi. 1. In the preceding Winter it was not fit to build, and in the firſt Month the *Paſchal Feaſt* hindred, as *Jarchi* here obſerves. And Dr. *Alix* takes this to have been a Sabbatick Year, in which the People were free from the Tillage of their Ground.

Ver. 3. *Now theſe are the Things wherein Solomon was inſtructed for the building of the Houſe of God.*] He had been inſtructed by *David* his Father, who gave him a Model, according to which he built it. See 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 11, *&c.* The *Targum* tranſlates theſe Words very clearly, which in the *Hebrew* are a little obſcure, *Theſe are the Dimenſions of the Foundation of the Temple, which Solomon began to build.* So in our Margin we tranſlate the Word, not *inſtructed*, but *founded*. And thus, *Beckius* thinks, it is moſt properly to be underſtood, becauſe *Solomon* did not receive from his Father a Delineation of the whole Fabrick of the Temple, but only of the Porch, and of the Courts, and ſome other Things: As the forenamed Place tells us.

The Length by Cubits after the firſt Meaſure, was threeſcore Cubits, and the Breadth twenty Cubits.] He projected the Sanctuary, and the Oracle, both together; and in their firſt Deſcription they were to be in Length ſixty Cubits: That is, forty for the Sanctuary, and twenty for the moſt holy Place. Or, as ſome think, by the *firſt Meaſure*, is here meant that Meaſure which *Moſes* followed in building of the Tabernacle: For in proceſs of Time, the Cubits altered, and were larger. See 1 *Kings* vi. 2. But this is doubtful.

Ver. 4. *And the Porch that was in the Front of the Houſe, the Length of it was according to the Breadth of the Houſe, twenty Cubits,*] So we read expreſly, 1 *Kings* vi. 2. that *the Breadth was twenty Cubits*.

And the Height was an hundred and twenty:] This is a very different Account from that in the Book of the *Kings*, where it is ſaid to be thirty Cubits. But *Abendana* hath briefly ſummed up what their Authors ſay to reconcile theſe two Places. Some think it probable, that the Porch was but thirty Cubits high, but the whole Temple higher. Thus *Kimchi*. Others, that the Porch and all were of the ſame Height: But from the Foundation to the Roof was but thirty Cubits: Tho' above the Roof there were ὑπερῷα, *Upper-rooms*, which were ninety Cubits high. See upon 1 *Kings* vi. 3. And indeed it is not likely, that this Houſe is lower than the ſecond Temple, which by the Command of *Cyrus* was to be threeſcore Cubits. *Ezra* vi. 3. And ſee *Joſephus* Lib. vii. Cap. 8.

And he overlaid it within with pure Gold.] As he did the reſt of the Houſe.

Ver. 5. *And the greater Houſe he cieled with Fir-tree, which he overlaid with fine Gold, and ſet thereon Palm-trees and Chains.*] By the *greater Houſe* he means the Sanctuary, or holy Place: Which was larger than the moſt Holy, as was before noted.

Ver. 6. *And he garniſhed the Houſe with precious Stones for Beauty:*] This ſhews the Uſe to which the precious Stones, that were dedicated by *David*, and by his Princes, were employed, 1 *Chron.* xxix. 2, 8. which ſerved not merely for the Garments of the High-Prieſt, but for the Houſe itſelf, which was garniſhed with them. Tho' I do not know, but the Obſervation of *Bochartus* may be true, that theſe Stones are called *precious Stones*, tho' they were common, becauſe they excelled the reſt in Greatneſs, Fineneſs, and in their poliſhing, *Hierozoicon*, P. ii. Lib. v. Cap. 7.

And the Gold was Gold of Parvaim.] It is a great Miſtake of *Abraham Mylius*, and others, who take this Place to have been *Peru:* Which the great Man now mentioned hath proved to be *Taprobana*, (ſee upon 1 *Kings* ix. 26.) which was called *Parvaim*, and with a ſmall Change, *Parvan*, and *Provan:* From whence he conjectures came the Name of *Taprobana*, which is compounded of *Taph* (which in *Arabick* ſignifies a *Shore* or Coaſt) and *Parvan*, Lib. ii. *Phaleg.*

leg. Cap. 28. The *Jews*, after their Manner, ſay the Gold was called the Gold of *Parvaim*, becauſe it was of a deep red Colour, like the Blood of *Parim*, that is, Bullocks, and ſignifies the moſt excellent Gold; as *L'Empereur* notes upon *Middoth:* Though others of them ſay it was a Place.

Ver. 7. *He overlaid alſo the Houſe, the Beams, the Poſts, and the Walls thereof, and the Doors thereof with Gold, and graved Cherubims on the Walls.*] See 1 *Kings* vi. 21, 22, 29.

Ver. 8. *And he made the moſt holy Houſe, the Length whereof was according to the breadth of the Houſe, twenty Cubits, and the Breadth thereof twenty Cubits: and he overlaid with Gold amounting to ſix hundred Talents.*] The very ſame is ſaid, 1 *Kings* vi. 20. only here is added the Quantity of Gold, which he expended upon this Place, which was very great.

Ver. 9. *And the Weight of the Nails was fifty Shekels of Gold:*] Each Nail, I ſuppoſe, whereby the Plates of Gold were faſtened to the Boards, coſt fifty Shekels.

And he overlaid the upper Chambers with Gold.] Theſe ſeem to be the Chambers mentioned 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 11. of which *David* gave him a Model. But Dr. *Lightfoot* thinks, that over the holy Place there were no Chambers at all, in the Temple of *Solomon*, but it was all open to the Roof. Over the moſt holy Place, indeed there was an upper Room of ten Cubits high; but why that ſhould be called *Chambers* in the plural Number, and why it ſhould be overlaid with Gold, ſince there was none came into it, nor any way to come there, is not eaſy to apprehend. And as for the ſide Chambers that were on the Outſide of the Houſe, there was no Reaſon they ſhould be overlaid with Gold, ſince they were Places, wherein their Corn, and Wine, and Tythes, and Firſt-Fruits, and ſuch like Things were laid up. Therefore by the *Hebrew* Word *Eljoth* we are not to underſtand *upper Chambers*, but *the upper Floor*, or *the Roof* of the Holy and moſt holy Place; which were overlaid with Gold every where; both the Floor on which they trod, and the Walls round about, and the Roof over-head. See his *Temple-Service.* Chap. xv. Sect. 3.

Ver. 10. *And in the moſt holy Houſe he made two Cherubims of Image Work,*] I do not know why we thus tranſlate the laſt Words, for the *Hebrew* which we tranſlate *Image*, hath nothing of that Signification in it: Unleſs we take the Word *Zaazum* to be the ſame with *Zeeazim.* which ſome of the *Jews* ſay, ſignifies their Faces were like to Boys. And accordingly many underſtand theſe Words, they had the Figure of Youths, or Boys. But *Beckius*, upon the *Targum*, in this Place ſeems to me to have given a more rational Account of the Word, which he derives from the Root *Zaa*, and tranſlates it the *Work of Motions*, or moveable Work, for they ſtood upon their Feet, *ver.* 13. as ready to move. In which he follows *Porſterus* and *Buxtorfius.*

And overlaid them with Gold.] For they were made of Olive Wood, and were not like thoſe of *Moſes*, of beaten Gold. See upon 1 *Kings* vi. 23, 28.

Ver. 11. *And the Wings of the Cherubims were twenty Cubits long: one Wing of the one Cherub was five Cubits, reaching to the Wall of the Houſe: and the other Wing was likewiſe five Cubits, reaching to the Wing of the other Cherub.*

Ver. 12. *And one Wing of the other Cherub was five Cubits, reaching to the Wall of the Houſe: and the other Wing was five Cubits, alſo joining to the Wing of the other Cherub.*

Ver. 13. *And the Wings of theſe Cherubims ſpread forth themſelves twenty Cubits:*] See theſe three *Verſes* explained, 1 *Kings* vi. 24, 25, 26. where the Height of theſe Cherubims is alſo ſet down.

And they ſtood on their Feet,] See 1 *Kings* vi. 26.

And their Faces were inward.] In the *Hebrew*, *towards the Houſe:* That is, toward the inner Houſe, or holy Place, as *Jarchi* expounds it: Whoſe Words are, Their Heads were not erect, that they ſhould look outwards; but they bended down, that they might look one upon another.

Ver. 14. *And he made a Vail of Blue, and Purple, and Crimſon, and fine Linen, and wrought Cherubims thereon.* That is, the Vail before the moſt holy Place; which is the Partition mentioned in 1 *Kings* vii. 21.

Ver. 15. *Alſo he made before the Houſe,*] Before the Entrance into the Sanctuary.

Two Pillars of thirty and five Cubits high,] They were not each of them thus high, but both of them together, as it is explained 1 *Kings* vii. 15.

And the Chapiter that was on the Top of each of them, was five Cubits.] In the Form of a Crown, as the *Targum* expreſſes it. See 1 *Kings* vii. 16.

Ver. 16. *And he made Chains, as in the Oracle,*] See 1 *Kings* vi. 21.

And put them on the Heads of the Pillars, and made an hundred Pomegranates, and put them on the Chains.] There were an hundred in two Rows, two hundred in all. See 1 *Kings* vii. 20.

Ver. 17. *And he reared up the Pillars before the Temple, one on the right Hand, and the other on the left; and called the Name of that on the right Hand, Jachin, and the Name of that on the left, Boaz.*] See 1 *Kings* vii. 21. The *Targum* on theſe Words make this Commentary; he called the one *Jachin*, becauſe *Nachon*, the Kingdom of the Houſe of *David* was *eſtabliſhed*; and the other *Boaz*, from the Name of the Patriarch of that Royal Houſe of *Judah*, from whom all their Kings were derived.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *Moreover, he made an Altar of Braſs, twenty Cubits the length thereof, and twenty Cubits the breadth thereof, and ten Cubits the height thereof.*] The making this Altar ſo many Cubits high, may ſeem to contradict God's Command, *Exod.* xx. 26. But ſee what I have noted there, to ſhew how the Aſcent might be ſo contrived, that the Prieſt's Nakedneſs ſhould not be diſcovered. The making it of Braſs alſo, was, no doubt, by the Direction of God, who told *David* how ſuch Things ſhould be made, 1 *Chron.* xxviii. as *L'Empereur* very well obſerves.

Ver. 2. *Alſo he made a molten Sea of ten Cubits from brim to brim, round in compaſs, and five Cubits the height thereof, and a Line of thirty Cubits did compaſs it round about.*] This, and the following *Verſes* are explained 1 *Kings* vii. 23.

Ver. 3. *And under it was the Similitude of Oxen, which did compaſs it round about, ten in a Cubit compaſſing the Sea round about,*] Theſe Oxen are called Knops in 1 *Kings* vii. 24. which were little Protuberances, or Bunches round about the Lips of the Laver, in the Figure of Oxen. There were ten of them in every Cubit, and the Circumference being thirty Cubits, there were three hundred of them in one Row: And they being caſt in two Rows one under another, were ſix hundred in all.

Two Rows of Oxen, were caſt, when it was caſt.] They were not faſtened on afterward, but caſt together with the Veſſel itſelf. So *Kimchi*, and *Jarchi*. The latter of which thus explains it: They were not joined to it by Nails or Soder, but all caſt together with the Sea.

Ver. 4. *It ſtood upon twelve Oxen, three looking toward the North, and three looking toward the Weſt, and three looking toward the South, and three looking toward the Eaſt: and the Sea was ſet above upon them, and all their hinder Parts were inward.*] See upon 1 *Kings* vii. 25.

Ver. 5. *And the Thickneſs of it was an Hand breadth, and the Brim of it like the Work of the Brim of a Cup, with Flowers of Lilies, and it received and held three thouſand Baths.*] See this Account reconciled with that in 1 *Kings* vii. 26. The *Targum* here thus paraphraſes, Three thouſand Baths of Things dry, and two thouſand of Things liquid. But others better explain it, that the Quantity of Water which was commonly in it, was two thouſand Baths; but if it were filled up to the Top, it would hold three thouſand.

Ver. 6. *He made alſo ten Lavers, and put five on the right Hand, and five on the left, to waſh in them: ſuch things as they offered for the Burnt-offering, they waſhed in them; but the Sea was for the Prieſts to waſh in.*] See there, 1 *Kings* vii. 38, 39.

Ver. 7. *And he made ten Candleſticks of Gold,*] See upon 1 *Kings* vii. 49.

According to their Form, and ſet them in the Temple, five on the right Hand, and five on the left.] Thoſe Words *according to their Form*, are thus tranſlated by the *Targum*, As was convenient or agreeable to them. Or the meaning may be, According to the Pattern which *David* gave him.

Ver. 8. *He made alſo ten Tables, and placed them in the Temple, five on the right Side, and five on the left: and he made an hundred Baſons of Gold.*] See upon 1 *Kings* vii. 48. Some have obſerved, that there was the very ſame Furniture made by *Solomon* for the moſt holy Place, that was made by *Moſes*; but in the holy Place there was an Augmentation made of ten Candleſticks, and ten Tables. But they ſhould have remembred, that *Solomon* alſo added two Cherubims, and of a larger Size, to the moſt holy Place, which were not there before.

Ver. 9. *Furthermore, he made the Court of the Prieſts, and the great Court, and Doors for the Court, and overlaid the Doors of them with Braſs:*] See 1 *Kings* vi. 36. where the Court of the Prieſts is called *the inner Court*, it being next the Sanctuary: And by the *great Court* here is meant the Court of the People, to which he made Doors.

Ver. 10. *And he ſet the Sea on the right Side of the Eaſt End, over againſt the South;*] See my *Notes* upon 1 *Kings* vii. 39.

Ver. 11. *And Huram made the Pots, and the Shovels, and the Baſons, and Huram finiſhed the Work that he was to make for King Solomon for the Houſe of God:*] See there, 1 *Kings* vii. 40. He did not ſtir from the Work, but finiſhed it all before he left *Solomon*'s Service.

Ver. 12. *To wit, the two Pillars, and the Pommels,*] Or, *the Globes*, as we now ſpeak, and as the *Targum* tranſlates it.

And the Chapiters which were on the Top of the two Pillars, and the two Wreaths to cover the two Pommels of the Chapiters which were on the Top of the Pillars,] This is there explained, 1 *Kings* vii. 41.

Ver. 13. *And four hundred Pomegranates on the two Wreaths,* &c.] See *ver.* 42.

Ver. 14. *And he made Baſes,* &c.] See *ver.* 43.

Ver. 15. *One Sea, and twelve Oxen under it,*] See *ver.* 44.

Ver. 16. *The Pots alſo, and the Shovels, and the Fleſh-hooks, and all their Inſtruments, did Huram his Father make to King Solomon for the Houſe of the* LORD, *of bright Braſs.*] In the 1 *Kings* vii. 45. it is ſaid, *which Hiram made:* And that's the meaning here; for the Words are beſt tranſlated *Hiram Abi*, or *Abif* did make. See upon *c.* ii. 13. which ſeems more eaſy than other Expoſitions which may be given of the Words. For ſome think *Solomon* calls him *his Father*, out of great Reſpect to him; or, becauſe he was the Inventor of all this excellent Work, (as in *Gen.* iv. 20, 21.) or it is a ſhort Speech, for *Hiram and his Father*.

Ver. 17. *In the Plain of Jordan did the King caſt them, in the Clay Ground between Succoth and Zaredathah.*] See 1 *Kings* vii. 46.

Ver. 18. *Thus Solomon made all theſe Veſſels in great Abundance,*] More for Ornament and Grandeur than for neceſſary Uſe.

For the Weight of the Braſs could not be found out.] See 1 *Kings* vii. 47.

Ver. 19. *And Solomon made all the Veſſels that were for the Houſe of God.*] That is, for the Sanctuary.

The golden Altar alſo, and the Tables whereon the Shew-bread was ſet.] One Table only was made by *Moſes*, but *Solomon* made ten (*ver.* 8.) for the greater Convenience of the Prieſts in their Miniſtration: That they might have a Table at Hand, whereon to ſet the Bread which they took off, when they ſet on new upon the Table of Shew-bread. But it is not improbable, that *Tables* in the Plural are put for *Table* in the Singular, and that he ſpeaks of that on which the Bread ſtood before the LORD. Which, I ſuppoſe, was of Gold, as the other were of Silver.

Ver. 20. *Moreover, the Candleſticks with their Lamps, that they ſhould burn after the Manner,*] Which God had appointed in the Law of *Moſes*.

Before the Oracle, of pure Gold;] Here the *Targum* calls the Oracle, *the Houſe of Expiations:*

Becauſe into this moſt holy Place the High-Prieſt went with the Blood, to make Atonement on the great Day of Expiation.

Ver. 21. *And the Flowers, and the Lamps, and the Tongs made he of Gold, and that perfect Gold.*] The *Hebrew* Word *Miklot*, which ſignifies *Perfection*, denotes Gold moſt purified, as *Kimchi* ſaith their Doctors expound it. But he thinks it ſignifies ſimply, all theſe Veſſels were of Gold.

Ver. 22. *And the Snuffers, and the Baſons, and the Spoons, and the Cenſers of pure Gold:*] See upon 1 *Kings* vii. 50.

And the Entry of the Houſe, the inner Doors thereof for the moſt holy Place, and the Doors of the Houſe of the Temple were of Gold.] They were not intirely of maſſy Gold, but of Wood (as we read 1 *Kings* vi. 31, &c.) covered with Plates of Gold, *ver.* 35. and ſee 1 *Kings* xviii. 16.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. THUS *all the Work that Solomon made for the Houſe of the* LORD, *was finiſhed: and Solomon brought in all the Things that David his Father had dedicated; and the Silver, and the Gold, and all the Inſtruments, put he among the Treaſures of the Houſe of God.*] See 1 *Kings* vii. 51. *David*, we read, 1 *Chron.* xxii. 14. made ſuch vaſt Preparations for building of this Houſe, that there was more than could be ſpent in the Work. What remained therefore, *Solomon* would not employ to his own Uſe, but laid it up in the Treaſures of God's Houſe.

Ver. 2. *Then Solomon aſſembled the Elders of Iſrael, and all the Heads of the Tribes, the Chief of the Fathers of the Children of Iſrael unto Jeruſalem, to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the* LORD, *out of the City of David which is in Zion.*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 1.

Ver. 3. *Wherefore all the Men of Iſrael aſſembled themſelves unto the King*] That is, all the Perſons fore-mentioned.

In the Feaſt, which was in the ſeventh Month.] 1 *Kings* viii. 2. The Feaſt of Tabernacles, which they kept ſeven Days; and the Feaſt of Dedication, which laſted as many, *c.* vii. 9.

Ver. 4. *And all the Elders of Iſrael came, and the Levites took up the Ark.*] That is, they whoſe Office it was to carry it.

Ver. 5. *And they brought up the Ark, and the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and all the holy Veſſels that were in the Tabernacle, theſe did the Prieſts and the Levites bring up.*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 3.

Ver. 6. *Alſo King Solomon and all the Congregation of Iſrael that were aſſembled unto him before the Ark, ſacrificed Sheep and Oxen, which could not be told nor numbred for Multitude.*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 5. The Obſervation of *Victorinus Strigelius* upon this Hiſtory is very pious: That nothing is more lovely in human Things, than ſuch Concord as here appeared among all Orders of Men; both of Teachers and Learners, Magiſtrates, Soldiers, and People, who were all combined to promote the Service and Honour of God. *Such Unity ought to be ſtudied by Chriſtian People, that we may be all one, as our Saviour prayed!*

Ver. 7. *And the Prieſts brought in the Ark of tht Covenant of the* LORD *unto his Place, to the Oracle of the Houſe in the moſt holy Place, even under the Wings of the Cherubims.*] The very ſame Words are in 1 *Kings* viii. 6. See there.

Ver. 8. *For the Cherubims ſpread forth their Wings over the Place of the Ark, and the Cherubims covered the Ark and the Staves thereof above.*] And this *Verſe* alſo is the ſame with 1 *Kings* viii. 7.

Ver. 9. *And they drew out the Staves of the Ark, that the Ends of the Staves were ſeen from the Ark before the Oracle, but they were not ſeen without. And there it is unto this Day.*] Or, *they are there*, as the Margin hath it out of 1 *Kings* viii. 8. where there are the ſame Words. And when that Book was written, they were exactly true; but when this Author tranſcribed them into this Book, after the Captivity, there was then neither Staves, nor Ark remaining. Therefore he only relates how *Solomon* ſettled Things. See my *Notes* there.

Ver. 10. *There was nothing in the Ark ſave the two Tables which Moſes put therein at Horeb, when the* LORD *made a Covenant with the Children of Iſrael, when they came out of Egypt.*] Theſe Words alſo are there explained. See 1 *Kings* viii. 10.

Ver. 11. *And it came to paſs when the Prieſts were come out of the holy Place,*] Whither they carried the Ark, and ſet it in its Place.

For all the Prieſts that were preſent were ſanctified, and did not then wait by Courſe.] As *David* had appointed in the ordinary Service at the Temple. But upon this extraordinary Occaſion they all attended (tho' it was not their Courſe) at leaſt as many as could, and were ſanctified to do all the Duties of this great Day. For, as *Kimchi* obſerves, there were ſuch a Multitude of Sacrifices offered, that the Service of them all was neceſſary.

Ver. 12. *Alſo the Levites which were the Singers, all of them of Aſaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their Sons and their Brethren; being arrayed in white Linen, having Cymbals, and Pſalteries, and Harps,*] According to their ſeveral Families, as the *Targum* well explains it, *viz.* thoſe of the Family of *Aſaph*, &c.

Stood at the Eaſt End of the Altar,] Where the *Talmudiſts* ſay there were two Deſks for them to ſtand in and ſing. One of which had fifteen Steps, on which they ſung thoſe Songs, called the *Songs of Degrees or Steps*. For there is no better Account, *L' Empereur* thinks, can be given of that Name.

And with them an hundred and twenty Prieſts ſounding with Trumpets.] Who joined with the *Levites* it appears by the next *Verſe* in praiſing God.

Ver. 13. *It came even to paſs as the Trumpeters and Singers were as one, to make one Sound to be heard in praiſing and thanking the* LORD,] When they were all ready, as one Man, to make with one Voice a loud Sound.

And when they lift up their Voice with the Trumpets and Cymbals, and Inſtruments of Muſick, and praiſed the LORD, *ſaying,*] As ſoon as they began to ſound, and play on the Inſtruments, and ſing the following Words.

For he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever:] Many think they ſung the whole Pſalm, which thus begins, *O give thanks unto the LORD, for he is good*, &c. And ſo the LXX in this Place, ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῷ Κυρίῳ, &c. And the Vulgar in like Manner.

That then the Houſe was filled with a Cloud, even the Houſe of the LORD;] In the *Hebrew* there is nothing anſwering to the Word *even:* But the whole may be thus plainly rendred, *The Houſe was filled, with the Cloud of the Houſe of the LORD.* That is, with the Cloud that was wont to be in the moſt holy Place, and was the Token of the gracious Preſence and Favour of the Divine Majeſty among them.

Ver. 14. *So that the Prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter by reaſon of the Cloud: for the Glory of the LORD had filled the Houſe of God.*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 19. It is a pious Reflection, which *Victorinus Strigelius* makes upon this Place: Which admoniſheth us, ſaith he, *Firſt*, of the Preſence of God in his Church; and, *Secondly*, of the Abrogation of the *Levitical* Worſhip. It is a moſt ſweet Promiſe of our Saviour, *Where two or three are gathered in my Name, I will be there preſent in the midſt of them.* Thus when the *Levites* here ſung his Praiſes, the Houſe of God was filled with a Cloud, which was the Token of his Preſence: And when the Auditors of the Apoſtles prayed, (*Acts* iv. 31.) the whole Houſe where they were aſſembled was ſhaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt: But the *Levitical* Prieſts being unable to diſcharge their Office, after the Majeſty of the LORD filled the Houſe; it was a plain Signification that their Miniſtry and Way of Worſhip ſhould ceaſe, when the *Meſſiah* came, in whom the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt bodily.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *THEN ſaid Solomon, the LORD hath ſaid that he would dwell in the thick Darkneſs.*] When *Solomon* ſaw that Token of the Divine Preſence, he made this Speech to the Prieſts. See 1 *Kings* viii. 12. and the following *Verſes*. For there is little in this *Chapter*, but what is there explained: The Senſe, and commonly the very Words being the ſame. The Paraphraſe of the *Targum* upon theſe Words is very remarkable, which is this, *The LORD would have his SHECHINAH, or glorious Preſence, to reſide in his City Jeruſalem, in his Sanctuary, which I have built to the Name of his WORD; and behold a thick Cloud covereth it.* This Notion of God's dwelling in Darkneſs was among the Heathen (who hence learn'd it) for *Juſtin Martyr* obſerves, that *Orpheus* and another ancient Writer, call God Παγκρυφον, *altogether hidden.* And the *Lacedæmonians*, who pretend to be of Kin to the *Jews*, had a Temple dedicated to Ζεὺς Σκοτινὸς, *Jupiter* the Dark, as *Strabo* relates out of *Pauſanias*. See *Meurſ. Miſcell. Lacon.* L. i. C. 1.

Ver. 2. *But I have built an Houſe of Habitation for thee, and a Place for thy dwelling for ever.*] See there, 1 *Kings* viii. 13.

Ver. 3. *And the King turned his Face, and bleſſed the whole Congregation of Iſrael, (and all the Congregation of Iſrael ſtood)*] Who were in the great Court before the Houſe. See there, *ver.* 14.

Ver. 4. *And he ſaid, Bleſſed be the LORD God of Iſrael, who hath with his Hands fulfilled that which he ſpake with his Mouth to my Father David, ſaying,*] The ſame with what is there ſaid, *ver.* 15.

Ver. 5. *Since the Day that I brought forth my People out of the Land of Egypt, I choſe no City among all the Tribes of Iſrael to build an Houſe in, that my Name might be there, neither choſe I any Man to be a Ruler over my People Iſrael.*] The laſt Words of this *Verſe*, are very different from thoſe 1 *Kings* viii. 16. where it is ſaid, *but I choſe David to be over my People Iſrael.* Till whoſe Time there was no ſettled Succeſſion of a Ruler, that he, and his Poſterity ſhould reign over them; but God raiſed up *Judges* out of what Tribe and Family he pleaſed: And when he made *Saul* King, did not continue that Dignity in his Family, as he did to *David*.

Ver. 6. *But I have choſen Jeruſalem, that my Name might be there, and have choſen David to be over my People Iſrael.*] But now he declared both the City wherein he would dwell, and alſo the Perſon and Family, whom he would have to govern *Iſrael*.

Ver. 7. *Now it was in the Heart of David my Father to build an Houſe for the Name of the LORD God of Iſrael.*

Ver. 8. *But the LORD ſaid to David my Father, Foraſmuch as it was in thine Heart to build an Houſe for my Name, thou didſt well in that it was in thine Heart.*

Ver. 9. *Notwithſtanding thou ſhalt not build the Houſe, but thy Son which ſhall come forth out of thy Loins, he ſhall build the Houſe for my Name.*

Ver. 10. *The LORD therefore hath performed his Word that he hath ſpoken: for I am riſen up in the room of David my Father, and am ſet on the Throne of Iſrael, as the LORD promiſed, and have built the Houſe for the Name of the LORD God of Iſrael.*] All theſe four *Verſes* are in the ſame Words, 1 *Kings* viii. 17, 18, 19, 20. See there. I ſhall only therefore obſerve here, how the *Targum* tranſlates the laſt Words of this *Verſe*; *built an Houſe to the Name of the WORD of the LORD God of Iſrael.* In which he makes the WORD a diſtinct Perſon from the LORD God of *Iſrael*, but LORD God alſo; elſe he would not have built an Houſe for his Name, that he might be there worſhipped and ſerved.

Ver. 11. *And in it have I put the Ark, wherein is the Covenant of the LORD, that he made with the Children of Iſrael.*] There is no Difference between theſe Words, and thoſe 1 *Kings* viii. 21. but that there he ſaith, *I have ſet there the Place of the Ark*; which is the ſame in Effect with theſe Words; which ſignify he had put the Ark in the moſt holy Place.

Ver. 12. *And he ſtood before the Altar of the LORD, in the Preſence of all the Congregation of Iſrael, and ſpread forth his Hands,*] See upon 1 *Kings* viii. 22.

Ver. 13. *For Solomon had made a brazen Scaffold, of five Cubits long, and five Cubits broad, and three Cubits high, and had ſet it in the midſt of the Court, and upon it he ſtood, and kneeled down upon his Knees before all the Congregation of Iſrael, and ſpread forth his Hands towards Heaven.*]

ven.] This *Verſe* is added to what we read in the Book of the *Kings:* And, as *Solomon Jarchi* obſerves, hath relation to what goes before: *in the Preſence of all Iſrael.* For he was advanced higher than they, that he might be ſeen and heard of all.

Ver. 14. *And ſaid, O LORD God of Iſrael, there is no God like thee in the Heaven, nor in the Earth; which keepeſt Covenant, and ſheweſt Mercy unto thy Servants, that walk before thee with all their Hearts.*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 23. where there are the ſame Words.

Ver. 15. *Thou which haſt kept with thy Servant David my Father that which thou haſt promiſed him; and ſpakeſt with thy Mouth, and haſt fulfilled it with thine Hand, as it is this Day.*

Ver. 16. *Now therefore, O LORD God of Iſrael, keep with thy Servant David my Father that which thou haſt promiſed him, ſaying, There ſhall not fail thee a Man in my Sight to ſit upon the Throne of Iſrael; yet ſo, that thy Children take heed to their way to walk in my Law, as thou haſt walked before me.*] Theſe two *Verſes*, with very little Difference, are in 1 *Kings* viii. 24, 25.

Ver. 17. *Now then, O LORD God of Iſrael, let thy Word be verified, which thou haſt ſpoke unto thy Servant David.*

Ver. 18. *(But will God in very Deed dwell with Men on the Earth? behold, Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain thee; how much leſs this Houſe which I have built!*] See there, *ver.* 26, 27. I ſhall only add the Gloſs of *Kimchi* upon the laſt Words, *Thou art rather the Place of this World, and comprehendeſt all Things, than the World the Place of thee, which cannot comprehend thee. Wherefore then have I built this Temple? It was only that thy gracious Preſence might dwell there, hearing the Prayers, which ſhall be made in this Place.* So the next Words import.

Ver. 19. *Have Reſpect therefore to the Prayer of thy Servant, and to his Supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the Cry, and the Prayer, which thy Servant prayeth before thee:*] See there, *ver.* 28.

Ver. 20. *That thine Eye may be open upon this Houſe Day and Night, upon the Place whereof thou haſt ſaid, that thou wouldſt put thy Name there, to hearken unto the Prayer which thy Servant prayeth towards this Place.*] Thoſe Words, *that thine Eyes may be open*, the *Targum* expounds, by his Divine Providence and Protection, in this Place of the Reſidence of his gracious Preſence, as the Words there are.

Ver. 21. *Hearken therefore unto the Supplications of thy Servant, and of thy People Iſrael, which they ſhall make towards this Place: hear thou from thy Dwelling-place even from Heaven; and when thou heareſt, forgive.*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 30.

Ver. 22. *If a Man ſin againſt his Neighbour, and an Oath be laid upon him to make him ſwear, and the Oath come before thine Altar in this Houſe.*] See there *ver.* 31. Whereby it appears, that a Man who was to purge himſelf of any Treſpaſs, whereof he was accuſed againſt his Neighbour, by an Oath, was to do it at the Temple, before the Altar of God, from whom he expected Remiſſion of Sin.

Ver. 23. *Then hear thou from Heaven, and do, and judge thy Servants, by requiting the Wicked, by recompenſing his way upon his own Head, and by juſtifying the Righteous, by giving him according to his Righteouſneſs.*] See there, 1 *Kings* viii. 32.

Ver. 24. *And if thy People Iſrael be put to the worſe before the Enemy, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee; and ſhall return and confeſs thy Name, and pray, and make Supplication before thee in this Houſe,*

Ver. 25. *Then hear thou from the Heavens, and forgive the Sin of thy People Iſrael, and bring them again unto the Land which thou gaveſt to them and to their Fathers.*] Theſe two Verſes are, in a manner, the very ſame with thoſe 1 *Kings* viii. 33, 34.

Ver. 26. *When the Heaven is ſhut up, and there is no Rain, becauſe they have ſinned againſt thee; yet if they pray towards this Place, and confeſs thy Name, and turn from their Sin, when thou doſt afflict them:*] This and all the reſt, to *v.* 32. are the ſame, in a manner, with 1 *Kings* viii. 35, 36, &c. And therefore ſee the Explication of them there: And in *v.* 29. he deſires, that all Prayers, whether for private or publick Concerns that were made here, might be heard.

Ver. 27. *Then hear thou from Heaven, and forgive the Sin of thy Servants, and of thy People Iſrael, when thou haſt taught them the good Way wherein they ſhould walk; and ſend Rain upon thy Land which thou haſt given unto thy People for an Inheritance.*

Ver. 28. *If there be Dearth in the Land, if there be Peſtilence, if there be Blaſting, or Mildew, Locuſts or Caterpillers; if their Enemies beſiege them in the Cities of their Land; whatſoever Sore, or whatſoever Sickneſs there be:*

Ver. 29. *Then what Prayer, or what Supplication ſoever ſhall be made of any Man, or of all thy People Iſrael, when every one ſhall know his own Sore, and his own Grief, and ſhall ſpread forth his Hands in this Houſe:*

Ver. 30. *Then hear thou from Heaven thy Dwelling-place, and forgive, and render unto every Man according unto all his Ways, whoſe Heart thou knoweſt: (for thou only knoweſt the Hearts of the Children of Men)*

Ver. 31. *That they may fear thee, to walk in thy Ways ſo long as they live in the Land which thou gaveſt unto our Fathers.*

Ver. 32. *Moreover, concerning the Stranger, which is not of thy People Iſrael, but is come from a far Country for thy great Name's ſake, and thy mighty Hand, and thy ſtretched out Arm; if they come and pray in this Houſe:*

Ver. 33. *Then hear thou from the Heavens, even from thy Dwelling-place, and do according to all that the Stranger calleth to thee for; that all People of the Earth may know thy Name, and fear thee, as doth thy People Iſrael, and may know that this Houſe which I have built, is called by thy Name.*] Theſe two Verſes are there alſo explained in *v.* 41, 42, 43. Unto which I ſhall here add this pious Reflection which Dr. *Jackſon* makes upon them. "*Solomon* knew the "Goodneſs of God to be ſo great, that it "could not be a whit leſſened towards *Iſrael*, "how far ſoever it was extended towards other "People. Happy had it been for that Nation, "if their Charity had been like this of their "heavenly Father. But it was their ſeeking "to ingroſs God's promiſed Bleſſings to Man-

"kind,

" kind, which brought that grievous Curſe " upon them, under which they groan at this " Day."

Ver. 34. *If thy People go out to War againſt their Enemies, by the Way that thou ſhalt ſend them, and they pray unto thee toward this City which thou haſt choſen, and the Houſe which I have built for thy Name:*

Ver. 35. *Then hear thou from the Heavens their Prayer, and their Supplication, and maintain their Cauſe.*

Ver. 36. *If they ſin againſt thee, (for there is no Man that ſinneth not) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their Enemies, and they carry them away Captives unto a Land far off or near;*

Ver. 37. *Yet if they bethink themſelves in the Land whither they are carried Captives, and turn, and pray unto thee in the Land of their Captivity, ſaying, We have ſinned, we have done amiſs, and have dealt wickedly.*

Ver. 38. *If they return to thee with all their Heart, and with all their Soul, in the Land of their Captivity, whither they have carried them Captives, and pray toward their Land which thou gaveſt unto their Fathers, and toward the City which thou haſt choſen, and toward the Houſe which I have built for thy Name:*

Ver. 39. *Then hear thou from the Heavens, even from thy Dwelling-place, their Prayer, and their Supplications, and maintain their Cauſe, and forgive thy People which have ſinned againſt thee.*] All theſe Verſes are, with ſome ſmall Variation in a few Words, and a large Addition to the laſt Verſe in 1 *Kings* viii. 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50.

Ver. 40. *Now, my God, let (I beſeech thee) thine Eyes be open, and let thine Ears be attent unto the Prayer that is made in this Place.*] He ſums up all theſe Words, beſeeching him, that the Prayer which was preſented to him here, for any Bleſſing, of what Sort ſoever it was, might be graciouſly accepted by him.

Ver. 41. *Now therefore, ariſe, O LORD God, into thy Reſting-Place, thou, and the Ark of thy Strength: let thy Prieſts, O LORD God, be clothed with Salvation, and let thy Saints rejoyce in Goodneſs.*] Theſe Words are Part of *Pſalm* cxxxii. 8, 9. with a little Alteration. Wherein he beſeeches God to take up his Habitation here, together with his Ark (whereby ſuch Wonders and Miracles had been wrought) and ſtir from hence no more. And then, that he would defend his Prieſts, who miniſtred to him here; that they might obtain his Bleſſings for others: So that all the People might rejoice in his great Bounty to them. The *Targum* here tranſlates the firſt Words after a remarkable Manner, *Now therefore, before the LORD God, reſt in thy Glory, thou, and the Ark of thy Strength.* Upon which Words an unanſwerable Queſtion is made by *Beckius* to the *Jews*, Who is this, *thou*, who, according to their Paraphraſe, reſts before *Jehovah?* Their Mouths are ſtopped, unleſs they acknowledge another *Jehovah*, that is, the WORD of God, (as he is commonly called in the *Targum*) the ſecond Perſon in the ever bleſſed Trinity.

Ver. 42. *O LORD God, turn not away the Face of thine Anointed,*] Since he had appointed *Solomon* to be the King of his People, he hoped God would have a Regard to his humble Petition. For as to *look upon* one, or *lift up the Countenance* upon him, is to have a kind Reſpect to him: So to *turn away the Face*, is to reject and refuſe him.

Remember the Mercies of David thy Servant.] This is another Argument for Hope, that his Prayer would be granted: Becauſe God had ſuch a great Kindneſs for *David*, that he had made very large and moſt gracious Promiſes unto him, and his Seed after him.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *NOW when Solomon had made an End of praying, the Fire came down from Heaven, and conſumed the Burnt-offering, and the Sacrifices; and the Glory of the Lord filled the Houſe.*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 11. This is added to what is recorded in that Book, to ſhew God's gracious Acceptance of *Solomon*'s Prayer and Sacrifices; to give him Aſſurance he would be preſent in this Place, and grant all their Petitions. Of which he gave two Demonſtrations: One by Fire ſent down from Heaven to conſume the Sacrifices; the other by the glorious Cloud filling the whole Houſe. By the former of theſe, the firſt Sacrifice that we read of in Scripture (that of *Abel*) it is generally thought was declared to be acceptable unto God, *Gen.* iv. 4. And when the Tabernacle was erected, and *Aaron* conſecrated, there was the ſame Teſtimony given of God's Preſence there, as here at the Conſecration of the Temple, *Levit.* ix. 24. See what I have there noted, and in other Places. I ſhall only farther add, that the like miraculous Token of God's Acceptance was ſhewn, when *Elijah* conteſted with the Prieſts of *Baal* (1 *Kings* xviii.) and when *David* offered Sacrifice in the Threſhing-floor of *Araunah*, 1 *Chron.* xxi. 26. which had Relation to what was now done: For *David* ſacrificed in the very Place where the Temple was built; and therefore by both theſe Miracles God declared he would be worſhipped in this Place. They differ only in this, that by the firſt God admoniſh'd *David* where the Temple ſhould be built: And by this he approved and conſecrated it when it was built. Dr. *Jackſon* moſt judiciouſly adds, that thus was the Conſecration of the Son of God to his eternal Prieſthood confirmed by the Apparition of the Holy Ghoſt in a Flame of Fire; which was the Accompliſhment of the Appearance of *Aaron*'s Conſecration, and of this at the Conſecration of the Temple.

Ver. 2. *And the Prieſts could not enter into the Houſe of the LORD, becauſe the Glory of the LORD had filled the LORD's Houſe.*] See *Exod.* xl. 35. and 1 *Kings* viii. 11. But another great Man (Dr. *Alix*) thinks it pertinent here to obſerve that there was no ſuch thing in the ſecond Temple: Tho' the Lord *Chriſt* was to appear in it, and make the Glory of the laſt Houſe greater than the firſt. For the Appearance of the Flames of Fire on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, was not in the Temple, but in *Jeruſalem*: When the *Meſſiah* was exalted to his heavenly Sanctuary, and the Temple devoted to Deſtruction by the *Romans*.

Ver. 3. *And when all the Children of Iſrael ſaw how the Fire came down, and the Glory of the LORD upon the Houſe,*] Here was a great Aſſurance, that God would be preſent in this Place, in that the Glory of the LORD not only *filled the Houſe*; but appeared *upon the Houſe:* So that all the People might ſee it, and not only have the Word of the Prieſts for it. By this they were ſatisfied, that it was God's Houſe, where he would accept their Sacrifices, hear their Prayers, and beſtow his Bleſſing upon them. There is no mention here made of the Cloud, as in the Book of the *Kings:* But that is comprehended, as *Abarbinel* obſerves, in the *Glory* and the *Fire*, which were in the Cloud. It came down at the firſt like a Cloud, and then broke out in ſuch a Light and Splendor, as they were not able to behold: And a Flame came out upon the Altar, and conſumed the Sacrifices that lay upon it.

They bowed themſelves with their Faces to the Ground upon the Pavement, and worſhipped,] They bowed down to the Middle of their Body, and fell proſtrate upon the Floor, which was the moſt profound Adoration. Theſe were two diſtinct Acts of Worſhip (bowing and falling flat on the Face) but here are joined together upon this great Occaſion, as Dr. *Hyde* obſerves in his *Relig. Vet. Perſarum*, Cap. 1. where he notes out of *Maimonides*, that the Pavement was kept very clean: It being unlawful for any one to come into the Court with their Shoes on their Feet, or ſo much as to ſpit there.

And praiſed the LORD, ſaying, For he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever.] They praiſed and gave Thanks to God (as they had great Reaſon to do, the Fire from Heaven and the Cloud of Glory being manifeſt Tokens of God's Preſence among them) in the ſame Words which the Prieſts had uſed, who ſung the eighty ſixth *Pſalm.* See *ver.* 13.

Ver. 4. *Then the King and all the People offered Sacrifices before the LORD.*] They had offered Sacrifices before; but now they renew them, and offer more in Acknowledgment of this Aſſurance of God's Love unto them.

Ver. 5. *And King Solomon offered a Sacrifice of twenty and two thouſand Oxen, and an hundred and twenty thouſand Sheep:*] See 1 *Kings* viii. 63. where it is ſaid, he offered only twenty thouſand Oxen; which was a vaſt Number, but not incredible: Nor are theſe two Places inconſiſtent, as I have there ſhewn.

So the King and all the People dedicated the Houſe of God.] Thus the Dedication of the Temple ended.

Ver. 6. *And the Prieſts waited on their Offices: the Levites alſo with Inſtruments of Muſick of the LORD,*] They are called Muſical Inſtruments of the LORD, becauſe *David* had made them, as it here follows, *to praiſe the Lord withal, becauſe his Mercy endureth for ever.* See 1 *Chron.* xv. 16.

When David praiſed by their Miniſtry:] For they ſung the Pſalm of Praiſe which he compoſed 1 *Chron.* xvi. 7, *&c.* In the *Hebrew* the Words are *behallil Dabid bejatham*, with the *Hallel* (that is, the Hymn of Praiſe) which *David* had put into their Hands, for that Purpoſe.

And the Prieſts ſounded the Trumpets before them, and all Iſrael ſtood.] For that was the common Poſture of Worſhip, whether in Prayer or Praiſes.

Ver. 7. *Moreover Solomon hallowed the Middle of the Court that was before the Houſe of the LORD: for there he offered Burnt-offerings, and the Fat of the Peace-offerings, becauſe the brazen Altar which Solomon had made, was not able to receive the Burnt-offerings, and the Meat-offerings, and the Fat.*

Ver. 8. *Alſo at the ſame time Solomon kept the Feaſt ſeven Days, and all Iſrael with him, a very great Congregation, from the entring in of Hamath, unto the River of Egypt.*

Ver. 9. *And in the eighth Day they made a ſolemn Aſſembly: for they kept the Dedication of the Altar ſeven Days, and the Feaſt ſeven Days.*] Theſe Verſes, and the next, are explained in 1 *Kings* viii. 64, 65, 66.

Ver. 10. *And on the three and twentieth Day of the ſeventh Month, he ſent the People away into their Tents, glad and merry in Heart, for the Goodneſs that the LORD had ſhewed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Iſrael his People.*] The *Targum* thus gloſſes upon the laſt Words of this Verſe, which expreſſes the Joy of the People, for the Goodneſs of the LORD, ſhewn *unto David*, in the opening of the Doors of the Sanctuary; *and unto Solomon*, whoſe Prayer God had accepted, and vouchſafed his glorious Preſence, in the Houſe he had built; and *unto his People Iſrael*, in his gracious Acceptance of their Sacrifices, and ſending down Fire from Heaven to conſume them.

Ver. 11. *Thus Solomon finiſhed the Houſe of the LORD, and the King's Houſe: and all that came into Solomon's Heart to make in the Houſe of the LORD, and in his own Houſe, he proſperouſly effected.*] See 1 *Kings* ix. 1.

Ver. 12. *And the LORD appeared to Solomon by Night,*] See 1 *Kings* ix. 2.

And ſaid unto him, I have heard thy Prayer, and have choſen this Place to myſelf for an Houſe of Sacrifice.] As appeared by the Fire which came down from Heaven, and conſumed the Sacrifice at the Conſecration of this Houſe.

Ver. 13. *If I ſhut up Heaven that there be no Rain, or if I command the Locuſts to devour the Land, or if I ſend Peſtilence among my People.*] Famine and Peſtilence were two ſore Puniſhments, wherewith God afflicted them for their Sins: And the former of them was cauſed ſometimes by want of Rain, and ſometimes by Locuſts, who eat up what the Earth produced for their Suſtenance.

Ver. 14. *If my People, which are called by my Name, ſhall humble themſelves, and pray, and ſeek my Face, and turn from their wicked Ways: then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their Sin, and will heal their Land.*] He had petitioned for the Divine Favour and Clemency, upon no other Condition.

Ver. 15. *Now mine Eyes ſhall be open, and mine Ears attent unto the Prayer that is made in this Place.*] Some take theſe Phraſes to ſignify, that he will always diſcern, whether they were ſuch as they ought to be: But they rather have the ſame Senſe with the next Verſe, that he would have a gracious Reſpect to them, and

te ſtify it by hearing their Prayers, as he deſir'd, *c.* vi. 40.

Ver. 16. *For now I have choſen and ſanctified this Houſe, that my Name may be there for ever: and mine Eyes and mine Heart ſhall be there perpetually.*] See this explained 1 *Kings* ix. 3.

Ver. 17. *And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy Father walked, and do according to all that I have commanded thee, and ſhalt obſerve my Statutes and my Judgments.*] See there *v.* 4.

Ver. 18. *Then will I ſtabliſh the Throne of thy Kingdom, according as I have covenanted with David thy Father, ſaying, there ſhall not fail thee a Man to be Ruler in Iſrael.*

Ver. 19. *But if ye turn away, and forſake my Statutes and Commandments, which I have ſet before you, and ſhall go and ſerve other Gods, and worſhip them:*

Ver. 20. *Then will I pluck them up by the Roots out of my Land which I have given them; and this Houſe which I have ſanctified for my Name, will I caſt out of my Sight, and will make it to be a Proverb, and a By-word among all Nations.*

Ver. 21. *And this Houſe which is high, ſhall be an Aſtoniſhment to every one that paſſeth by it; ſo that he ſhall ſay, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this Land, and unto this Houſe?*

Ver. 22. *And it ſhall be anſwered, Becauſe they forſook the LORD God of their Fathers, which brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, and laid hold on other Gods, and worſhipped them, and ſerved them: therefore hath he brought all this Evil upon them.*] This and the foregoing Verſes are the ſame with thoſe 1 *Kings* ix. 6, 7, 8, 9. and there have been explained.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs (at the End of twenty Years, wherein Solomon had built the Houſe of the Lord, and his own Houſe)*] See 1 *Kings* ix. 10.

Ver. 2. *That the Cities which Huram had reſtored to Solomon, Solomon built them, and cauſed the Children of Iſrael to dwell there.*] This is a ſhort Relation of what is more largely told in the Book of the *Kings*, *c.* ix. 12, 13. only here we are further informed, that theſe Cities being reſtored to *Solomon*, who had given them to *Huram*, (who diſliked them) *Solomon* built them ſo, that his own Subjects became the Inhabiters of them.

Ver. 3. *And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed againſt it.*] This Country lay between *Euphrates*, which was the Eaſtern Bounds of it; and *Damaſcus*, which was the Weſtern, as *Bochartus* hath demonſtrated in his *Phaleg.* Lib. ii. Cap. 7.

Ver. 4. *And he built Tadmor in the Wilderneſs,*] See an Account of this in the 1 *Kings* ix. 18.

And all the Store-Cities which he built in Hamath.] All the Cities wherein he laid up Proviſion for War, were in this Country of *Hamath-zobah*, as well as *Tadmor*.

Ver. 5. *Alſo he built Beth-horon the upper, and Beth-horon the nether, fenced Cities with Walls, Gates, and Bars.*] Only one of theſe Cities is mentioned in the Book of the *Kings*, viz. the nether. But both of them were built before, and he now only repaired, enlarged, beautified, and made them ſtrong Places. See 1 *Kings* ix. 17.

Ver. 6. *And Baalath, and all the Store-Cities that Solomon had,*] That is, elſewhere as well as in the Land of *Hamath*.

And all the Chariot-Cities, and the Cities of Horſemen, and all that Solomon deſired to build in Jeruſalem, and in Lebanon, and throughout all the Land of his Dominion.] See 1 *Kings* ix. 19.

Ver. 7. *As for all the People that were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebuſites, which were not of Iſrael;*

Ver. 8. *But of their Children who were left after them in the Land, whom the Children of Iſrael conſumed not; them did Solomon make to pay Tribute until this Day.*

Ver. 9. *But of the Children of Iſrael did Solomon make no Servants for Work: but they were Men of War, and Chief of his Captains, and Captains of his Chariots and Horſemen.*] Theſe three Verſes are the ſame with 1 *Kings* ix. 20, 21, 22.

Ver. 10. *And theſe were the Chief of King Solomon's Officers, even two hundred and fifty, that bare Rule over the People.*] How this agrees with the Book of the *Kings*, where 'tis ſaid they were five hundred and fifty, ſee upon 1 *Kings* ix. 23.

Ver. 11. *And Solomon brought up the Daughter of Pharaoh out of the City of David,*] Where ſhe firſt dwelt, 1 *Kings* iii. 1.

Unto the Houſe that he had built for her:] See 1 *Kings* vii. 8.

For he ſaid, My Wife ſhall not dwell in the Houſe of David King of Iſrael, becauſe the Places are holy whereunto the Ark of the LORD hath come.] All Houſes into which the Ark had come, were not thereby made holy, for then the Houſe of *Obed-edom* would have been ſo. But where it had been ſettled ſo long, as it had been in *David*'s Houſe, and had a Tabernacle made for it, there was a ſpecial Regard to the Place, where it had made its Abode: And *Solomon* would not ſuffer a Stranger (for ſo his Wife was, tho' proſelyted) to keep her Court there. For 'tis not likely, ſhe, and all her Servants had embraced the Law of *Moſes*, though they had renounced Idolatry: And ſo might many ways defile a Place, which had been made ſacred, by a divine Preſence in it: Many other Reaſons are given by Interpreters, to which I refer the Reader; and only add, that *Abarbinel* thought it ſufficient to ſay, That it would have founded very ill, to hear the People ſay, That *Pharaoh*'s Daughter dwelt where the Ark of God had inhabited. And he looks upon this as an Argument, that the Heart of *Solomon* continued hitherto right with God, and had no Intentions to commit thoſe Sins he afterwards did: And therefore God at this time vouchſafed him the Gift of Prophecy.

Ver. 12. *Then Solomon offered Burnt-Offerings unto the LORD, on the Altar of the LORD, which he had built before the Porch:*] That is, he ſettled the daily Sacrifice at the Temple.

Ver. 13. *Even after a certain Rate every Day, offering according to the Commandment of Moſes, on the Sabbaths, and on the new Moons, and on the ſolemn Feaſts, three times in the Year; even in the*

Feaſt

Feaſt of unleavened Bread, and in the Feaſt of Weeks, and in the Feaſt of Tabernacles.] He firſt took Care the Law of *Moſes* ſhould be ſtrictly obſerv'd, which preſcrib'd what Offerings ſhould be offered every Day, *Exod.* xxix. 38, 39. and at ſeveral other ſolemn Times, here mentioned. *Exod.* xxiii. 14. and other Places.

Ver. 14. *And he appointed according to the Order of David his Father, the Courſes of the Prieſts to their Service, and the Levites to their Charges, to praiſe and miniſter before the Prieſts, as the Duty of every Day required:*] Next of all he took Care to confirm and eſtabliſh the Orders which *David* had made, for the regular Attendance of the *Prieſts* and *Levites* upon the Service of God. Who were but few in the Days of *Moſes*, in Compariſon of what they were now; and therefore *David* diſpoſed them ſo, that all Confuſion might be avoided: And alſo aſſigned them new Employments, in ſinging the Hymns which he compoſed, and playing upon muſical Inſtruments, whereby he made the Service of God more beautiful and cheerful. See 1 *Chron.* xxiv, xxv.

The Porters alſo by their Courſes, at every Gate:] Theſe Words ſhew that the Porters were diſtributed, into twenty four Courſes, as well as the *Prieſts* and *Levites:* Though this Order of *David*'s be not there expreſly mentioned. See what I have noted upon 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 27, 28.

For ſo had David the Man of God commanded.] He is called by the Name of the *Man of God*, as *Moſes* was: Becauſe after *Moſes* there was none like him, ſo divinely inſpired, to raiſe the publick Worſhip of God, to a higher Pitch, by his heavenly Hymns; and to direct the Manner of its Performance in ſuch Order, that God was ſerved (if I may uſe here thoſe Words of his) *in the Beauty of Holineſs.* For tho' *Solomon*, as *Strigelius* obſerves, was a very wiſe Man in natural Knowledge, and in political Affairs, and in moral and divine Things: Yet he was much inferior to *David* in Piety, and in the Gift of Prophecy; as the Book of *Pſalms* alone is ſufficient to teſtify: In which there are ſo many glorious Predictions of the MESSIAH.

Ver. 15. *And they departed not from the Commandment of the King unto the Prieſts and Levites, concerning any Matter, or concerning the Treaſures.*] Whatſoever had been ordered by *David* in all other Matters, *Solomon* ſettled them, and the *Prieſts* and *Levites* obeyed him.

Ver. 16. *Now all the Work of Solomon was prepared unto the Day of the Foundation of the Houſe of the LORD, and until it was finiſhed: ſo the Houſe of the LORD was perfected.*] Care was taken, that there ſhould be no Stop to the Building of God's Houſe: Becauſe all Materials were prepared before he began it; and every Thing projected how it ſhould be done, in every Part of it.

Ver. 17. *Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth, at the Sea-ſide in the Land of Edom.*] After he had finiſhed all thoſe great Works of the Houſe of the LORD, and his own Houſe, and built many Cities, as before recited; he deſigned to improve Navigation, which the *Jews* did not much underſtand. And for that End he went to theſe Places, on the *Red Sea.* See 1 *Kings* ix. 26. *Eloth* (as is obſerved by the learned *Nic. Fuller* in his *Miſcellanies*, Lib. iv. Cap. 20.) lay neareſt to him, which appears from *Deut.* ii. 8. where we read that the *Iſraelites* paſſing by the Country of *Edom*, came firſt to *Eloth* and then to *Ezion.* But *Solomon* went firſt to *Ezion*, though further off, becauſe there was Ναυπήγιον, the Place where Ships were built and fitted up: Which *Solomon* made Haſte, with the greateſt Diligence and Speed to inſpect, and ſee in what Forwardneſs they were.

Ver. 18. *And Huram ſent him by the Hands of his Servants, Ships, and Servants that had Knowledge of the Sea; and they went with the Servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty Talents of Gold, and brought them to King Solomon.*] Beſides thoſe Ships which *Solomon* had built, *Huram* ſent more, who brought able Seamen with them to manage the whole Fleet. See there *v.* 27, 28. where only four hundred and twenty Talents are ſaid to be brought: Of which I have there given an Account, and ſhewn it doth not diſagree with this Place.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *AND when the Queen of Sheba heard of the Fame of Solomon, ſhe came to prove Solomon with hard Queſtions at Jeruſalem, with a very great Company, and Camels that bare Spices, and Gold in abundance, and precious Stones: and when ſhe was come to Solomon, ſhe communed with him of all that was in her Heart.*

Ver. 2. *And Solomon told her all her Queſtions, and there was nothing hid from Solomon which he told her not.*] There is little in this *Chapter*, but what is related in 1 *Kings* x. where ſee concerning theſe two *Verſes*, *ver.* 1, 2, 3. I ſhall only add, That the hard Queſtions ſhe came to ask were not the curious Inquiries into the Secrets of natural Things, or new political Matters, but about Things pertaining to Piety, and the Service of God. For our Saviour ſaith, ſhe came to hear the *Wiſdom of Solomon*, and ſhould therefore riſe up in Judgment againſt that Generation, who would not learn of him: And in 1 *Kings* x. 1. it is ſaid, the Fame ſhe heard of *Solomon* was *concerning the Name of the LORD:* Which moved her to this Journey.

Ver. 3. *And when the Queen of Sheba had ſeen the Wiſdom of Solomon, and the Houſe that he had built,*

Ver. 4. *And the Meat of his Table, and the ſitting of his Servants, and the Attendance of his Miniſters, and their Apparel, his Cup-bearers alſo, and their Apparel, and his Aſcent by which he went up into the Houſe of the LORD; there was no more Spirit in her.*

Ver. 5. *And ſhe ſaid to the King, It was a true Report which I heard in mine own Land, of thine Acts, and of thy Wiſdom.*

Ver. 6. *Howbeit, I believed not their Words, until I came, and mine Eyes had ſeen it: and behold, the one half of the Greatneſs of thy Wiſdom was not told me: for thou exceedeſt the Fame that I heard.*

Ver. 7. *Happy are thy Men, and happy are theſe thy Servants, which ſtand continually before thee, and hear thy Wiſdom.*] All that is contained

tained in the foregoing *Verſes*, is related in the ſame Words, (with very little Difference) in 1 *Kings* x. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. where ſee what I have noted.

Ver. 8. *Bleſſed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to ſet thee on his Throne, to be King for the LORD thy God:*] In theſe Words ſhe ſays a great Deal more than is there related *ver.* 9. for ſhe here calls the Throne of *Iſrael, the Throne of the LORD*, and acknowledges *Solomon* to be made *King for the LORD his God*; that is, not only to rule by his Authority, and as his Viceroy, but for his Glory, and to promote his Religion.

Becauſe thy God loved Iſrael, to eſtabliſh them for ever, therefore made he thee King over them, to do Judgment and Juſtice.] See upon 1 *Kings* ix. 9.

Ver. 9. *And ſhe gave the King an hundred and twenty Talents of Gold, and of Spices great Abundance, and precious Stones: neither was there any ſuch Spice as the Queen of Sheba gave King Solomon.*

Ver. 10. *And the Servants alſo of Huram, and the Servants of Solomon which brought Gold from Ophir, brought Algum-trees and precious Stones.*

Ver. 11. *And the King made of the Algum-trees, Terraſſes to the Houſe of the LORD, and to the King's Palace, and Harps and Pſalteries for Singers; and there were none ſuch ſeen before in the Land of Judah.*] This and the two foregoing *Verſes* are explained in 1 *Kings* x. 10, 11, 12.

Ver. 12. *And King Solomon gave to the Queen of Sheba all her Deſire, whatſoever ſhe aſked, beſides that which ſhe had brought unto the King: ſo ſhe turned, and went away to her own Land, ſhe and her Servants.*] The laſt Clauſe concerning his Preſents (*viz. beſides that which ſhe had brought unto the King*) is expreſſed much otherwiſe in 1 *Kings* x. 13. Where the Words are, *beſides that which Solomon gave her of his Royal Bounty*; what is here explained to have been done, to requite her for the great Preſents ſhe had made the King.

Ver. 13. *Now the Weight of Gold that came to Solomon in one Year, was ſix hundred and threeſcore and ſix Talents of Gold.*] See there, *ver.* 14.

Ver. 14. *Beſides that which Chapmen and Merchants brought: and all the Kings of Arabia, and Governors of the Country brought Gold and Silver unto Solomon.*] See there, *ver.* 14.

Ver. 15. *And King Solomon made two hundred Targets of beaten Gold, ſix hundred Shekels of beaten Gold went to one Target.*

Ver. 16. *And three hundred Shields made he of beaten Gold: three hundred Shekels of beaten Gold went to one Shield: and the King put them in the Houſe of the Foreſt of Lebanon.*] See both this and the foregoing *Verſe* there explained, *ver.* 16, 17.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, the King made a great Throne of Ivory, and overlaid it with pure Gold.*

Ver. 18. *And there were ſix Steps to the Throne, with a Footſtool of Gold, which were faſtened to the Throne, and Stays on each Side of the ſitting Place, and two Lions ſtanding by the Stays.*] Theſe and the following *Verſes* are explained in 1 *Kings* x. 18, 19, 20, 21. Where there are the ſame Words; only here is mention made *of a Footſtool of Gold*, which is not taken Notice of there.

Ver. 19. *And twelve Lions ſtood there on the one Side and on the other, upon the ſix Steps. There was not the like made in any Kingdom.*

Ver. 20. *And all the drinking Veſſels of King Solomon were of Gold, and all the Veſſels of the Houſe of the Foreſt of Lebanon were of pure Gold, none were of Silver; it was not any thing accounted of in the Days of Solomon.*

Ver. 21. *For the King's Ships went to Tarſhiſh with the Servants of Huram: every three Years once came the Ships of Tarſhiſh, bringing Gold, and Silver, Ivory, and Apes, and Peacocks.*] See 1 *Kings* x. 22.

Ver. 22. *And King Solomon paſſed all the Kings of the Earth in Riches and Wiſdom.*

Ver. 23. *And all the Kings of the Earth ſought the Preſence of Solomon, to hear his Wiſdom that God had put in his Heart.*

Ver. 24. *And they brought every Man his Preſent, Veſſels of Silver, and Veſſels of Gold, and Raiment, Harneſs and Spices, Horſes and Mules, a Rate Year by Year.*] See of theſe *Verſes*, 1 *Kings* x. 23, 24, 25.

Ver. 25. *And Solomon had four thouſand Stalls for Horſes and Chariots,*] See 1 *Kings* x. 26. and what I have noted there to make this Place and that agree together.

And twelve thouſand Horſemen, whom he beſtowed in the Chariot-Cities, and with the King at Jeruſalem.] See there. It is evident that in *David*'s Time they had no Horſes: For *Abſalom*, when he had loſt the Battle (wherein he periſhed) rode upon a Mule, to make his Eſcape, and *David* ordered his own Mule to carry *Solomon* to be anointed. And indeed the Country did not produce them: But *Solomon*, being able to make great Expences, had them brought out of *Egypt*, and maintained this Number of Chariots, which reſembled thoſe of the *Grecians*; that is, they were ſmall with two Wheels apiece, carrying a Man or two ſtanding or leaning forward. The following Kings could not be at this Charge, but upon this Occaſion ſent for Succour from *Egypt*, and then mention is always made of their Horſes.

Ver. 26. *And he reigned over all the Kings, from the River, even unto the Land of the Philiſtines, and to the Border of Egypt.*] That is, they were Tributaries to him. See 1 *Kings* iv. 26.

Ver. 27. *And the King made Silver in Jeruſalom as Stones,*] This is an hyperbolical Expreſſion, ſignifying ſuch Abundance of it, as exceeded all Belief.

And Cedar-trees made he as the Sycomore-trees, that are in the low Plains, in Abundance.] This is a wild Fig-tree, with which thoſe Countries abound; bearing Fruit not unlike to Figs, but much ſweeter, and have no little Seeds in them; and being not ſo good as others are little eſteemed, but commonly ſold only to the poorer Sort of People, as *Leon Rawholf* informs us in his Travels, *Part* I. *Chap.* 4.

Ver. 28. *And they brought unto Solomon Horſes out of Egypt, and out of all Lands.*] Such as *Cappadocia*, which was famous for a noble Breed of Horſes. See 1 *Kings* x. 28. But *Egypt* is here eſpecially mentioned, becauſe it was nearer, and no Place afforded more. From whence,

even till the Captivity, they ſought for Supplies, as appears by *Zedekiah*'s ſending Ambaſſadors to *Egypt*, requeſting Horſes from thence, *Ezek.* xvii. 15.

Ver. 29. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Solomon, firſt and laſt, are they not written in the Book of Nathan the Prophet, and in the Prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the Viſions of Iddo the Seer, againſt Jeroboam the Son of Nebat?*] In the firſt Book of the *Kings* it is only ſaid, that his Acts were written in the *Book of the Acts of Solomon*. See chap. xi. 41. But here we are told the particular Books wherein they were recorded. And the laſt of theſe Authors (viz. *Iddo*) wrote alſo the Acts of *Rehoboam*, *c.* xii. 15. of this Book: And ſome ſuppoſe he lived till the Time of *Aſa*, *c.* xv. 1. where he is called *Obed*. Howſoever that be, it appears, by this, that the Prophets, as I noted before, were alſo Hiſtorians, who gave an Account of what paſſed in their Times; out of whoſe Work this ſhort Hiſtory was extracted. And *Abarbinel* is of Opinion, that there were two Books or Catalogues written of the Acts of *Solomon*: One *de rebus prioribus*, of what paſſed in the Beginning of his Reign, giving an Account of his great Buildings, and of the Splendor wherein he lived, and the Proſperity he enjoyed; and theſe were written by *Nathan*: The other, *de rebus poſterioribus*, giving an Account of what paſſed in the latter End of his Life; how he doted upon Women, and fell into Idolatry, and was threatned with terrible Puniſhments, and had ſeveral Adverſaries raiſed againſt him, *&c.* which were all written by *Ahijah* the *Shilonite*. And ſome of theſe Things were alſo recorded by another Author, *Iddo*; who wrote concerning the Acts of *Jeroboam*, which could not be related, without touching upon ſome Part of *Solomon*'s Reign. Theſe three did not join to make one Book, but ſeverally and diſtinctly gave an Account of ſuch Things as occurred to their Knowledge: Out of which it is probable, *Ezra* took many Things, which he hath ſupplied in this Book.

Ver. 30. *And Solomon reigned in Jeruſalem over all Iſrael, forty Years.*

Ver. 31. *And Solomon ſlept with his Fathers, and he was buried in the City of David his Father, and Rehoboam his Son reigned in his Stead.*] Theſe two *Verſes* are the laſt Words of 1 *Kings* xi. 42, 43.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND Rehoboam went to Shechem, for to Shechem were all Iſrael come to make him King.*

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs when Jeroboam the Son of Nebat (who was in Egypt, whither he had fled from the Preſence of Solomon the King) heard it, that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt.*] See 1 *Kings* xii. where this *Chapter* is ſo fully explained, that little is to be added here.

Ver. 3. *And they ſent and called him:*] The *Targum* well tranſlates it, *for they ſent*, giving a Reaſon why he returned from *Egypt*.

So Jeroboam and all Iſrael came and ſpake to Rehoboam, ſaying,

Ver. 4. *Thy Father made our Yoke grievous, now therefore eaſe thou ſomewhat the grievous Servitude of thy Father, and his heavy Yoke that he put upon us, and we will ſerve thee.*] This *Verſe* is the ſame in Senſe with 1 *Kings* xii. 4. and ſo are thoſe that follow, with thoſe that follow there; where ſee them explained. I ſhall only add, that if this Complaint of *Solomon*'s hard Uſage of them was true, it is probable that when he was corrupted by the Love of Money and ſtrange Women, and fell into Idolatry, he alſo oppreſſed his Subjects; being unable to maintain ſuch great Expences, and ſo many Wives and Concubines, and building them Places for Religious Worſhip (beſides other Things before-mentioned) put him unto, without greater Treaſures than he had heaped up to ſupport them. At leaſt they began to be exhauſted, which tempted him to theſe ill Courſes to keep them full.

Ver. 5. *And he ſaid unto them, Come again unto me after three Days. And the People departed.*] The reſt of this *Chapter* is ſo much the very ſame, not only in Senſe, but alſo in Words, with what we had before in the Book of the *Kings*, that I ſhall not tranſcribe it.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND when Rehoboam was come to Jeruſalem, he gathered of the Houſe of Judah and Benjamin, an hundred and fourſcore thouſand choſen Men which were Warriors, to fight againſt Iſrael, that he might bring the Kingdom again to Rehoboam.*

Ver. 2. *But the Word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the Man of God, ſaying,*

Ver. 3. *Speak unto Rehoboam the Son of Solomon King of Judah, and to all Iſrael in Judah and Benjamin, ſaying,*

Ver. 4. *Thus ſath the LORD, Ye ſhall not go up, nor fight againſt your Brethren: return every Man to his Houſe, for this thing is done of me. And they obeyed the Words of the LORD, and returned from going againſt Jeroboam.*] Theſe four *Verſes* I have explain'd in my *Notes* upon 1 *Kings* xii. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 5. *And Rehoboam dwelt in Jeruſalem, and built Cities for Defence in Judah.*] That is, he ſtrengthened his Frontiers againſt the ten Tribes that were revolted from him.

Ver. 6. *He built even Bethlehem, and Etam, and Tekoa,*

Ver. 7. *And Beth-zur, and Shoco, and Adullam,*] We are told in 1 *Chron.* iv. 32. that *Etam* was a Town in the Tribe of *Simeon*: Therefore this ſhews that ſome Portion of that Tribe adhered to the Houſe of *David*, after *Jeroboam* made this Rent in the Kingdom.

Ver. 8. *And Gath, and Mareſhah, and Ziph,*

Ver. 9. *And Adoraim, and Lachiſh, and Azekah,*

Ver. 10. *And Zorah, and Aijalon, and Hebron, which are in Judah, and in Benjamin, fenced Cities.*] It is apparent from hence, that by *building Cities of Defence*, ver. 5. is meant only repairing, and fortifying them: For they were built before, but perhaps he now enlarged ſome of them, and made them more capacious.

Ver. 11. *And he fortified the ſtrong Holds, and put Captains in them, and Store of Victual, and of Oyl and Wine.*] Theſe ſtrong Holds, I ſuppoſe, were in the Heart of his Country, which he furniſhed with good Garriſons and Proviſions; that they might be able to maintain a Siege, in Caſe their Enemies ſhould make an Irruption into his Country.

Ver. 12. *And in every ſeveral City he put Shields and Spears, and made them exceeding ſtrong, having Judah and Benjamin on his Side.*] Who were two warlike and valiant Tribes, by whoſe Aſſiſtance he made every one of theſe Cities a Magazine; out of which, upon Occaſion, Soldiers might be furniſhed with Arms: Which was a neceſſary Precaution in doubtful Times, for the Preſervation of his Kingdom.

Ver. 13. *And the Prieſts and the Levites that were in all Iſrael, reſorted to him out of all their Coaſts.*] So the Tribe of *Levi* was added to the Tribe of *Judah*; tho' not all the Cities wherein they dwelt: Which they were forced to leave, when they would not conform to the idolatrous Worſhip, which *Jeroboam* had ſet up. The Tribe of *Simeon* likewiſe was ſo intermixed with *Judah*, that, in all Probability, more Cities of it beſides that before-mentioned, if not all, became one Body with it; which made *Judah* a very powerful Kingdom.

Ver. 14. *(For the Levites left their Suburbs, and their Poſſeſſion, and came to Judah and Jeruſalem: for Jeroboam and his Sons had caſt them off from executing the Prieſt's Office unto the LORD.*] After the right Manner, according to the Law of *Moſes*. For they refuſed to offer Sacrifices before his Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*; and he would not let them go to do their Duty at *Jeruſalem*, the Place which the LORD had choſen; and therefore they left their Dwellings and Poſſeſſions, and went to live there. He mentions *Jeroboam*'s Sons as well as himſelf; becauſe they were his principal Counſellors, and Aſſiſtants in the Change he made in Religion.

Ver. 15. *And he ordained him Prieſts for the High Places, and for the Devils, and for the Calves which he had made.)*] See 1 *Kings* xii. 28, 29, *&c.* A new Religion being ſet up by *Jeroboam*, deviſed out of his own Head, wherein he ordained a Solemnity in the eighth Month, which was not of God's Inſtitution, all that he did was prophane; the Prieſts prophane, the Feaſts prophane; and ſo were the Sacrifices and the whole Worſhip. And therefore he calls (as *Bochartus* well obſerves) the Objects of their Worſhip, *Devils* and not *Gods:* And the Miniſters of this Religion he calls not *Cohen Prieſts*, but *Chemarim*, *Hoſea* x. 5. And their Solemnities, inſtead of the *Feaſt of God*, he calls the *Day of their King*, *Hoſea* vii. 5. (becauſe inſtituted by their King, and not by God) and the Place of Worſhip, inſtead of *Beth-el* he calls *Beth-aven*, (*Hoſea* x. 5, 8.) that is, not the *Houſe of God*, but the *Houſe of Wickedneſs*, or of *Idolatry*. For the Ointment (as he ſpeaks) being turned into deadly Poiſon, the Inſcription ought not to remain upon the Pot or Box, wherein it was contained. See his *Hierozoicon*, Par. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 34. p. 357. There is a late Writer indeed (*Antonius van Dale*) who labours to perſuade us, that the Word *Seirim* (which we tranſlate *Devils*) ſignifies no more than *Goats*; which were worſhipped in *Egypt*: From whence *Jeroboam* lately coming brought this Worſhip along with him. But who can think the *Iſraelites* would have been drawn to adore ſo filthy a Creature? Which was worſhipped by the *Egyptians*, as ſeveral other hairy Creatures were, and the Image of them held in great Veneration, (*Pan* being repreſented below in that Form) as *Bochartus* hath obſerved: Yet ſignified alſo *Dæmons*, which appeared in that Shape. Thus the ancient Interpreters, the *Chaldee*, the *Syriack*, the *Arabick*, and all the *Jews* underſtand it, as the ſame learned Man hath largely ſhewn, in the ſame Book, Lib. ii. Cap. 53. pag. 643.

Ver. 16. *And after them out of all the Tribes of Iſrael, ſuch as ſet their Hearts to ſeek the LORD God of Iſrael, came to Jeruſalem, to ſacrifice unto the LORD God of their Fathers.*] The good Example of the *Prieſts* and *Levites* moved many pious People to quit their Habitations and Eſtates, rather than forſake, or not have the Exerciſe of their Religion.

Ver. 17. *So they ſtrengthened the Kingdom of Judah, and made Rehoboam the Son of Solomon ſtrong, three Years: for three Years they walked in the Way of David and Solomon.*] Though the Number of People that came to him out of all the Tribes, added great Strength to *Rehoboam*'s Kingdom; yet his Power was chiefly owing unto God: Who protected and aſſiſted them, as long as he and his People continued in the Way of his Predeceſſors, *David* and *Solomon*. From which laſt Words ſome conclude *Solomon* was a Penitent, becauſe he is mention'd here as an Example of true Piety, as well as *David*. But it cannot be certainly inferred hence, becauſe this may relate only to the greateſt Part of his Reign, before he lapſed in his old Age, and forſook the Law of *Moſes*. The Book of *Eccleſiaſtes* is a better Proof of it, which the *Jews* generally think, was written when he was old: Wherein he ſenſibly expreſſes the Vanity of all Earthly Things; and particularly ſpeaks with great Deteſtation of bad Women, by whom he had been ſeduced, *Eccleſ.* vii. 26. Here it is to be obſerved, that the Corruption of *Judah* and *Iſrael* began in the fourth Year of *Rehoboam*, (ſee xii. 1.) and from thence begin the three hundred and ninety Years of their Iniquity, mentioned by *Ezekiel*, iv. 5. which laſted to the Siege of *Jeruſalem* by *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Ver. 18. *And Rehoboam took him Mahalath the Daughter of Jerimoth the Son of David, to Wife,*] We never read of *Jerimoth* among the Sons of *David*, but only here. Some think he was by a Concubine who is not named.

And Abihail the Daughter of Eliab the Son of Jeſſe.] His Grand-Daughter; for he was *David*'s eldeſt Brother.

Ver. 19. *Which bare him Children; Jeuſh and Shamariah, and Zaham.*] He ſpeaks, I ſuppoſe, of the latter of theſe Wives, who bare him theſe Children.

Ver. 20. *And after her he took Maachah the Daughter of Abſalom, which bare him Abijah, and Attai, and Ziza, and Shelomith.*] This Wife was his firſt Couſin (as we call ſuch Perſons) being

the Daughter of his Uncle: If this be meant of *Abſalom* the Son of *David*. But it is evident this was another Perſon of the ſame Name, of *Gibeah*, which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, (xiii. 2.) whereas *Abſalom* the Son of *David* was of *Judah*.

Ver. 21. *And Rehoboam loved Maachah the Daughter of Abſalom above all his Wives, and his Concubines: (for he took eighteen Wives, and threeſcore Concubines, and begat twenty and eight Sons, and threeſcore Daughters.)*] So great was their Deſire of having Abundance of Children in thoſe Days, that they intrenched upon the Law of God, who commanded their Kings ſhould not multiply Wives. But *David* indulged himſelf in it, and *Solomon* a great deal more: And ſo did *Rehoboam*, and *Abijah*, who had both of them a numerous Iſſue. For Virginity in thoſe Days was not accounted a Virtue: And the greateſt Unhappineſs in a married Eſtate was Barrenneſs.

Ver. 22. *And Rehoboam made Abijah the Son of Maachah the chief, to be Ruler among his Brethren:*] He was his eldeſt Son by his beloved Wife, whom he put in Authority over all the reſt which he had by her, and by his former Wives.

For he thought to make him King.] Such Power, I have obſerved before, they then challenged: And in order to it, he ſeems to have committed unto *Abijah* the Management of all Affairs, under himſelf.

Ver. 23. *And he dealt wiſely, and diſperſed all his Children throughout all the Countries of Judah and Benjamin,*] Upon which Words *Kimchi* gloſſes very well: He thought ſeriouſly of this Thing, and fearing a Rebellion, broke all his Sons, (that is, did not ſuffer them to live together) and diſperſed them into all Parts of the Country under his Government, that he might confirm the Kingdom in the Hand of his Son *Abijah*. Thus *Abraham* anciently ſent his Sons which he had by *Keturah* into other Countries, that they might not be troubleſome to *Iſaac*, who he intended ſhould be his Heir: And thus *Jehoſhaphat* did in following Times after this, xxi. 3.

Unto every fenced City:] Of which, I ſuppoſe, he made them Governors in Chief, and committed a great Care to them: Theſe Cities being frontier Places, as I obſerved *v.* 5. where it is probable, he had truſty Perſons to watch and obſerve them, that they entred not into any Combinations to defeat his Deſign.

And he gave them Victual in Abundance:] He provided for them amply, that they might not be diſcontented, but live at their Eaſe.

And he deſired many Wives.] This might poſſibly be for his Children, that they might in their ſeveral Governments live very pleaſantly. But, conſidering his Temper, moſt Interpreters think it was for himſelf; being not ſatisfied with thoſe Wives he had already, but ſtill deſiring more.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs when Rehoboam had eſtabliſhed the Kingdom, and had ſtrengthened himſelf,*] When he thought himſelf ſafe, and out of all Danger.

He forſook the Law of the LORD,] His evil Inclinations began to appear; which he deriv'd, it is likely, from his Mother, who was an *Ammoniteſs*. See 1 *Kings* xiv. 21.

And all Iſrael with him.] See 1 *Kings* xiv. 22, 23, 24.

Ver. 2. *And it came to paſs, that in the fifth Year of King Rehoboam, Shiſhak King of Egypt came up againſt Jeruſalem (becauſe they had tranſgreſſed againſt the LORD,)*] See 1 *Kings* xiv. 25. Their Apoſtaſy was in the fourth Year of his Reign, (after they had been three Years obedient, xi. 17.) therefore God ſpeedily corrected them, that he might reduce them to his Service, before they were ſettled in their Impiety.

Ver. 3. *With twelve hundred Chariots, and threeſcore thouſand Horſemen: and the People were without Number,*] That is, the Footmen in his Army.

That came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.] There is no doubt, the *Lubims* were the People of *Libya*, a famous Country in *Africa*, adjoining to *Egypt*. And the *Sukkiims* are the People called *Troglodytes*, who lived near the *Red Sea*; and had that Name *Troglodytes*, becauſe they dwelt ἐν τρώγλαις, in Caves and Dens of the Earth: Which is the very Signification of the *Hebrew* Word *Succha*; which in that Language imports not only *Tabernacles*, but alſo *Caves* or *Dens*, as in *Pſalm* x. 9. *Job* xxxviii. 40. From this People there was a Town, upon the Coaſt of the *Red Sea*, called *Succhæ*; and at this Day, with a little Alteration *Suachen*, as *Bochartus* obſerves in his *Phaleg*. Lib. iv. Cap. 29. As for the People called *Cuſh* (which we tranſlate *Ethiopians*) they were either thoſe to the South of *Egypt*, or the *Scenitæ* in *Arabia*: For I have obſerved elſewhere, it was a Name common to both. See the ſame moſt learned Author in the ſame Book, Cap. 33.

Ver. 4. *And he took the fenced Cities which pertained to Judah,*] Where the Sons of *Rehoboam* were Governors: Who perhaps there periſhed.

And came to Jeruſalem.] The frontier Towns being taken, nothing hindred his coming hither: For truſting to his fenced Cities, he had raiſed no Army to oppoſe *Shiſhak*: Or if he had, they durſt not oppoſe his Progreſs.

Ver. 5. *Then came Shemaiah the Prophet to Rehoboam, and to the Princes of Judah, that were gathered together to Jeruſalem becauſe of Shiſhak,*] As to a Place of more Safety than the Country; or perhaps to conſult what to do, in a Time of ſo great Danger.

And ſaid unto them, Thus ſaith the LORD, ye have forſaken me, and therefore have I alſo left you in the Hand of Shiſhak.] The *Chaldee* tranſlates this, *ye have forſaken my Fear*, that is, his Worſhip, and turned to Idols: Therefore God gave them up into the Power of an Idolater.

Ver. 6. *Whereupon the Princes of Iſrael,*] They are called *the Princes of Iſrael*, becauſe there were many *Iſraelites* among them; and they had all lately been comprehended under this Name.

And the King humbled themſelves, and they ſaid, The LORD is righteous.] Sorrowfully confeſſed, that

that the LORD had moſt juſtly puniſhed them for their Sins.

Ver. 7. *And when the LORD ſaw, that they humbled themſelves, the Word of the LORD came to Shemaiah, ſaying, They have humbled themſelves, therefore I will not deſtroy them, but I will grant them ſome Deliverance, and my Wrath ſhall not be poured out upon Jeruſalem by the Hand of Shiſhak.*] Their Humiliation prevailed with God ſo far, that he moderated his Anger, and reſpited the Deſtruction which was coming upon them; promiſing he would not ſuffer *Shiſhak* to do ſo much Miſchief as he deſigned. Yet he ſeems to intimate, that if they went on to provoke him, he would uſe ſome other Hand to ruin them.

Ver. 8. *Nevertheleſs, they ſhall be his Servants; that they may know my Service, and the Service of the Kingdoms of the Countries.*] He reſolved to let them feel the Difference between him and all other Lords and Maſters: And how much more happy they were while they continued to worſhip and ſerve him, than when they fell under a foreign Yoke.

Ver. 9. *So Shiſhak King of Egypt came up againſt Jeruſalem,*] Which was baſely yielded up to him, ἀμαχητὶ, without ſtriking a Stroke, as *Dionyſius Halicarnaſſ.* ſpeaks; who is thought by learned Men to have Reſpect to this Place, when he ſaith, that *Seſoſtris* made an Expedition into *Paleſtine*, Λαβὼν ἀμαχητὶ τὺς ἀνθρώπυς ἐν αὐτῷ, taking all the Men there without fighting. And it was to be aſcribed only to the great Goodneſs of God, that he did not poſſeſs himſelf abſolutely of the whole Country, and make it a Province ſubject and tributary to the King of *Egypt*. For unleſs God had diverted him, he might have done what he pleaſed; it being in his Power to extirpate the *Jewiſh* Nation.

And took away the Treaſures of the Houſe of the LORD, and the Treaſures of the King's Houſe, he took all: he carried away alſo the Shields of Gold which Solomon had made.

Ver. 10. *Inſtead of which King Rehoboam made Shields of Braſs, and committed them to the Hands of the Chief of the Guard, that kept the Entrance of the King's Houſe.*

Ver. 11. *And when the King entred into the Houſe of the LORD, the Guard came and fetcht them, and brought them again into the Guard-Chamber.*] Theſe three Verſes have been explained in 1 *Kings* xiv. 25, 26, 27, 28. Only from hence may be gathered, that the Golden Shields were made for State, to be uſed by his Guard when they attended him to the Houſe of the LORD: This being the Uſe of the brazen Shields which were made in their ſtead.

Ver. 12. *And when he humbled himſelf, the Wrath of the LORD turned from him, that he would not deſtroy him altogether:*] When he ſaw his Danger he humbled himſelf, before *Shiſhak* came to *Jeruſalem:* And after he had taken and ranſacked it, he humbled himſelf ſtill more; and thereby diverted that utter Deſtruction, which ſuch an Army might have brought upon him, and which their Sins deſerved. For it appears by the Language of the Prophet, God was moſt highly provoked by the Defection of *Judah* ſo ſuddenly from him, *to pour out his Wrath* upon them.

And in Judah Things went well:] They began again to proſper. But the Words in the *Hebrew* being, there were *good Things in Judah*, they may be underſtood of the Reformation made in the whole Kingdom: Many good Things being found among them, in the midſt of their Corruption. For the Prieſts, I ſuppoſe, kept up the Worſhip of God in its Purity, and many good People joined in it: Eſpecially ſuch as had fled from the Idolatry of *Jeroboam*.

Ver. 13. *So King Rehoboam ſtrengthned himſelf in Jeruſalem, and reigned:*] He repaired the fenced Cities, which *Shiſhak* had taken; and recovered ſo much Strength, that he reigned with ſome Authority

For Rehoboam was one and forty Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ſeventeen Years in Jeruſalem, the City which the LORD had choſen out of all the Tribes of Iſrael, to put his Name there: And his Mother's Name was Naamah, an Ammoniteſs.] See 1 *Kings* xiv. 21.

Ver. 14. *And he did Evil, becauſe he prepared not his Heart to ſeek the LORD.*] This ſeems to ſignify, that after his Humiliation for his Sins, he relapſed again into them, (tho' it may relate to his firſt Provocation) and the Reaſon is here given, becauſe his Heart was not intent (as the *Targum* expounds it) to ſeek Inſtruction from the LORD.

Ver. 15. *Now the Acts of Rehoboam, firſt and laſt, are they not written in the Book of Shemaiah the Prophet,*] Which was extant when *Ezra* made this ſhort Abſtract out of it. For Prophets, as I obſerved before, wrote the Hiſtory of their own Times; as *Jarchi* ſays, they did their own Prophecies.

And of Iddo the Seer, concerning Genealogies?] The *Targum* hath it, *Genealogies of the Houſe of David:* Which he ſet down in the Hiſtory he wrote of Things done in his Time.

And there were Wars between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually.] See 1 *Kings* xiv. 30.

Ver. 16. *And Rehoboam ſlept with his Fathers, and was buried in the City of David; and Abijah his Son reigned in his ſtead.*] As he had deſigned in his Life-time. See xi. 22, 23.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW in the eighteenth Year of King Jeroboam, began Abijah to reign over Judah.*] See 1 *Kings* xv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And he reigned three Years in Jeruſalem: (his Mother's Name alſo was Michaiah the Daughter of Uriel of Gibeah,)*] He gives a different Account above, ix. 20, 21. for there his Mother is called *Maachah*, and her Father's Name is ſaid to be *Abſalom:* And ſo we read, 1 *Kings* xv. 2. The *Targum* therefore, to reconcile theſe two Places, add a long Gloſs, in theſe Words, Becauſe ſhe was his legal Wife, her Name was changed from *Maachah* to *Michajah*, which was a more honourable Name: And the Name of her Father chang'd into *Uriel*, that no mention might be made of the Name of *Abſalom*. But this Reaſon is frivolous, for ſhe is ſaid to be the Daughter of *Abſalom* in the Place above-named. Therefore a better Account of this is given by *Jarchi* and by *Kimchi*, who

who ſay, that her intire Name was *Michaiah Maachah*; and her Father's entire Name was *Uriel Abſalom*. See what I have noted upon 1 *Kings* xv. 2.

And there was War between Abijah and Jeroboam.] 1 *Kings* xv. 7.

Ver. 3. *And Abijah ſet the Battle in Array, with an Army of valiant Men of War, even four hundred thouſand choſen Men: Jeroboam alſo ſet the Battle in Array againſt him, with eight hundred thouſand choſen Men, being mighty Men of Valour.*] Here was ſuch a vaſt Army brought into the Field, that the whole Strength of both Sides was engaged in the Controverſy, about the reſtoring the Kingdom of *Iſrael* to the Houſe of *David*, who had but half the Number of Men that was on *Jeroboam*'s Side; but thought they had the better Cauſe, and ſeemed by *Abijah*'s Speech to have put ſuch Truſt in God for Succour, that they doubted not of Succeſs.

Ver. 4. *And Abijah ſtood upon Mount Zemaraim, which is in Mount Ephraim,*] It ſeems *Abijah* had entred into the Country of the *Iſraelites*, and there drew up his Army, on the Hill afterwards called *Samaria*.

And ſaid, Hear me, thou Jeroboam, and all Iſrael.] A great many might hear his Voice, from ſo advantageous a Place; but all the eight hundred thouſand could not. But he deſired what he ſaid might be reported to them; and it is very likely he deſired a Parley before they fought, to ſee if they could accommodate Matters without ſhedding Blood.

Ver. 5. *Ought you not to know,*] They did know, but he means they ought to conſider and acknowledge.

That the LORD God of Iſrael gave the Kingdom over Iſrael to David for ever, even to him and his Sons by a Covenant of Salt?] See concerning this Expreſſion, *Covenant of Salt*, *Num.* xviii. 19. The *Targum* here expounds it, *as the Waters of the Sea*, which never alter their Saltneſs. But it rather ſignifies a ſolemn Covenant made by Sacrifice, which was always ſalted, *Levit.* ii. 13.

Ver. 6. *Yet Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, the Servant of Solomon the Son of David, is riſen up, and has rebelled againſt his Lord.*] Tho' he had the Warrant of a Prophet to take the Kingdom; yet his own Ambition firſt led him to it; as we may gather from 1 *Kings* xi. 27.

Ver. 7. *And there are gathered unto him vain Men, the Children of Belial,*] Such, one would think, his principal Partakers were, who ſo eaſily changed their Religion, that it ſhewed they regarded neither God nor Man: As the Word *Belial* ſignifies. See my *Notes* upon 1 *Kings* xii. 24. And here it may be further noted, that the high Offenders of all Sorts are called by the Name of *Children of Belial*. As thoſe ungodly Men, who like a Torrent came upon *David* with all Manner of Violence, are called the *Floods of Belial*, 2 *Sam.* xxii. 5. and the ſacrilegious Sons of *Eli*, 1 *Sam.* ii. 12. and the filthy Beaſts of *Gibeah*, *Judges* xix. 22. and blood-thirſty Men, 2 *Sam.* xvi. 7. and perjur'd Perſons, 1 *Kings* xx. 10. and pernicious Counſellors, *Nahum* i. 11.

And have ſtrengthened themſelves againſt Rehoboam the Son of Solomon, when Rehoboam was young,] He was one and forty Years old when he came to his Kingdom; but not bred up to military Affairs, in which he was raw, and unexperienced, in a Time of long Peace.

And tender-hearted.] This doth not ſo much aggravate their Crime, as reflect upon his Father, who wanted Courage, as this Phraſe ſignifies. But if we take it in this Senſe, *Abijah* overſhot himſelf: For *Rehoboam* gathered a great Army, and would have fought, if God, by his Prophet, had not forbidden him. And if that was his Meaning, that he had a tender Regard to God's Commands, and yielded immediately to them, he ſpake the Truth; for he was fearful then to offend God, and *ſo could not withſtand them*, as it here follows.

Ver. 8. *And now ye think to withſtand the Kingdom of the LORD, in the Hand of the Sons of David:*] But he would not have them think, that God would always be of that Mind, and let them quietly enjoy what they had uſurped. For the Kingdom which he governed was not ſet up by ſuch vain Perſons as advanced *Jeroboam*; but the LORD himſelf; whom they ſhould not be able to withſtand.

And ye be a great Multitude;] Or, *tho'* you be far more in Number than we; being two to one, *ver.* 3.

And there are with you golden Calves, which Jeroboam made you for Gods.] It may be better tranſlated, *but there are with you*, &c. *i. e.* you have forſaken the LORD, and worſhipped other Gods (for ſo the golden Calves were eſteemed by God) and therefore your vaſt Forces will do you no Service.

Ver. 9. *Have you not caſt out the Prieſts of the LORD, the Sons of Aaron and the Levites,*] This they could not deny, whatſoever they might pretend againſt the Charge of *forſaking the LORD*.

And have made you Prieſts after the Manner of the Nations of other Lands?] Without any Regard to the Family they were of, and out of any Part of the Country. See 1 *Kings* xii. 31.

So that whoſoever cometh to conſecrate himſelf with a young Bullock and ſeven Rams,] Any one that could make this Expence might conſecrate himſelf to be a Prieſt.

The ſame may be a Prieſt of them that are no Gods.] The *Targum* expreſſes it thus, *is the Prieſt of him that is not the WORD of the LORD*. By which it appears (as from innumerable other Places) the Divine WORD was the God of *Iſrael*, worſhipped in the moſt holy Place.

Ver. 10. *But as for us, the LORD is our God,*] So it follows in the *Targum*, *unto us the WORD of the LORD is our Helper, he is our God.*

And we have not forſaken him:] Not quite departed from him; tho' in ſome Part *Abijah* (who ſpake theſe Words) had done Evil in the Sight of the LORD, as his Father had done; and his Heart was not perfect with God, 1 *Kings* xv. 3.

And the Prieſts which miniſter unto the LORD are the Sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their Buſineſs.] The Service of God was orderly

derly performed in his Houſe, by ſuch only as were appointed to it by himſelf.

Ver. 11. *And they burn unto the LORD every Morning and every Evening, Burnt-ſacrifices and ſweet Incenſe: the Shew-bread alſo ſet they in Order upon the pure Table, and the Candleſtick of Gold, with the Lamps thereof, to burn every Evening:*] There was nothing omitted, either Day or Night, which the Law required: And he mentions theſe Things thus particularly, that he might put the *Iſraelites* in mind how the Worſhip of God was with great Solemnity kept up in *Judah*, which in ſome Years the *Iſraelites* had not ſeen, and perhaps had forgot. But he mentions here only one Candleſtick and its Lamps, becauſe, as ſome think, *Shiſhak* had carried away the reſt; or, rather, becauſe *Solomon* had made the other ten Candleſticks for Ornament, ſo that they had not Lamps in them every Night, which burnt only in the great Candleſtick made by *Moſes*, from Evening until Morning. See *Levit.* xxiv. 2, 3.

For we keep the Charge of the LORD our God; but ye have forſaken him.] The *Targum* here again thus expreſſes it, *We keep the Charge of the WORD of the LORD our God.* This gives us reaſon to think, that *Abijah* kept up the publick Worſhip of God very regularly: Tho' he did Evil in the Sight of the LORD privately.

Ver. 12. *And behold, God himſelf is with us for our Captain, and his Prieſts with ſounding Trumpets to cry alarm againſt you:*] Upon the ſounding of which *Moſes* promiſed they ſhould *be remembred before the LORD, and ſaved from their Enemies*, Numb. x. 9. This ſeems to be added as an Amplification of their ſtrict Obſervance of the Law of God in all Things, in War as well as in Peace, which gave them a good Hope that he would be with them. And here it may be noted, that it doth not appear, that the Prieſts were forbidden any Functions in a Civil Life: For they went to War, and performed the Office of Trumpeters in the Army, as well as in the Temple.

O Children of Iſrael, fight ye not againſt the LORD God of your Fathers, for you ſhall not proſper.] So he concludes his Speech, that if they fought, it was not ſo much againſt him, as againſt the LORD whom their Fathers worſhipped and they had forſaken, and therefore ſhould not ſucceed. None of the great Captains and Commanders, whoſe Speeches are recorded in Heathen Authors, ever ſpoke more movingly than this King of *Judah* did.

Ver. 13. *But Jeroboam cauſed an Ambuſhment to come about behind them: ſo they were before Judah, and the Ambuſhment was behind them.*] We read of no Anſwer to this Speech; but *Jeroboam* ſeems to have been ſo much touched with it, that he would not truſt to his Numbers, but uſed Policy, and like a great Captain, laid an Ambuſh behind the Army of *Judah*, while he faced them with his main Body, drawn up in Battle Array: For he had ſuch a prodigious Multitude with him, that he had Men enough to ſpare upon any Deſign, and more than enough to fight alſo.

Ver. 14. *And when Judah looked back,*] Hearing a great Noiſe, it is like, behind them.

Behold, the Battle was before, and behind:] Which put them into ſore Diſtreſs.

And they cried unto the LORD, and the Prieſts ſounded with the Trumpets.] They were not diſmayed, but implored Help from God; which the Prieſts gave them Hopes to obtain. For *the Sounding with the Trumpets*, was an imploring of the Divine Aid, which God had promiſed (as I before noted) when they ſounded.

Ver. 15. *Then the Men of Judah gave a Shout:*] To terrify their Enemies, by this Token of their Confidence, that they ſhould have the Victory.

And as the Men of Judah ſhouted, it came to paſs, that God ſmote Jeroboam and all Iſrael before Abijah and Judah.] This is thus expreſſed by the *Targum*, when the Alarm ſounded, the WORD of the LORD cauſed *Jeroboam* and all *Iſrael* to fall, and to be ſlain by *Abijah*. For to *ſmite*, commonly ſignifies in Scripture Language to *kill*.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of Iſrael fled before Judah: and God delivered them into their Hands.*] They ſeem not to have ſtruck a Stroke, but to have been ſo diſmayed, that they run away; and in the Chaſe were ſlain in vaſt Numbers.

Ver. 17. *And Abijah and his People ſlew them with a great Slaughter: ſo there fell down ſlain of Iſrael, five hundred thouſand choſen Men.*] This is the greateſt Slaughter that we ever read of in any Story, as *Bochartus* obſerves: But it is not incredible, when we conſider that God fought for them, and chaſtiſed the Idolatry of the *Iſraelites* to ſuch a Degree, that the *Jews* killed an hundred thouſand of them, more than they had in their own Army. So *Joſephus* alſo long ago obſerves, that there never was ſuch a Slaughter heard of, either among the *Greeks* or *Barbarians*.

Ver. 18. *Thus the Children of Iſrael were brought under at that Time,*] Very much humbled, but not made ſubject to the Houſe of *David*.

And the Children of Judah prevailed, becauſe they relied upon the LORD God of their Fathers.] It was not by their own Valour that they obtained this great Victory; but by their leaning (or relying) *upon the WORD of the LORD God of their Fathers*, as the *Targum* expreſſes it.

Ver. 19. *And Abijah purſued after Jeroboam, and took Cities from him,*] He followed his Blow (as we ſpeak) and did not content himſelf with beating them in the Field, but purſued the *Iſraelites* into their Country, and poſſeſſed himſelf of ſome of their Cities.

Beth-el with the Towns thereof,] From whence, it is likely, *Jeroboam* removed the Golden Calf, unto ſome Place of greater Safety: Or elſe the Deſtruction of it would have been mentioned.

And Jeſhanah with the Towns thereof, and Ephraim with the Towns thereof.] There was a City, as well as a Tribe call'd *Ephraim* (*John* xi. 54.) which ſome think was the ſame with *Ophrah*.

Ver. 20. *Neither did Jeroboam recover Strength again in the Days of Abijah: and the LORD ſtruck him, and he died.*] Some have made it a Doubt, who it is of whom it is ſaid that God *ſtruck him*. And in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. xxi. the *Jews* ſay it was *Abijah*: For *Jeroboam* lived a long

long Time, but *Abijah* reigned only three Years: God not granting him a longer Life, becauſe of his Ingratitude for ſo great a Victory; or as others will have it, becauſe, when he took *Bethel* he did not deſtroy nor carry away the Golden Calf, but let it remain, altho' he had reproached the *Iſraelites* with it, *ver.* 8. But it is uncertain, as I ſaid, whether it was there when the City was taken: And the next *Verſe* plainly ſhews, that *Abijah* while he lived was mighty: And therefore it was *Jehoram* who was ſtruck, and died a Year or two after this Blow. And as long as he lived, after this Defeat, ſome think he was full of Anguiſh, and ſuch Pain in his Bowels, as *Jeroboam* had, *c.* xxi. 19. Thus *Abarbinel*, and many others.

Ver. 21. *But Abijah waxed mighty, and married fourteen Wives, and begat twenty and two Sons, and ſixteen Daughters.*] Not after this Victory, but before he was King, in the Time of his Father; for he lived not long after this Succeſs.

Ver. 22. *And the reſt of the Acts of Abijah, and his Ways, and his Sayings, are written in the Story of the Prophet Iddo.*] In the *Targum* it is, *they are written in the Midraſch of the Prophet Iddo:* That is, in his *Commentary*, as we tranſlate the *Hebrew* Word here, in the Margin of our Bible. See *c.* xii. 15. This King was a very wiſe Man, (as appears by the excellent Oration above-mentioned) and in familiar Converſation drop'd many remarkable *Sayings*, like the Proverbs of *Solomon*, which *Iddo* thought worthy to be recorded and tranſmitted to Poſterity.

CHAP. XIV.

Ver. 1. *SO Abijah ſlept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the City of David, and Aſa his Son reigned in his Stead: in his Days the Land was quiet ten Years.*] There was no War declared, but only ſome private Bickerings between his Subjects and *Baaſha*'s. See 1 *Kings* xv. 16.

Ver. 2. *And Aſa did that which was good and right in the Eyes of the LORD his God.*] See concerning this *Verſe* and the next, in 1 *Kings* xv. 11, 12.

Ver. 3. *For he took away the Altars of the ſtrange Gods, and the High Places, and brake down the Images, and cut down the Groves.*] By this it appears, that tho' *Abijah* maintained the publick Worſhip of God (as I obſerved *c.* xiii. 11.) yet there were alſo ſtrange Gods worſhipped in ſome Places.

Ver. 4. *And commanded Judah to ſeek the LORD God of their Fathers, and to do the Law and the Commandment.*] I ſuppoſe he ſet forth Royal Edicts, requiring the People to worſhip the LORD alone, and to obſerve all the Laws of *Moſes*.

Ver. 5. *Alſo he took away out of all the Cities of Judah, the High Places*] There were High Places in the open Fields (mentioned before, *ver.* 3.) and alſo in the Cities, which were all taken away by him.

And the Images:] In the *Hebrew* the *Sun-Images*, as we tranſlate it in the Margin. Certain it is, that the Word *Hammanim* imports ſomething belonging to the Sun, which *Buxtorf* renders *Solares Statuæ*, Sun-Statues; becauſe, ſaith *Jarchi*, they were ſet on the Tops of Houſes, and ſo expoſed to the Sun: Whence *Junius* and *Tremellius* called them *Subdiales Statuæ*; but *Abarbinel* thinks they were in the Form of the Sun, made after the Similitude of that Globe, and worſhipped by thoſe who took the Sun for their God. Others think they were Temples built for the Worſhip of the Sun: Which the *Vulgar Latin* follows.

And the Kingdom was quiet before him.] No Body made Oppoſition to him.

Ver. 6. *And he built fenced Cities in Judah:*] On the Frontiers of his Kingdom.

For the Land had reſt, and he had no War in thoſe Years, becauſe the LORD had given him reſt.] The *Targum* thus explains it, *becauſe the Land of Iſrael reſted, neither did they more war againſt him in thoſe Years:* That is, the *Iſraelites* and their King made no Attempt upon him, nor endeavoured to vindicate the late great Loſs they had received, by the ſingular Providence of God over him. But the meaning may rather be, that *the Land of Judah* (which he is ſpeaking of) which had hitherto endeavoured to reduce the ten Tribes to the Obedience of the Houſe of *David*, now attempted nothing, nor was aſſaulted by them or others.

Becauſe the Lord had given him Reſt.] Of which he made this good Uſe, in providing for War in the Time of Peace.

Ver. 7. *Therefore he ſaid unto Judah, Let us build theſe Cities, and make about them Walls and Towers, Gates and Bars,*] But he ſhewed his Wiſdom in this alſo, that he did not go about this Work without the Advice of his Counſel, and the Elders of *Judah*.

While the Land is yet before us;] Which the *Targum* thus expounds, *while the Inhabitants of the Land are ſubdued to us.* Or, as *Jarchi*, *while the Kingdom is eſtabliſhed before us.* That is, while it is in our Power, as this Phraſe ſignifies.

Becauſe we have ſought the LORD our God, we have ſought him, and he hath given us reſt on every Side: ſo they built and proſpered.] None gave him the leaſt Diſturbance, till he had finiſhed his Works.

Ver. 8. *And Aſa had an Army of Men that bare Targets and Spears, out of Judah three hundred thouſand, and out of Benjamin that bare Shields and drew Bows, two hundred and fourſcore thouſand, all theſe were mighty Men of Valour.*] He was provided alſo of a great Army, if there were any Occaſion to uſe it, as well as of Places of Defence. Some think he raiſed theſe Men after he heard *Zerah* intended an Invaſion upon him: But it rather ſignifies his great Care to have an Army in Readineſs, when he ſaw no Danger of any Enemy.

Ver. 9. *And there came out againſt them Zerah the Ethiopian,*] King of the *Arabians*, as *Cuſh* here ſignifies: And muſt neceſſarily be ſo underſtood in *c.* xxi. 16. and 2 *Kings* xix. 9. See what I have there noted. And *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*, L. iv. Cap. 2. where he ſhews they were a very powerful Nation.

With an Hoſt of a thouſand thouſand, and three hundred Chariots, and came to Mareſhah.] A City upon the Borders of *Judah*, *Joſh.* xv. 44.

Ver. 10. *Then Aſa went out againſt him, and they ſet the Battle in Array in the Valley of Zephathath at Mareſhah.*] He did not ſtay till he entred his Country, but went to fight him upon the Frontiers of it.

Ver. 11. *And Aſa cried unto the LORD his God, and ſaid,*] Before he began to fight, he implored the Help of Heaven: Which he did, I ſuppoſe, in the Face of all his Army, that they might look up to God as their Strength and Salvation.

LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no Power:] Or, as the *Targum* renders it, *there is none beſides thee, who helpeſt both the Strong and the Weak.*

Help us, O LORD our God, for we reſt on thee, and in thy Name we go againſt this Multitude:] In the *Targum* it is, we rely *upon thy WORD, in the Name of thy WORD we go forth:* That is, by his Authority, in Confidence of his Power, and in the Defence of his Kingdom and Religion.

O LORD, thou art our God, let not Man prevail againſt thee.] Nothing could more inſpire them with Courage, than to believe, he look'd upon their Cauſe as his own, while they owned him for their God.

Ver. 12. *So the LORD ſmote the Ethiopians before Aſa, and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled.*] As the *Iſraelites* had done not long before, *c.* xiii. 15.

Ver. 13. *And Aſa and the People that were with him, purſued them unto Gerar:*] This was a City of the *Philiſtines*, who, it's likely, were their Allies, and Confederates in this War.

And the Ethiopians were overthrown, that they could not recover themſelves, for they were deſtroyed before the LORD, and before his Hoſt;] The Victory was ſo intire, that they could not rally their Forces to renew the Fight. It is not ſaid what Number were ſlain, but the Word *deſtroy* ſignifies that very many periſhed: For they fought againſt the LORD, and his Hoſt, who made a great Deſtruction among them.

And they carried away very much Spoil.] From the Men that were ſlain in the Field of Battle, and thoſe that run away and left their Baggage behind them: For he ſpeaks in the next *Verſes* of the Spoil of their Cities, and of the Fields about them.

Ver. 14. *And they ſmote all the Cities round about Gerar,*] Into which it is likely the *Ethiopians* fled.

For the fear of the LORD came upon them:] Seeing ſo vaſt an Hoſt defeated, they had no Courage to defend themſelves.

And they ſpoiled all the Cities, for there was exceeding much Spoil in them.] Partly by their own Riches, and partly by the Booty which the *Ethiopians* afforded them.

Ver. 15. *They ſmote alſo the Tents of Cattle, and carried away Sheep and Camels in Abundance, and returned to Jeruſalem.*] The Abundance of *Camels* which they had, ſhew they were *Arabians*; and the *Scenitæ* and *Nomades* (as *Bochartus* obſerves) did not live all the Year in the open Air, but had Tents both for themſelves and their Cattle in Winter-Time. And they that dwelt in Tents, are oppoſed to thoſe who lived in the open Field, who are ſaid ἀγραυλεῖν. Thus *Eſau* and *Jacob* are diſtinguiſhed; the former of which is ſaid to be *a Man of the Field*, and the other to *dwell in Tents*, *Gen.* xxv. 27.

CHAP. XV.

Ver. 1. *AND the Spirit of God came upon Azariah the Son of Oded.*] Some think he was alſo called *Oded*, ver. 8. but had the Name of *Azariah* given him, to diſtinguiſh him from his Father.

Ver. 2. *And he went out to meet Aſa, and ſaid unto him, Hear ye me, Aſa, and all Judah and Benjamin, The LORD is with you,*] As appear'd by the late glorious Victory, they had obtained by his Help, *c.* xiv. 13.

While ye be with him;] While you continue to worſhip him alone.

And if ye ſeek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forſake him, he will forſake you.] He would not have them preſume of his continued Favour, if they forſook his Worſhip and Service: And therefore admoniſhes them to ſtick cloſe to him, otherwiſe he would forſake them. The *Targum* thus expreſſes it, *the WORD of the LORD is your Helper, while you walk in his Ways*, &c.

Ver. 3. *Now for a long Seaſon Iſrael hath been without the true God,*] The *Targum* explains it very clearly, *there have been many Days, ſince the Houſe of Iſrael departed from the Houſe of David, becauſe of Jeroboam: In which they have not worſhipped the true God, but the Golden Calves.*

And without a teaching Prieſt, and without Law.] For all the Prieſts were gone into the Land of *Judah:* And the *Iſraelites* neglected the Study of the Law, as the *Targum* explains the laſt Words. But there are a great Number of learned Men, who will have theſe Words, and thoſe that follow, relate to the Times of the *Judges*; when they were more manifeſtly in ſuch a Condition as is here deſcribed. And truly *Campegius Vitringa* hath learnedly aſſerted this Opinion, in his Book *De Synagoga Veteri*, Pars II. L. i. Cap. 6.

Ver. 4. *But when they in their Trouble did turn unto the LORD God of Iſrael, and ſought him, he was found of them.*] If we follow the common Interpretation, which reſpects the preſent and future State of *Iſrael*, theſe Words ſhould thus be tranſlated, *If in their Trouble they had turned*, &c. *they ſhould have found him.*

Ver. 5. *And in thoſe Times there was no Peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great Vexations were upon all the Inhabitants of the Countries.*] We do not read of ſuch Troubles hitherto in the Kingdom of *Iſrael*; therefore the Words muſt be tranſlated, *In thoſe Times* (if they continue to diſpleaſe God) *there ſhall be no Peace*, &c. No Quiet, no Safety, but they ſhall be infeſted both by external Wars, and inteſtine Diſcords. Which was fulfilled,

filled, as we find in their Hiſtory, 1 *Kings* xv, xvi, *&c.*

Ver. 6. *And Nation was deſtroyed of Nation, and City of City:*] Theſe Words alſo muſt be tranſlated in the future Tenſe, *Nation ſhall be deſtroyed of Nation*, &c. Where by *Nation* is meant Tribe: One of which fought againſt another, in thoſe Times, when there was no certain ſettled Succeſſion in the Kingdom; but whoſoever killed their King, hoped to make a Party to help him to get into the Throne.

For God did vex them with all Adverſity.] For God ſhall ſet them one againſt another, with mutual Slaughters, and all thoſe Evils that accompany Civil Wars. The *Targum* here again tranſlates it, *the WORD of the LORD*, &c.

Ver. 7. *Be ye ſtrong therefore, and let not your Hands be weak:*] To root out Idolatry; which had brought ſuch Calamities upon the *Iſraelites*, and would ſtill bring more.

For your Work ſhall be rewarded.] As they might learn from their late great Victory over Idolaters.

Ver. 8. *And when Aſa heard theſe Words, and the Prophecy of Oded the Prophet,*] A ſhort Expreſſion, being as much as *the Son of Oded the Prophet*. Tho' ſome think the Father propheſied, as well as the Son, and foretold the ſame Calamities; the more to awaken them, and confirm them in the Belief of what *Azariah* ſaid.

He took Courage,] This explains the foregoing Words, *be ſtrong therefore*, to be meant of an undaunted Reſolution to aboliſh Idolatry: Which required great Courage, when ſo many were addicted to it, and had practiſed it both in the Days of *Rehoboam* and *Abijah*.

And put away the abominable Idols out of all the Land of Judah and Benjamin, and out of the Cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim,] Or which had been taken, *viz.* by *Abijah*.

And renewed the Altar of the LORD that was before the Porch of the LORD.] At the Entry of the Court of the Prieſts.

Ver. 9. *And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the Strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, and out of Simeon: (for they fell to him out of Iſrael in Abundance,*] Tho' the *Simeonites* had their Portion out of the Tribe of *Judah*, when the Land was divided by *Joſhua*; yet it appears from hence, as well as from other Places, that they joined themſelves to the reſt of the *Iſraelites*, when the Kingdom was rent by *Jeroboam*. But now great Numbers of them came over to *Aſa*: Which they might eaſily do, for one Side of their Tribe adjoined to *Judah*, as the other to *Dan*.

When they ſaw that the LORD his God was with him,)] The *Targum* here again renders it, When he ſaw *the WORD of the LORD was his Helper*.

Ver. 10. *So they gathered themſelves together at Jeruſalem, in the third Month, in the fifteenth Year of the Reign of Aſa.*] This ſeems to have been a voluntary Aſſembly by common Agreement, rather than by the King's Commandment or Invitation: Unleſs we ſuppoſe it to have been at one of the great Feſtivals when they were bound by God to go up to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 11. *And they offered unto the LORD the ſame Time,*] In the *Hebrew*, in that *Day*; which the *Targum* takes to have been in the *Feaſt of Weeks*, which in the *New Teſtament* is called *Pentecoſt*; which was kept in the third Month, called *Sivan*.

Of the Spoil which they had brought,] From *Zerah*, and from the Cities they took about *Gerar*.

Seven hundred Oxen, and ſeven thouſand Sheep.] Which they offered beſides the appointed Offerings at the Feaſt. And they ſeem to have been partly Burnt-offerings, in Acknowledgement of God's Goodneſs for their great Victory, and partly Peace-offerings, in eating of which they made the following Covenant.

Ver. 12. *And they entered into a Covenant to ſeek the LORD God of their Fathers, with all their Heart, and with all their Soul;*] Engaged themſelves by a ſolemn Oath to worſhip the LORD alone, and profeſſed to do it ſincerely, and with intire Affection to him. But this doth not ſignify that *Aſa* had no Fault: For it appears by the next *Chapter*, that he had a great many.

Ver. 13. *That whatſoever would not ſeek the LORD God of Iſrael, ſhould be put to death,*] If any Body did either publickly or privately worſhip any other God, they agreed the Sentence of the Law ſhould be executed upon him, which was Death, *Deut.* xvii. 2.

Whether ſmall or great, whether Man or Woman.] That is, without any Reſpect to Perſons; no Conſideration being had of any one's Dignity, nor the Weakneſs of their Sex moving Pity and Compaſſion.

Ver. 14. *And they ſware unto the LORD with a loud Voice, and with Shouting, and with Trumpets, and with Cornets.*] Theſe were Expreſſions of the Joy, mentioned in the next *Verſe*, wherewith they took this Oath. The Difference between *Trumpets* and *Cornets*, it is not worth enquiring after: The former ſeem to have been made of Metals, the other of Horns or Wood.

Ver. 15. *And all Judah rejoiced at the Oath:*] The main Body of the People. And tho' there might be ſome Idolaters ſecretly lurking among them, yet they all gave thoſe outward Tokens of their Joy, to ſee the Worſhip of God thus eſtabliſhed.

For they had ſworn with all their Heart, and ſought him with their whole Deſire,] That is, they profeſſed to do this moſt ſincerely and heartily; and many of them, no doubt, did at that time reſolve to worſhip God alone, tho' afterward they apoſtatized from him.

And he was found of them: and the LORD gave them Reſt round about.] They reaped the happy Fruit of this Reformation, in the great Peace which they enjoyed, without Diſturbance from any of their Neighbours.

Ver. 16. *And alſo concerning Maachah the Mother of Aſa the King,*] His Grand-Mother, as the *Targum* obſerves: It being uſual in Scripture to call ſuch their Parents, *Exod.* ii. 18.

He removed her from being Queen,] This was a great Teſtimony of the Uprightneſs of this King, that he would not ſuffer ſuch a near Relation to retain her Idols, or any Authority:

His

His Love to God overcometh his Affection to his Parents. See 1 *Kings* xv. 13. *Jacobus Capellus* thinks this ſtirred up *Baaſha* to make War upon him; for having liv'd peaceably with him a long Time, upon this he broke out into Hoſtility. *Hiſtor. Sacra & Exot. ad Annum Mundi* 3053.

Becauſe ſhe had made an Idol in a Grove:] Or rather, an *Aſherah*, or *Aſtarte*, for ſo *Laaſherah* is tranſlated by the LXX. And, in all Probability, *Aſtarte*, the famous Goddeſs of *Syria*, was the Deity which was worſhipped by *Maachah*, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves in his *de Diis Syris, Syntagm.* ii. *Cap.* 2. And thus *Abarbinel* upon *Jerem.* xliv. makes *Aſherah* to be the ſame with the *Queen of Heaven* there mentioned, *viz.* the Moon.

And Aſa cut down her Idol, and ſtamped it, and burnt it at the Brook Kidron.] He deſtroyed it with the utmoſt Contempt, 1 *Kings* xv. 13.

Ver. 17. *But the high Places were not taken away out of Iſrael:*] It is ſaid twice in the foregoing Chapter, that he did take away the high Places, *ver.* 3 and 5. But that was of *Judah:* Whereas out of the Territories he had conquered in the Land of *Iſrael*, we are here informed, he was not able to remove them. Or elſe the Meaning is, that he gave Orders for the taking them away every where; but they were not obeyed: Or, as others think, he took away thoſe high Places that were for the Service of other Gods; but let thoſe alone where the true God alone was worſhipped.

Nevertheleſs the Heart of Aſa was perfect all his Days.] He heartily hated all idolatrous Worſhip, as long as he lived.

Ver. 18. *And he brought unto the Houſe of God the Things that his Father had dedicated, and that he himſelf had dedicated, Silver, and Gold, and Veſſels.*] See upon 1 *Kings* xv. 15.

Ver. 19. *And there was no more War unto the five and thirtieth Year of the Reign of Aſa.*] That is, as ſome interpret it, there was no War with the *Ethiopians*, or ſuch like People; tho' with *Baaſha* he had perpetual War, 1 *Kings* xv. 16. But *Jacobus Capellus* in the Place above-named, would have the Words thus tranſlated, *There was no War in the Kingdom of Aſa, till the thirty fifth Year*, viz. of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, not of *Judah*, or *Aſa:* For this was the thirty fifth Year after *Jeroboam* rent the Kingdom from the Houſe of *David.* In which he follows *Torniellus*; as he doth *Beroaldus* and *Junius*, tho' he would not vouchſafe to name them; but more of this in the Beginning of the next Chapter.

CHAP. XVI.

Ver. 1. *IN the ſix and thirtieth Year of the Reign of Aſa, Baaſha King of Iſrael came up againſt Judah,*] The War was begun in the Concluſion of the five and thirtieth Year; and in the Beginning of the ſix and thirtieth he made this Invaſion. But this diſagrees ſo much with what is ſaid in 1 *Kings* xv. 33. that Interpreters labour hard to reconcile them; for by that Place it appears, that *Baaſha* began his Reign in the third Year of *Aſa*, and reigned no more than four and twenty Years: From whence it follows, that he was dead, nine or ten Years before the thirty ſixth Year of *Aſa.* It is a ſhort Way of ſolving this which *Joſephus* ſeems to take, *Lib.* viii. *Ant. Cap.* 6. by ſuppoſing a Miſtake in the Tranſcriber from the Original Copy, in which it was not the *ſix and thirtieth* of *Aſa*'s Reign, but the *ſix and twentieth*, which was the laſt Year of the Reign of *Baaſha*; who died, he thinks, immediately after *Benhadad* had defeated his Intentions of building *Ramah*; but moſt think this too bold a Suppoſal; and therefore I gave in few Words another Account of this Difficulty in my *Notes* upon 1 *Kings* xvi. 8. *viz.* that this was the ſix and thirtieth Year ſince the Diviſion of the Kingdom, after the Death of *Solomon*, when *Iſrael* was rent from *Judah:* For ſo many Years were now paſt ſince that Time; *viz.* twenty Years in the Reign of *Rehoboam* and *Abijah*, and fifteen of *Aſa*'s Reign, when many of the *Iſraelites* came to him, (xv. 10.) Thus *Sedar Olam Rabba, Ralbag, Abarbinel* alſo, with a great Number of eminent modern Writers, both Proteſtants and Papiſts; ſuch as *Junius, Piſcator, Cocceius, Jacobus Capellus, Lightfoot, Mariana, Torniellus, Sanctius, Salianus* and *Petavius* himſelf, with many others. It is not ſaid indeed, that *Baaſha* came up in the thirty ſixth Year of the *Kingdom of Judah*, but in that Year of the Reign of King *Aſa:* But they make Account, that the Kingdom of *Judah* and of *Aſa* were all one, and ſo they might eaſily be put one for the other. And whereas it is objected, That the Scripture is not wont to reckon the Years of any King from any other Term, but the Time wherein he began to reign; they produce an Example to the contrary from 2 *Sam.* xv. 7. where *Abſalom* is ſaid to have gone to *Hebron* in the End of forty Years, and there conſpired againſt his Father; which Years *Sedar Olam* reckons from the Beginning of the Kingdom, or the Inauguration of *Saul.* And our Dr. *Lightfoot* alledges another Inſtance in the *thirty ſixth* Chapter of this Book, *v.* 9. where *Jehoiachin* is ſaid to be eight Years old, when he began to reign; that is, ſaid he, in the eighth Year of *Nebuchadnezzar:* For he was eighteen Years old, as appears from 2 *Kings* xxiv. 8. But this Difference, I think, may be better reconciled another Way, as I ſhall obſerve on that Place. I ſhall here only add, that as this is the moſt ancient Way of ſolving this Difficulty, ſo they that go another are forc'd to ſuppoſe, that theſe Words do not relate to the Beginning of the Reign of *Aſa*, but to ſomething elſe; for Inſtance, to the Beginning of his *Wars with Iſrael*, which *Kimchi* endeavours to make out; but I ſhall not trouble the Reader with it, for many good Men think *Joſephus* in the Right.

And built Ramah,] That is, made a Wall about it, and fortified it.

To the Intent that he might let none go out, or come in to Aſa King of Judah.] The late Defection of ſo many of his Subjects, as fell from him to the Houſe of *David* (xv. 9.) was the Occaſion of ſetting a ſtrong Guard in this Place, which was the Paſſage between the Dominions of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, 1 *Kings* xv. 17.

Ver. 2. *Then Aſa brought out Silver and Gold, out of the Treaſures of the Houſe of the LORD, and of the King's Houſe, and ſent to Ben-hadad King of Syria, that dwelt at Damaſcus, ſaying,*]

This is a little more largely related in 1 *Kings* xv. 18. See my *Notes* there.

Ver. 3. *There is a League between me and thee, as there was between my Father and thy Father: behold, I have ſent thee Silver and Gold; go, break thy League with Baaſha King of Iſrael, that he may depart from me.*

Ver. 4. *And Ben-hadad hearkened unto King Aſa, and ſent the Captains of his Armies againſt the Cities of Iſrael; and they ſmote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-maim, and all the Store-Cities of Naphtali.*

Ver. 5. *And it came to paſs, when Baaſha heard it, that he left off building of Ramah, and let his Work ceaſe.*

Ver. 6. *Then Aſa the King took all Judah, and they carried away the Stones of Ramah, and the Timber thereof; wherewith Baaſha was a building, and he built therewith Geba and Mizpah.*] Theſe four Verſes are the very ſame (with ſmall Variation) with thoſe in 1 *Kings* xv. 19, 20, 21, 29. See my *Notes* there.

Ver. 7. *And at that Time Hanani the Seer came to Aſa King of Judah, and ſaid unto him,*] Here follows a remarkable Hiſtory added to what we read in the Book of the *Kings:* Which relates the great Weakneſs of *Aſa* in his declining Years, and God's Diſpleaſure at it.

Becauſe thou haſt relied on the King of Syria, and not relied on the LORD thy God,] Who had promiſed great Victories to him, by the Prophet *Azariah*, if he did well, xv. 7.

Therefore is the Hoſt of the King of Syria eſcaped out of thine Hand.] Whom God would have overthrown, as he did the *Ethiopians*, if they had continued their League with *Baaſha*, and come to his Aſſiſtance againſt *Aſa*. But now the *Syrians* were reſerved to be a Scourge to his Family.

Ver. 8. *Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge Hoſt, with very many Chariots and Horſemen?*] See xiv. 9. By the *Lubims* are meant the People of *Libya*, or the *Africans* beyond *Egypt*; who are ſometimes in Scripture called *Phut*, and ſometimes *Lubim*, from the *Arabick* Word *Lub*, which ſignifies dry or thirſty, as *Bochartus* obſerves: For ſuch was the Country which this People inhabited, *Terra ſitiens*, (as *Lucian* calls it) *a thirſty Land.* They are noted by Authors to have had abundance of Horſemen and Chariots, in which they fought, as *Xenophon* tells us. And *Herodotus* ſaith, the *Greeks* learnt from them τέτρορας ἵππους ζευγνῦναι, *to yoke four Horſes together to draw a Chariot.*

Yet becauſe thou didſt rely on the LORD, he delivered them into thine Hand.] See xiv. 11. The Words of *Conradus Pellicanus* upon this Verſe are ſo pious, that I think fit to tranſcribe them. "*Aſa* committed a triple Offence; in "diſtruſting the Goodneſs of God for Help, "and calling to his Aid an Infidel and impious "King; when he had lately had ſuch an Ex"periment of God's Clemency in his Triumph "over the King of *Ethiopia*. Nothing of"fends God ſo much as Diſtruſt in his Good"neſs toward the Faithful; as an entire Faith "and Confidence in his Mercy pleaſes him a"bove all Things. Upon which Account *Da*"*vid* was ſo highly in his Favour, tho' other"wiſe guilty of ſundry Crimes."

Ver. 9. *For the Eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole Earth, to ſhew himſelf ſtrong in the Behalf of them, whoſe Heart is perfect towards him.*] He exerciſes a moſt watchful Providence over thoſe throughout the whole World, who ſincerely commit themſelves unto him, and depend upon him in well-doing, and will not fail to protect them. For theſe Words, as Mr. *Mede* obſerves, are of the ſame Import with thoſe in the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, iv. 11. where *the ſeven Eyes of the LORD* are ſaid to *run to and fro thro' the Earth*; which took ſuch Care of that one Stone which *Zerubbabel* had laid for the Foundation of the Temple, that the Work could not be diſappointed, but ſhould certainly at length be finiſhed, Par. i. Diſcourſe 10.

Herein thou haſt done fooliſhly; therefore from henceforth thou ſhalt have Wars.] The Heart of *Aſa* is ſaid to have been *perfect all his Days*, in the foregoing Chapter, *v.* 17. And ſo it was in the Matter of the outward Worſhip of God at the Temple; of which he was there ſpeaking. But in the latter End of his Life he was defective in his inward Truſt and Confidence in God: Which is called *Fooliſhneſs*; both becauſe it was a ſinful Thing, and very pernicious. For God expoſed him to his Enemies, as a Puniſhment for relying on Man more than his Friendſhip.

Ver. 10. *Then Aſa was wroth with the Seer,*] This was ſtill a greater Sin, to be ſo angry with his Reprover (tho' he had his Commiſſion from God) as to put him in Priſon. But Anger is no good Adviſer; and when Men forget God, they are not themſelves.

And put him in a Priſon Houſe;] In the Stocks which were in the Priſon, as *Tremellius* tranſlates it, *in domum cippi.*

For he was in a Rage with him, becauſe of this Thing.] For which he ought to have thanked, and rewarded him.

And Aſa oppreſſed ſome of the People at the ſame Time.] He inſlaved them, as the *Targum* tranſlates it; that is, in the latter Part of his Reign he grew ſomething tyrannical, and no Wonder, when he relied not upon God, but upon human Power, and was full of Pride and Paſſion.

Ver. 11. *And behold, the Acts of Aſa, firſt and laſt, lo, they are written in the Books of the Kings of Judah and Iſrael.*] Not in theſe Books of the *Kings* which we have in the Bible: But in thoſe written by the Prophets, mentioned xii. 15.

Ver. 12. *And Aſa in the thirty and ninth Year of his Reign, was diſeaſed in his Feet until his Diſeaſe was exceeding great:*] He had the Gout; which increaſed to ſuch an Heighth, that he died of it, as *Pellicanus* thinks: Which was a juſt Puniſhment upon him, for putting the Prophet's Feet in the Stocks. *Ut per id quod peccaverat, per id puniretur*; That his Offence might be ſeen in his Puniſhment.

Yet in his Diſeaſe he ſought not to the LORD, but to the Phyſicians.] It was not a Fault that he deſired the Help of Phyſicians; but that he truſted to their Skill, more than to the Goodneſs and Power of God; which he did not implore, but continued in his former Fault, of putting Confidence in Man. And ſo *Grotius* thinks, he did not ſin in ſeeking Help from the *Syrians*, but in truſting to them more than God,

and

and hiring them with Things conſecrated to God, *Lib.* ii. *De Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap.* xv. *Sect.* 9. An excellent Perſon whom I have often mentioned (Dr. *Alix*) is of Opinion, that theſe Phyſicians were Heathens; for we never read of any before in the ſacred Story, but among the *Egyptians*: And the Heathen Phyſicians in thoſe Days were a ſort of Charmers.

Ver. 13. *And Aſa ſlept with his Fathers, and died in the one and fortieth Year of his Reign.*

Ver. 14. *And they buried him in his own Sepulchres, which he had made for himſelf in the City of David,*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, they buried him *in his Sepulchres*; the Plural Number being uſed, as many think, for the Singular; which is frequent in the Scripture: But the Words rather reſpect the Form of their Monuments in that Nation, which contained many Sepulchres: That is, ſeveral Cells wherein dead Bodies were laid. And it is likely, he made one for himſelf, which he added to the reſt of the Sepulchres in that Vault, or Monument.

And laid him in the Bed, which was filled with ſweet Odours, and divers Kinds of Spices prepared by the Apothecaries Art:] To all his other Offences he added this Vanity, (as *Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) that he ordered his Body to be buried after the Manner of the *Gentiles*, rather than like the People of God: Tho' it muſt be confeſſed, it was an ancient Cuſtom to embalm Bodies, which was uſed in the Burial of *Jacob*. But what is here related doth not ſeem to be meant of any thing done to the Body, but to the Bed on which it lay; which, among the *Romans*, was very ſtately for great Perſons. See *Suetonius* in the Life of *Julius Cæſar*, Cap. 84. For the Heathens were wont to burn their Goods with them, to ſerve them in the other World.

And they made a very great Burning for him.] The *Greeks* and *Romans* burnt dead Bodies; throwing Frankincenſe, Myrrh, Caſſia, and other fragrant Things into the Fire: And theſe in ſuch vaſt Quantity, that *Pliny* repreſents it as a Piece of Profaneneſs, to beſtow ſuch Heaps of Frankincenſe upon a dead Body, when they offered it to their Gods by Crumbs, *Lib.* xii. *Nat. Hiſt. Cap.* 18. But the *Iſraelites* had no ſuch Cuſtom; but from the ancient *Egyptians* perhaps learnt the Cuſtom, not of burning Bodies, but of burning many Spices at their Funerals; as we find not only here, but at the Funeral of *Jehoram*, *c.* xxi. 9. and of *Zedekiah*, *Jerem.* xxxiv. 5. *Kimchi* here ſays, that they burnt the Bed on which they lay, and other Houſhold-Stuff, that none might have the Honour to uſe them when they were gone.

If we may believe what the *Jews* ſay in *Juchaſin*, when *Gamaliel* the Son of *Simeon*, the Grand-child of *Hillel* (at whoſe Feet St. *Paul* ſat) was buried, *Onkelos* burnt ſeventy Pound of Frankincenſe upon his Sepulchre. But this is a Fable invented to raiſe the Credit of the *Targum* of *Onkelos*, which was not known till many Ages after. But the beſt of the *Jews* believe this burning of ſweet Spices and Woods was firſt intended, merely to prevent the Offence which the Smell of dead Bodies might poſſibly ſometimes give. But the Vanity of ſome Men made them exceed beyond Neceſſity.

CHAP. XVII.

Ver. 1. *AND Jehoſhaphat his Son reigned in his ſtead, and ſtrengthened himſelf againſt Iſrael.*] The firſt Thing he did after he came to the Crown, was to put his Kingdom in a good Poſture of Defence, againſt the King and People of *Iſrael*; who had given Diſturbance to his Father, xvi. 1, &c.

Ver. 2. *And he placed Forces in all the fenced Cities of Judah, and ſet Gariſons in the Land of Judah, and in the Cities of Ephraim, which Aſa his Father had taken.*] He fortified his frontier Cities, and increaſed the Gariſons in the reſt of the Country, and in thoſe Cities which his Father took from *Iſrael*. We do not read indeed of any Cities that *Aſa* took, but *Abijah* poſſeſſed himſelf of ſeveral, which *Aſa* kept and took for his own, xiii. 19. and *Jehoſhaphat* put ſuch Forces in them as might ſecure them to himſelf.

Ver. 3. *And the LORD was with Jehoſhaphat,*] The *Targum*, according to the uſual Language of that Paraphraſt, ſaith, *The WORD of the LORD was his Helper.*

Becauſe he walked in the firſt Ways of his Father David,] Before he committed thoſe foul Sins, in the Matter of *Urijah*; but ſome read it, *of his Father, and of David*, for *Aſa* in the Beginning of his Reign was very pious, as *David* was. And thus it is ſome Reflection upon *Aſa*, for his Offences in the latter End of his Life: His Son being noted to have followed him as he was in his *firſt* Days, not in his old Age.

And ſought not unto Baalim.] Which were the Gods worſhipped in all the Eaſtern Countries round about them.

Ver. 4. *But ſought the LORD God of his Father, and walked in his Commandments, and not after the Doings of Iſrael.*] As he worſhipped not the Gods of other Countries, ſo he did not join with the *Iſraelites* in worſhipping God by the Calves.

Ver. 5. *Therefore the LORD eſtabliſhed the Kingdom in his Hand, and all Judah brought up Jehoſhaphat Preſents,*] As they uſed to do in thoſe Countries, in the Beginning of their King's Reign. See 1 *Sam.* x. 27, 28. and 1 *Kings* x. 25.

And he had Riches and Honour in Abundance.] Riches procure Men Honour, when they make ſuch a good Uſe of them, as he did.

Ver. 6. *And his Heart was lift up in the Ways of the LORD:*] He had very generous Reſolutions, as *Strigelius* renders it, to promote the true Worſhip of God, and all Goodneſs; his Mind being raiſed above all Fear and Diſcouragement.

Moreover, he took away the high Places and Groves out of Judah.] The Meaning is plain, that thoſe high Places wherein they ſacrificed to Idols, he deſtroyed, as *Aſa* had done in the Beginning of his Reign; but in the latter End, ſome had reſtored them again. There is no need therefore of their Amendment, who fancy that anciently inſtead of *Veoth*, *moreover*, there

was *Velo, he did not*; that ſo it may agree with 1 *Kings* xxii. 43. and with the *twentieth* Chapter of this Book, *v.* 33. As if the Meaning was, that tho' he was couragious above all that had been before him; yet the People were ſo accuſtomed to Sacrifices in high Places, that he durſt not take them away. This is true, that where they offered to the true God, he did not take them away; but thoſe wherein Idols were worſhipped were aboliſhed.

Ver. 7. *Alſo in the third Year of his Reign, he ſent to his Princes, even to Ben-hail, and to Obadiah, and to Zechariah, and to Nethaneel, and to Michaiah, to teach in the Cities of Judah.*] He ſent ſome that were of his Counſel, to ſee the People taught; by removing all Impediments, and making the People come to hear the *Prieſts* and the *Levites*; for it had been to little Purpoſe to take away their Idols, if they had not been withal better inſtructed: And the *Prieſts* and the *Levites* would not have had much Authority among the People, if they had not been back'd by ſuch great Perſons as are here mentioned. *Grotius* indeed will have it, that theſe great Men did themſelves inſtruct the People: For, as the *Jews* obſerve, it was not proper to the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, but all learned Men might teach the People; and theſe who were of the King's Counſel were certainly learned in the Law. But the two next Verſes tell us, that *Prieſts* and *Levites* were ſent along with them, *who taught in Judah*; and therefore I take the Meaning to be, that *Jehoſhaphat* being very deſirous to have the People underſtand their Duty, took this ſingular and extraordinary Courſe to ſend ſome *Princes*, together with the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, upon this weighty Buſineſs: The latter, that they might teach the People, the former to ſee them do it carefully, and require the People to come and receive Inſtruction, and to be obedient to what they heard. Thus *Jarchi* and other Interpreters explain it; *It belonged to the Prieſts and Levites to inform the People of their Duty, as it is written*, Deut. xxiv. 8. *and theſe political Perſons went along with them, to quicken the People to hear them, and compel them to obey them, and do according to their Commands.* See *Nehem.* viii. 9. *Campegius Vitringa* hath a long Diſcourſe to this Purpoſe in his *Synag. Vet.* Par. ii. Lib. i. Cap. 9. where he takes this to be an Indication that the People in thoſe Times had little ſolemn publick Inſtruction; and thinks it a good Proof that there were no Synagogues in the Country in thoſe Days, as there were in After-times, wherein the People were conſtantly inſtructed in the Senſe of the Divine Law. Mr. *Thorndike* indeed rightly obſerves, that the Words of *Moſes*, *Deut.* xxiv. 8. are not rightly alledged by *Jarchi* to this Purpoſe; but there is another Place, *Deut.* xvi. 18. from whence he alſo concludes (*Religious Aſſemblies*, p. 23.) that this Teaching conſiſted in declaring the Obligation of the Law by the Judges of it, the *Prieſts* and *Levites*; and the Princes were Officers with Power to inforce the Execution of it. See *Malachi* ii. 7.

Ver. 8. *And with them he ſent Levites, even Shemaiah, and Nethaniah, and Zebadiah, and Aſahel, and Shemiramoth, and Jehonathan, and Adonijah, and Tobijah, and Tob-adonijah, Levites.*] Theſe, no doubt, were eminent Men among the *Levites*, as the two Prieſts *Eliſhama*, and *Jehoram* were, who were joined with them.

Ver. 9. *And they taught in Judah, and had the Book of the Law of the LORD with them,*] That they might teach with the greater Authority, by reciting the very Words of that ſacred Book. But from hence *Vitringa* argues, that the Books of *Moſes* were ſcarce among the People in thoſe Days: For if there had been then publick Synagogues, wherein the Law had been read (as it was afterward, every Sabbath-day) there had been no need of carrying a Copy of the Law with them; which they might have had in every Synagogue.

And went about throughout all the Cities of Judah, and taught the People.] Which is too plain an Argument, that there were not ſettled Teachers in every City; who on all Occaſions inſtructed the People: Nor doth it appear by this Hiſtory, that theſe great Men who were ſent to ſee the People inſtructed, ſettled ſuch conſtant Teachers in every City, to inſtruct them when they were gone. The *Prieſts* and *Levites*, no doubt, were ready to teach the People in their Cities where they dwelt: And there is good Reaſon to think, that moſt Part of the Prophets, who were the great Inſtructors of the People, were *Prieſts* and *Levites*. But it is as certain, that the Charge of teaching the People belonged to thoſe Prophets who were not *Prieſts* and *Levites*, as much as to thoſe that were, as Mr. *Thorndike* obſerves in the ſame Place.

Ver. 10. *And the Fear of the LORD fell upon all the Kingdoms of the Lands, that were round about Judah, ſo that they made no War againſt Jehoſhaphat.*] God took care to prevent any Diſturbance, while they were about this pious Work, by ſtriking a Terror into all their Neighbours; who, it is likely, were ſenſible, that it was in vain to aſſault them, while they continued firm in their Religion. For they could not but obſerve how much their Proſperity depended on that; and that they never fell into their Enemies Hands, but when they fell off from God.

Ver. 11. *Alſo ſome of the Philiſtines brought Jehoſhaphat Preſents, and Tribute Silver*;] They were ſo far from giving him any Diſturbance, that ſome of his Neighbours complimented him by Preſents, and voluntarily paid their Tribute; which, it is likely, they had neglected in the Time of ſome of his Predeceſſors; tho' impoſed on them by *David*, who had conquered the *Philiſtines*.

And the Arabians brought him Flocks, ſeven thouſand and ſeven hundred Rams, and ſeven thouſand and ſeven hundred He-goats.] The Riches of the *Arabians* conſiſted in Cattle, as *Fuller* obſerves out of *Strabo* and *Pliny*, in his *Miſcellanies*, Lib. iii. Cap. 16. And the Scripture informs us, how they abounded in both ſorts of Flocks here mentioned, *Iſaiah* lx. 7. *Ezek.* xxvii. 21. And theſe perhaps were their Tribute, they having been brought under the *Jews*: Or rather their Preſent, by which they ſought *Jehoſhaphat*'s Friendſhip, and put themſelves under his Protection.

Ver.

Ver. 12. *And Jehoſhaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah Caſtles, and Cities of Store.*] He built very ſtrong Towers (as *Jarchi* underſtands it) and Cities wherein he laid up Proviſions of Wine and Corn.

Ver. 13. *And he had much Buſineſs in the Cities of Judah:*] To ſettle Religion, and purge out Idolatry; as well as to provide for their Safety, by Fortifications, and whatſoever was neceſſary for the Preſervation of publick Tranquillity.

And the Men of War, mighty Men of Valour, were in Jeruſalem.] He kept the principal Officers in his Army near to himſelf; that he might adviſe with them upon any Emergency.

Ver. 14. *And theſe are the Numbers of them according to the Houſe of their Fathers: of Judah, the Captains of Thouſands; Adna the Chief, and with him mighty Men of Valour, three hundred thouſand.*] He mentions only the Commanders in Chief; under whom were a great Number of Captains of Thouſands, and Captains of Hundreds, who are not named.

Ver. 15. *And next to him was Jehohanan the Captain, and with him two hundred and fourſcore thouſand.*] In the *Hebrew*, (as it is noted in the Margin) the firſt Words are, *at his Hand* was, *&c.* Which may ſeem to import, that he was Lieutenant-General (as we ſpeak) to the former great Man, who aſſiſts him in the Management of that Army. But the following Words plainly ſignify, that he was another Commander in Chief, having under him a great Body of Men, tho' not equal to the former. And as the *Targum* tranſlates the firſt Words (whom *Jarchi* follows) he encamped near to the former.

Ver. 16. *And next to him was Amaſiah the Son of Zichri, who willingly offered himſelf unto the LORD; and with him two hundred thouſand mighty Men of Valour.*] Some think, he ſerved as a Voluntier, without any Stipend; or that he vowed himſelf to the Service. *Kimchi* thinks that he offered Gold and Silver to the Treaſury, for the Service of the LORD.

Ver. 17. *And of Benjamin; Eliada a mighty Man of Valour, and with him armed Men, with Bow and Shield, two hundred thouſand.*] All the former were of *Judah*; now he mentions thoſe of *Benjamin*, and the eminent Perſons who commanded them.

Ver. 18. *And next him was Jehozabad, and with him an hundred and fourſcore thouſand, ready prepared for the War.*] See *v.* 16. If we put all theſe Numbers of valiant Men together, they make a great Demonſtration of the wonderful Bleſſings of God upon *Jehoſhaphat:* Who, tho' he had little more than the third part of the Kingdom which *David* had, yet went much beyond him, in Proportion, in the Number of able Men that were ſubject to him. For *David* when he numbred the People, found but thirteen hundred thouſand; and *Jehoſhaphat* had ſeveral Bodies of good Troops, which all together amounted to eleven hundred and ſixty thouſand; not reckoning the Gariſons, which were in the ſtrong Holds. Nor is there any thing incredible in this, for we read the like in prophane Hiſtories. The great *Thebes*, for Inſtence, (as *Tacitus* relates in his *Annales*, Lib. ii.) furniſhed ſeven hundred thouſand Soldiers, of its own Inhabitants alone. But it is farther obſervable, how God bleſſed the Reign of theſe two laſt Kings, *Aſa* and *Jehoſhaphat*; in that when *Abijah* the Father of *Aſa* could ſcarce bring into the Field four hundred thouſand Men, (xiii. 3.) his Grand-ſon was able to muſter almoſt three times that Number.

Ver. 19. *Theſe waited on the King,*] That is, theſe great Men, who had ſuch numerous Forces at their Command, attended the King's Perſon always, whereſoever he went.

Beſides thoſe whom the King put in the fenced Cities, throughout all Judah.] He made Governors of all ſtrong Places, who conſtantly attended their Duty there, and were under the Direction of the great Men before-mentioned; who did not only wait upon the King, but, as *Pellicanus* conjectures, preſided over the whole Kingdom, and were ready upon any Occaſion to ſend abroad the King's Orders, and take Care of the publick Concerns.

CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jehoſhaphat had Riches, and Honour in Abundance,*] So he had before this Time, (xvii. 5.) but now they were more increaſed.

And joined Affinity with Ahab.] For his Son married *Athaliah* the Daughter of *Ahab*, 2 *Kings* viii. 18. and *Chap.* xxi. *ver.* 6. of this Book. His great Proſperity tempted him to this Affinity with an abominable Idolater; having ſome Conceit, perhaps, that he might again unite by this Marriage, the two Kingdoms of *Iſrael* and *Judah*.

Ver. 2. *And after certain Years,*] After there had been Peace three Years between *Iſrael* and *Syria*, as it is explained, 1 *Kings* xxii. 1.

He went down to Ahab to Samaria.] The Affinity between them, was the Occaſion, I ſuppoſe, of this Viſit.

And Ahab killed Sheep and Oxen for him in abundance, and for the People that were with him,] He entertained both *Jehoſhaphat* and all his Attendants, with great Splendor: Which is not mentioned in the Book of the *Kings*, tho' the Subſtance of this Chapter is the ſame with that above-mentioned; and is there explained.

And perſuaded him to go up with him to Ramoth-gilead.] He careſſed him ſo at this Feaſt, and uſed ſuch Arguments as prevailed with him to undertake this Expedition.

Ver. 3. *And Ahab King of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat King of Judah, Wilt thou go up with me to Ramoth-gilead?*] What he had conſented unto in the midſt of their Merriment, he ſeems now to reſolve more deliberately. See 1 *Kings* xxii. 4.

And he anſwered him, I am as thou art, and my People as thy People, and will be with thee in the War.] The Prophet *Hanani* had given his Father a Caution againſt this, xvi. 7. and *Jehoſhaphat* is reproved for it afterwards, *c.* xix. 2. xx. 37. The *Targum* expounds the laſt Words thus, *That which happens to thee, ſhall happen to me, in this War.*

Ver. 4. *And Jehoſhaphat ſaid unto the King of Iſrael, Enquire, I pray thee, at the Word of the LORD to Day.*

Ver. 5. *Therefore the King of Iſrael gathered together of Prophets four hundred Men, and ſaid unto them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to Battle, or ſhall I forbear? And they ſaid, Go up; for God will deliver it into the King's Hand.*

Ver. 6. *But Jehoſhaphat ſaid, Is there not here a Prophet of the LORD beſides, that we might enquire of him?*] Theſe three Verſes are the ſame in Senſe, and almoſt in Words, with thoſe which I have explained in 1 *Kings* xxii. 5, 6, 7.

Ver. 7. *And the King of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat, There is yet one Man, by whom we may enquire of the LORD: but I hate him; for he never propheſieth good unto me, but always evil: the ſame is Micaiah, the Son of Imla. And Jehoſhaphat ſaid, Let not the King ſay ſo.*] See there *v.* 8.

Ver. 8. *And the King of Iſrael called for one of his Officers, and ſaid, Fetch quickly Micaiah the Son of Imla.*] He ſeems to have thought, that *Micaiah* would be backward to come, becauſe he knew the King's Hatred to him; and therefore he bids the Officer (who was a Perſon of Quality) quicken him.

Ver. 9. *And the King of Iſrael, and Jehoſhaphat King of Judah, ſat either of them on his Throne, clothed in their Robes, and they ſat in a void Place, at the entring in of the Gate of Samaria,*] The very ſame we read there *v.* 10. And the *Targum* explains it thus; *they ſat in a Semicircle*, as the Court of Judgment uſed to do, that they might ſee one another, and all the People ſtood before them.

And all the Prophets propheſied before them.] All the *falſe Prophets*, as the *Targum* underſtands it, who pretended to the Gift of Prophecy, which the following Words ſhew to be the Meaning.

Ver. 10. *And Zedekiah the Son of Chenaanah, had made him Horns of Iron, and ſaid, Thus ſaith the LORD, with theſe thou ſhalt puſh Syria, until they be conſumed.*

Ver. 11. *And all the Prophets propheſied ſo, ſaying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and proſper: for the LORD ſhall deliver it into the Hand of the King.*

Ver. 12. *And the Meſſenger that went to call Micaiah, ſpake to him, ſaying, Behold, the Words of the Prophets declare good to the King with one Aſſent: let thy Word therefore, I pray thee, be like one of theirs, and ſpeak thou good.*

Ver. 13. *And Micaiah ſaid, as the LORD liveth, even what my God ſaith, that will I ſpeak.*] There is no Difference between theſe Verſes, and thoſe in 1 *Kings* xxii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Ver. 14. *And when he was come to the King, the King ſaid unto him, Micaiah, ſhall we go up to Ramoth-gilead to Battle, or ſhall I forbear? and he ſaid, Go ye up, and proſper, and they ſhall be delivered into your Hand.*

Ver. 15. *And the King ſaid to him, How many times ſhall I adjure thee, that thou ſay nothing but the Truth to me, in the Name of the LORD?*

Ver. 16. *Then he ſaid, I did ſee all Iſrael ſcattered upon the Mountains, as Sheep that have no Shepherd; and the LORD ſaid, Theſe have no Maſter; let them return therefore every Man to his Houſe in Peace.*

Ver. 17. *(And the King of Iſrael ſaid to Jehoſhaphat, Did I not tell thee, that he would not propheſy good unto me, but evil?)*

Ver. 18. *Again he ſaid, Therefore hear the Word of the LORD.*] Some think, he ſpake theſe Words to the By-ſtanders: But this is confuted by 1 *Kings* xxii. 19. where the Words are, *hear thou therefore*, ſpeaking again to the King.

In all that follows to the End of the Chapter, there is ſcarce any Difference between it, and what is recorded in the Book of the *Kings*, where I have explained it; and will not here tranſcribe what the Reader may find there.

CHAP. XIX.

Ver. 1. *AND Jehoſhaphat King of Judah returned to his Houſe in Peace to Jeruſalem.*] I ſuppoſe, as ſoon as the Battle was over, he immediately went to *Jeruſalem*; to return Thanks to God for his wonderful Preſervation.

Ver. 2. *And Jehu the Son of Hanani the Seer,*] See 1 *Kings* xvi. 1.

Went out to meet him,] Before he came into the City: That being admoniſhed by him, he might be the more affected with the Mercy of God towards him in his Deliverance.

And ſaid to King Jehoſhaphat, Shouldeſt thou help the Ungodly, and love them that hate the LORD?] As much as to ſay, This is contrary to common Reaſon, which taught the *Gentiles* to make no Friendſhip with ſuch as were God's Enemies. So *Callimachus* in his Hymn to *Ceres*, *v.* 117, 118.

Δάμητερ, μὴ τῆνος ἐμὶν φίλος, ὅς τοι ἀπεχθὴς,
Ἔξαι, μηδ' ὁμότοιχος, ἐμοὶ κακογείτονες ἐχθροί.

O Ceres, *he ſhall be none of my Friend, who is hated by thee: Nor ſhall he live under my Roof: Such Neighbours are odious unto me.* Where the illuſtrious *Spanhemius* hath obſerved many the like Sayings among the *Heathens*; and ſhews, how the ancient *Greeks* abhorred to lodge in the ſame Houſe with a Murderer, or other grievous Criminals; with whom they would not eat, much leſs be with them in their ſacred Aſſemblies; looking upon them as impure Creatures.

Therefore is Wrath upon thee from before the LORD.] Upon which Account God threatens to puniſh him: Which ſome think he did by raiſing ſuch numerous Enemies to invade him, as we read of in the next Chapter. But moſt of all, by ſuffering all his Sons to be murdered by their elder Brother, *c.* xxi. 4. And his Grand-children by *Jehu*, 2 *Kings* ix. 27. *c.* x. 13, 14.

Ver. 3. *Nevertheleſs, there are good Things found in thee,*] For the ſake of which, he ſo far pardoned his Error, as not to puniſh him in his own Perſon, but in his Poſterity.

In that thou haſt taken away the Groves out of the Land, and haſt prepared thine Heart to ſeek God.] The chief Thing wherein he pleaſed God was by aboliſhing idolatrous Worſhip; which he had done rigorouſly, and ſerved God with a ſincere Heart.

Ver. 4. *And Jehoſhaphat dwelt at Jeruſalem:*] Being ſettled at *Jeruſalem* after his Viſit to *Ahab* and the War with *Syria*, he had Time to reflect upon his Eſcape out of the late Battle, and the Reproof of the Prophet: At which he was ſo far

from being angry (as his Father *Aſa* had been, *c.* xvi. 7.) that he laid it to Heart, and ſeriouſly reſolved upon a farther Reformation, in other Matters, as well as Religion.

And he went out again through the People,] He had ſent out his Officers before (*c.* xvii. 7.) who went out by his Authority, and acted in his Name, about this very Buſineſs; but now he went in Perſon, as then by his Orders.

From Beerſheba to Mount Ephraim,] The former of theſe had always been the utmoſt Bound Southward of the Tribe of *Judah:* And the latter, ſince the Diviſion of the Kingdom, had been the Northern Bound, as before the Diviſion was *Dan.*

And brought them back unto the LORD *God of their Fathers.*] Since the laſt Reformation, it ſeems ſome had revolted to their former Idolatry, whom he now reduced; eſpecially thoſe Cities which his Father had taken in Mount *Ephraim* (*c.* xv. 8.) who being *Iſraelites*, might have been drawn in again to worſhip the Calves.

Ver. 5. *And he ſet Judges in the Land, throughout all the fenced Cities of Judah, City by City.*] That is, in every one of theſe Cities. Or, as *Bertram* thinks it ſhould be tranſlated, *for City and City:* That is, he placed Judges in the principal Cities, unto which all Cauſes were brought from the leſſer Cities and Villages. This was a Means both to have Juſtice done between Man and Man, and alſo to preſerve them in the Worſhip of God, when Judges were ready at Hand, to call thoſe to an Account, who went after other Gods.

Ver. 6. *And ſaid to the Judges, Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for Man, but for the* LORD, *who is with you in the Judgment.*] He gave them this very ſolemn Admonition, when he ſettled them in their Places. Which the *Targum* thus tranſlates, *Ye do not judge before the Sons of Men, but before the* WORD *of the* LORD; *and his glorious Preſence reſides among you in the Act of Judgment.* Which is a moſt illuſtrious Teſtimony that the ancient *Jews* believed more Perſons than one in the Deity.

Ver. 7. *Wherefore now, let the fear of the* LORD *be upon you, take heed and do it:*] That is, do as I command you, judge according to the Law: For ſuch as God is, ſuch you ought to be, ſince you are in his Place.

For there is no Iniquity with the LORD *our God, nor Reſpect of Perſons, nor taking of Gifts.*] He bids them remember that as the Nature of God is perfectly juſt, ſo he cannot be moved to do Iniquity by Reſpect to the greateſt, or Pity to the meaneſt, or by any Gift be bribed to do unjuſtly; whom they ought to imitate, being intruſted by him with his Authority.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, in Jeruſalem did Jehoſhaphat ſet of the Levites, and of the Prieſts, and of the Chief of the Fathers of Iſrael,*] Many were of Opinion, that as before he ſpeaks of the Courts conſiſting of XXIII Judges, which were ſettled in every conſiderable City of the Kingdom; ſo here he ſpeaks of the High Court of all, conſiſting of LXX, called by the *Jews* the *Great Sanhedrin* ſitting at *Jeruſalem*; whither Appeals were made in all Cauſes, that could not be determined below. But if this be true, *Jehoſhaphat* was the firſt that we can find who ſettled this excellent Conſtitution: Of which we can find no Footſteps in the Books of *Joſhua*, *Judges*, *Ruth*, *Samuel*, or in the foregoing *Kings*, as I have diſcours'd at large upon *Deut.* xvi. 18. xvii. 9. See my Notes there. And there is little in the ſucceeding Times to perſuade us of it; for *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* ſet up no ſuch Judicature, as that the *Jews* call *Sanhedrin*; which ſeems to have been wiſely conſtituted, when they fell under the Government of the *Macedonian* Princes, from whoſe Language they borrowed the Name. Tho' *Jehoſhaphat* therefore ſettled Judges in *Jeruſalem*, yet the Number of them is not certain.

For the Judgment of the LORD, *and for Controverſies,*] Theſe Words are variouſly expounded, ſome underſtanding by the *Judgment of the* LORD, Cauſes about ſacred Matters, others pecuniary Matters; and by *Controverſies*, ſome underſtanding Civil Cauſes, others Criminal and Capital. It is ſufficient, I think, to ſay, they tried all Sorts of Cauſes.

When they returned to Jeruſalem.] That is, when *Jehoſhaphat*, and thoſe that attended him, returned from the other Cities, where they had appointed Judges (*ver.* 5.) he conſtituted this ſupreme Court in the chief City of his Kingdom. I ſay, ſupreme *Court*, for there were not two of them, one for Eccleſiaſtical, the other for Civil Cauſes, as ſome have imagined: But one Court judged both, as *Grotius* hath very well proved, from the very Account here given of this Matter. For *Jehoſhaphat* bids theſe Judges try *what Cauſe ſoever ſhould come to them*, ver. 10. and adds, *between Blood and Blood, between Law and Commandment, Statutes and Judgments:* Which ſhews there was no Kind of Buſineſs in Controverſy, which did not come before this one Court. Nor do thoſe Words, *ver.* 11. prove the contrary, as he ſhews in his Book, *De Imperio ſum. Poteſt. circa Sacra*, Cap. xi. Sect. 15.

Ver. 9. *And he charged them, ſaying, Thus ſhall ye do in the Fear of the* LORD, *faithfully, and with a perfect Heart.*] He gives them the ſame ſolemn Charge, which he had given the other Judges (*ver.* 7.) that having the Fear of God before their Eyes, they ſhould do righteous Judgment, and not ſuffer themſelves to be any way corrupted; for God would judge all over again.

It is a moſt memorable Saying of *Cicero*; That Judges being ſworn to do Juſtice, ſhould remember when they come to paſs Sentence, *Deum ſe habere teſtem, id eſt, ut ego arbitror, mentem ſuam, qua nihil homini dedit ipſe Deus divinius:* That he hath God a Witneſs of what he doth, even his own Conſcience, than which God himſelf hath given unto Man nothing more Divine, *L.* iii. *De Officiis, Cap.* 10. Where he hath left this excellent Inſtruction alſo, That a Man muſt *lay aſide the Perſon of a Friend, when he puts on the Perſon of a Judge.*

Ver. 10. *And what Cauſe ſoever ſhall come to you of your Brethren that dwell in their Cities,*] By way of Appeal from the other Cities, where the Judges were wont to refer Matters of great Difficulty to this ſupreme Court

at *Jeruſalem*, where the Judges were moſt learned.

Between Blood and Blood,] When the Queſtion was, who was next of Kin to an Eſtate, and ſhould ſucceed him that was deceaſed. So ſome underſtand the Word *Blood* to ſignify *Kindred*. But *Jarchi* underſtands it of a Queſtion, whether a Murder was voluntary, or a Man was killed by Chance.

Between Law and Commandment, Statutes and Judgments,] Some take the Word *Law* to be a *general* Word, the *Species* of which follow. So that it is as much as to ſay, ye ſhall judge concerning all Manner of Laws: Firſt of *Commandments*, ſuch as have a natural Equity in them; then *Statutes*, or poſitive Laws belonging to Rites and Ceremonies; and *Judgments*, concerning thoſe Precepts, which direct the Manner of Proceeding in Judgment.

Ye ſhall even warn them that they treſpaſs not againſt the LORD, *and ſo Wrath come upon you, and upon your Brethren*:] This ſeems to be a Command, that they ſhould not only pronounce a righteous Sentence in every Cauſe that came before them, but that they ſhould admoniſh him who was in the Wrong (and all other Perſons in the like Caſe) to beware of injuring their Neighbours for the Time to come.

This do, and ye ſhall not treſpaſs.] But worthily diſcharge their Office.

Ver. 11. *And behold, Amariah the Chief Prieſt*] See concerning him, what I have noted upon 1 *Chron.* vi. 9, 10, *&c.*

Is over you in all Matters of the LORD; *and Zebadiah the Son of Iſhmael, the Ruler of the Houſe of Judah, for all the King's Matters*:] Many underſtand by *the Matters of the* LORD, all Things ſacred; and by *the King's Matters*, all Civil and Political Cauſes. But *Grotiut* hath judiciouſly obſerved (in his Book *De Imperio ſum. Poteſt. circa Sacra*, Cap. xi. Sect. 15.) that it is moſt agreeable to the Scripture to underſtand by *the Things of God*, thoſe which were defined by the Law of God, and were to be judged by that Law: And by *the King's Matters*, ſuch as not being defined by the Divine Law, were left to the Judgment of the King. Of which Kind were all Deliberations about what was expedient or not expedient. And thus he obſerves, the moſt learned of the Jewiſh Interpreters explain theſe Words, in his Book *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Lib. i. Cap. 3. Sect. 20. But which way ſoever we diſtinguiſh the *Things of God* and the *King's Things*, yet one and the ſame Court took Cognizance of them both: Only with this Difference, that the Court had different Preſidents according to the Nature of the Cauſes. In Things pertaining to God, *Amarias* the High-Prieſt ſat as the firſt Judge; in Things pertaining to the King, *Zebadiah* a principal Perſon about the King had the Chair, and was the Moderator. For, as the High-Prieſt was moſt converſant in the Law of God, and therefore fitteſt to direct in ſuch Matters; ſo the chief Ruler about the King, was moſt exerciſed in Matters left undetermined by the Law, and ſo fitteſt to preſide in ſuch Conſultations.

There are indeed very learned Men, who think theſe Words plainly prove two different Courts; in one of which Eccleſiaſtical Matters were determined, in the other Civil; in the former of which *Amarias* preſided; in the latter, *Zebadiah*. Thus *Corn. Bertram*, in his Book *De Republ. Judaica*, p. 137, 139. whom *Conſt. L'Empereur* defends in his *Annotations* on that Place, and endeavours to prove out of *Deuteronomy*, that God himſelf inſtituted an Eccleſiaſtical Senate, diſtinct from the Civil, *p.* 389. But this is not a fit Place to meddle further with that Controverſy: I ſhall only ſay, that I think *Grotius* hath ſufficiently confuted this Opinion in the Book and *Chapter* before-mentioned, *De Imperio*, &c. And in his *Annotations* alſo upon St. *Matthew* v. 22. (on thoſe Words ἔνοχος ἔσται τῷ συνεδρίῳ) where he makes this Paraphraſe, upon this Speech of *Jehoſhaphat*. *Do not deſpond, as not able to diſcharge ſo weighty an Office, for want of ſuch Learning and Knowledge as is neceſſary for ſuch a Work: You have excellent Men to guide you with their Counſel. Such is the Prince of the Senate,* Amarias *the Prieſt, a Man ſkilled in Judgment; and if any thing fall out belonging rather to Civil Prudence than to the Knowledge of the Law,* Sabadias *the* Iſhmaelite *is ready at Hand, who is a principal Perſon in ſuch Kind of Deliberations. And beſides* (as it here follows) *you have the* Levites *their Aſſeſſors, who are very well ſkilled in many Arts.*

Alſo the Levites ſhall be Officers before you.] Some of the *Levites* were Members of this great Court, who ſat in Judgment, *ver*, 8. The reſt, who were not Judges, were Miniſters under them to ſee their Sentence executed. But it appears by this Place, that the Word *Shoterim* doth not here ſignify, as in others, meer Apparitors who ſummoned Men to the Court; or ſuch Officers as executed the Sentence of the Court; but Perſons of ſome Authority, who had Power to make Offenders ſenſible of the Juſtice of the Sentence, and convince them of their Error: Which was a great Encouragement to the Judges to undertake this Office, and to judge uprightly.

Deal couragiouſly, and the LORD *ſhall be with the good*.] He bids them not be afraid of any Man: For God, who employed them, would ſtand by them and defend them, if they were good and upright Judges. The *Targum* hath it, *the WORD of the* LORD *will help you, who is good.*

CHAP. XX.

Ver. 1. IT *came to paſs after this alſo, that the Children of Moab, and the Children of Ammon*,] Theſe ſeem to have been the Principal in this Invaſion; the other, here mentioned (in the next *Verſe*, and in *ver.* 22.) to have been Auxiliaries. For ſuch was the ancient Way of making War, and ſtill is to this Day, to call in the Aſſiſtance of their Neighbours: As appears by the *Romans* more eſpecially, whoſe Armies conſiſted of their own Legions, on whom they chiefly relied, and their Auxiliaries; who agreed neither in their Diſcipline, nor in their Language, nor in their Affection, as *Vegetius* obſerves in his Book *De Re Militari*, Lib. ii. Cap. 2. and therefore could not do ſuch Service,

Service. For which Cauſe (as he obſerves in the Beginning of this *third* Book) they took Care their *Socii Militares* ſhould never exceed the Number of their own Soldiers; which is a Rule laid down by *Livy* and *Tacitus*.

And with them other beſide the Ammonites] It ought to be tranſlated, *and with them the Meunims:* Who were a People in *Arabia*, near the *Moabites* and *Ammonites*. See my *Annotations* upon *Judges* x. 12. and in this Book, *c.* xxvi. 6, 7. and *Bochartus* in his *Phaleg*, Lib. ii. Cap. 22.

Came againſt Jehoſhaphat to battle.] Made an Invaſion upon his Country.

Ver. 2. *Then there came ſome that told Jehoſhaphat, ſaying, There cometh a great Multitude againſt thee from beyond the Sea,*] That is the *Dead-Sea*, as it is called in Scripture.

On this ſide Syria,] The *Targum* tranſlates it, *From the Weſtern Part of Syria*; for the Dead-Sea was the Weſtern Bounds of that Country. And it is likely the *Syrians* joined againſt him, to revenge the Aſſiſtance he gave to *Ahab*.

And behold, they be in Hazazon-tamar, which is Engedi.] A Place where there was a great Foreſt of Palm-trees. It ſeems he had but ſlender Intelligence, for he heard not of their Motion, till they were upon the Borders of his Country.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoſhaphat feared,*] Having been lately told by the Prophet (*c.* xix 2.) that God was very angry with him.

And ſet himſelf to ſeek the LORD, and proclaimed a Faſt throughout all Judah.] Faſting was generally joined with Prayer in Times of Diſtreſs: Unto which he publickly called the whole Nation, that they might obtain Help from God.

Ver. 4. *And Judah gathered themſelves together, to aſk help of the LORD: even out of all the Cities of Judah they came to ſeek the LORD.*] The *Targum* tranſlates it, *to aſk Mercy of him, and to beg his Direction, and to hear his holy Word.* For ſome Part of the Law was read upon thoſe ſolemn Days. *Vitringa* takes this to be an Argument, that there were no Synagogues in every City in thoſe Days. For there would have been no need they ſhould *come out of their Cities*, and all reſort to *Jeruſalem*, to faſt and pray and hear the Law there; which might have been done at home in their Synagogues, as well as in the Temple; tho' not indeed in ſuch a ſolemn Manner, as it was performed by ſuch a vaſt Conflux of People, in one Place, to make their Supplications to God. *De Vet. Synag.* Pars ii. L. i. Cap. 9.

Ver. 5. *And Jehoſhaphat ſtood in the Congregation of Judah and Jeruſalem, in the Houſe of the LORD*] For there was a Throne, the *Hebrew* Doctors tell us, in the Court of the *Iſraelites*, where their Kings prayed to God, or ſpake to the People, as there was Occaſion. So *Jehoſhaphat* did, and in following Times, *Hezekiah* and *Joſiah*; after the Example of *Solomon*, who began this Cuſtom, *c.* vi. 13.

Before the new Court.] The moſt Learned in theſe Matters, confeſs they do not know what is meant by the *new Court*. Some think it probable, that it was only ſome Enlargement that *Jehoſhaphat* had made of the Court of the People, to render it more capacious: But others are of Opinion, that it ſignifies the *Court of the Women*, which was now made diſtinct from the *Court of the Men*. See 1 *Chron.* xv. 3. Thus *Conſtantine L' Empereur* thinks that the Court of the Women was not built by *Solomon*, but added in after Times, *Annot. in Cod. Middoth*, Cap. ii. Sect. 5. Where he diſputes, that according to the *Miſnah*, this Court when it was made, did not ſurround the Court of *Iſrael*; but the Breadth of them was equal, according to the Delineation there.

Ver. 6. *And ſaid, O LORD God of our Fathers, art thou not God in Heaven? and ruleſt not thou over all the Kingdoms of the Heathen? and in thine Hand is there not Power and Might, ſo that none is able to withſtand thee?*] This is the moſt admirable Prayer, that we read any of their Kings made; expreſſing the greateſt Confidence in God, and repreſenting to him the Juſtice of their Cauſe. He begins with an Acknowledgment of God's ſupreme and irreſiſtible Power, which extends itſelf every where over all Creatures in Heaven and Earth, who are every one of them ſubject to his Authority.

Ver. 7. *Art not thou our God, who didſt drive out the Inhabitants of this Land before thy People Iſrael, and gaveſt it to the Seed of Abraham thy Friend for ever?*] Then he remembers the peculiar Relation the People of *Iſrael* had to him, and the Promiſe to *Abraham*, and the Deed of Gift which he made of this Country to him, and to his Poſterity for ever, as a Reward of his Fidelity to him.

Ver. 8. *And they dwelt therein, and have built thee a Sanctuary therein for thy Name, ſaying,*] Next to that, he remembers, that they had been long poſſeſſed of this Country, wherein an Houſe had been built for his Worſhip by *Solomon*: To whom God promiſed at the Conſecration of it, that he would have Regard to the Prayers made in that Place; and in the ſixth Chapter of this Book, and in 1 *Kings* viii. The *Targum* here again ſaith, this Sanctuary was *built to the Name of thy WORD*, as in the foregoing Verſe God is ſaid to have driven out the Inhabitants of this Land *by his WORD*.

Ver. 9. *If when Evil cometh upon us, as the Sword, Judgment,*] Some tranſlate it, *the Sword of Judgment*, that is, the puniſhing Sword. But if *Judgment* ſignify any particular Puniſhment, diſtinct from the *Sword*, it muſt be wild Beaſts, or Captivity: For *Peſtilence* and *Famine* are particularly mentioned in the following Words. The *Targum* tranſlate it, *Slaughter of the Sword*, which was a ſore Judgment.

We ſtand before this Houſe, and in thy Preſence (for thy Name is in this Houſe) and cry unto thee in our Affliction, then thou wilt hear and help.] See 1 *Kings* viii. 38, 39.

Ver. 10. *And now behold, the Children of Ammon, and Moab, and Mount Seir,*] Some think this explains what is meant by *others beſide the Ammonites* (as we tranſlate *ver.* 1.) viz. *Edomites*. So the *Targum* in that Place, *With theſe the Edomites, who joined with the Ammonites.* But ſee there.

Whom thou wouldſt not let Iſrael invade, when they came out of the Land of Egypt, but they turned from them, and deſtroyed them not.] He repreſents in the next Place the foul Ingratitude of their Enemies (added to their Injuſtice) in invading their Country, unto which they had an undoubted Title; when the *Iſraelites* did not do them the leaſt Harm, as they went to take Poſſeſſion of it, but took the Pains to march a long Way about to come at it, rather than give them any Diſturbance in their Country.

Ver. 11. *Behold, I ſay, how they reward us, to come to caſt us out of thy Poſſeſſion, which thou haſt given us to inherit.*] It is a moſt odious Thing not to make grateful Returns of Benefits received; but to return Evil for Good is the higheſt Wickedneſs; which in this Caſe was aggravated by this, that they made an Attempt not only upon the Rights of the *Iſraelites*, but of God himſelf; whoſe Land this was, which they held of him as their LORD.

Ver. 12. *O our God, wilt thou not judge them?*] He appeals to the Juſtice of God, the righteous Judge, who rights thoſe that ſuffer wrong, eſpecially when they have no Helper. To *judge* in this Place ſignifies to puniſh, as in *Exod.* vi. 6. *Pſalm* ix. 16. where theſe Words, *the LORD is known by the Judgment which he executeth*, are thus interpreted by *Druſius*, the LORD is known *by the juſt Puniſhment which he inflicts*. In his *Miſcellanies*, Cent. i. Cap. 18.

For we have no Might againſt this great Company that cometh againſt us: neither know we what to do, but our Eyes are upon thee.] This is the laſt Argument he uſes to obtain Help from God; the weak Condition wherein he and his People were, which made them the Objects of the Divine Pity; eſpecially ſince they placed all their Confidence and Hope in him alone. But it may ſeem ſtrange that he ſhould ſay they had *no Might* againſt this Multitude, when he had ſo many hundred thouſand Men at Command, as are mentioned, *Chap.* xvii. 14, 15, 16, *&c.* To which it may be replied, that perhaps this was ſuch a ſudden Invaſion, that he had not Time to gather a conſiderable Body to oppoſe them: Or rather, he diſtruſted the greateſt Army, and acknowledged them to be of no Force, if God was not with them; on whom he intirely relied, and not on the Number and Valour of his Soldiers, tho' both were very great.

Victorinus Strigelius hath ſuch a devout Reflection upon this Prayer of *Jehoſhaphat*, that it will not be unacceptable, I perſuade myſelf, to the pious Reader, if I here tranſcribe it. *In this weak and declining Condition wherein the Church now is, when the Devil is very outragious, becauſe he knows his Time to be ſhort*, &c. *let us ſay daily with* Jehoſhaphat, *we know not what to do; but our Eyes are upon thee. Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory. Thou art our King and our Shepherd; we are thy People, and the Sheep of thy Paſture. Thou only art powerful, we are infirm: But thy Power will be perfected in our Weakneſs. Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but to thy Name give the Glory; for thy Mercy, and for thy Truth's Sake. Do not remember our Iniquities, but ſave us for thy Mercy's Sake; for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our Salvation, for the Glory of thy Name: Deliver us and be merciful to our Sins, for thy Name's Sake. Save us, O LORD our God, that we may give Thanks unto thy holy Name, and triumph in thy Praiſe.* Such Addreſſes to God (ſo he concludes) will illuſtrate this Prayer of *Jehoſhaphat*, better than the largeſt Commentaries.

Ver. 13. *And all Judah ſtood before the LORD, with their little ones, their Wives, and their Children.*] The more to move the Divine Compaſſion towards them.

Ver. 14. *Then upon Jehaziel, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Benaiah, the Son of Jeiel, the Son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the Sons of Aſaph, came the Spirit of the LORD in the midſt of the Congregation.*] He ſeems not to have been a Prophet before this Time; when a ſudden Inſpiration came upon him from God, to comfort this great Aſſembly with aſſured Hope of Deliverance, before they ſtirred from the Place where they had prayed.

Ver. 15. *And he ſaid, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and thou King Jehoſhaphat, thus ſaith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid, nor diſmayed by Reaſon of this great Multitude, for the Battle is not yours, but God's.*] As it was God's Cauſe which they now aſſerted, ſo they might be aſſured he would maintain it, by overthrowing their Enemies.

Ver. 16. *To morrow go ye down againſt them:*] *Jeruſalem*, where they now were, was ſituated on a high Hill, and therefore he ſaith they ſhould *go down* againſt theſe Enemies; who are ſaid in the next Words *to come up*.

Behold, they come up by the Cliff of Ziz, and ye ſhall find them at the End of the Brook (or Valley) before the Wilderneſs of Jeruel.] God was ſo very gracious to them, as, by this Prophet, not only to aſſure them of Victory, but to inform them of the very Time, and Place, and Manner of it: The *Time* was the very next Morning; the *Place* is mentioned in the latter End of this *Verſe*, as the Time is in the Beginning; and the *Manner*, in the Concluſion of the foregoing *Verſe*, that it ſhould be by the Hand of God, and not by their own; who ſhould be only Spectators of the Victory which God himſelf would give them: So it follows in the next *Verſe*.

Ver. 17. *Ye ſhall not need to fight in this Battle; ſet your ſelves, ſtand ye ſtill, and ſee the Salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jeruſalem: fear not, nor be diſmayed; To morrow go out againſt them,*] He repeats what he had ſaid before (which he knew would be the greateſt Comfort to them) that they ſhould have no Conflict with their Enemies; but only ſtand ſtill in their Place, and ſee the Hand of God overthrowing them all. In which there was a notable Accompliſhment of *Solomon*'s Prayer, which *Jehoſhaphat* recited.

For the LORD will be with you.] The WORD of the LORD will be your Helper, as the *Targum* expounds it.

Ver. 18. *And Jehoſhaphat bowed his Head, with his Face to the Ground: and all Judah and Jeruſalem fell before the LORD, worſhipping the LORD.*] The King gave moſt humble Thanks

to

to God, as did all the People with him, after his Example.

Ver. 19. *And the Levites, of the Children of the Kohathites, and of the Children of the Korhites,*] Who were then waiting in their Courſe at the Temple.

Stood up to praiſe the LORD *God of Iſrael with a loud Voice on high.*] They ſung Praiſe to God before the Army went out, as if the Victory had been already obtained. And they raiſed their Voice as high as they could, to expreſs their full Aſſurance of Succeſs. This, I ſuppoſe, they did by the Order of *Jehoſhaphat.*

Ver. 20. *And they roſe up early in the Morning, and went forth into the Wilderneſs of Tekoa:*] That is, the Army, who were to ſtand and face the Enemy, went forth from *Jeruſalem.*

And as they went forth, Jehoſhaphat ſtood, and ſaid, Hear me, O Judah, and ye Inhabitants of Jeruſalem,] It is likely he ſtood in the Gate of the City, thro' which they marched out, and ſpake theſe Words to the ſeveral Companies as they paſſed by him.

Believe in the LORD *your God, ſo ſhall ye be eſtabliſhed; believe his Prophets, ſo ſhall ye proſper.*] The *Targum* tranſlates it, *Believe in the* WORD *of the* LORD *your God, believe his Law, and his Prophets,* &c. God having made them a gracious Promiſe, expected their Belief of it, and Dependance on it: Otherwiſe they had no Reaſon to hope for Victory.

Ver. 21. *And when he had conſulted with the People,*] That is, with the Elders and Heads of their Tribes, who repreſented the reſt; without whoſe Conſent he was loth to do any Thing in a Time of common Danger.

He appointed Singers unto the LORD, *and that ſhould praiſe the Beauty of Holineſs,*] It may be tranſlated, ſhould praiſe *his moſt ſacred Majeſty*; tho' it is commonly thought he ordered them to praiſe the LORD, with the ſame State, Pomp, and Ornament, that they worſhipped in the Temple; in the ſame Habit, in that Order, and Magnificence, wherein they appeared in the Holy Place.

As they went out before the Army,] This was an Argument of great Courage and Aſſurance, that they led on the Army; declaring to their Enemies, that God (whoſe Miniſters they were) was coming againſt them.

And to ſay, praiſe the LORD, *for his Mercy endureth for ever.*] This was the uſual Song, which they ſung at the Temple, *ver.* 13.

Ver. 22. *And when they began to ſing and to praiſe,*] Before they had marched many Steps.

The LORD *ſet Ambuſhments againſt the Children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, which were come againſt Judah, and they were ſmitten.*] Or, *ſmote one another*, as it is in the Margin. The *Targum* tranſlates it, *The* WORD *of the* LORD *ſet Ambuſhments*, &c. By which that Paraphraſt underſtands, his Angelical Miniſters which attended him; who ſmote ſome of them ſecretly, and the reſt thinking it was done by their Neighbours, fell upon them as their Enemies. But the Meaning ſeems rather to be, that the Ambuſhments which they had laid againſt *Judah*, by a Confuſion among themſelves made by a Divine Hand, fell upon a Part of their own Army, miſtaking them for their Enemies.

Ver. 23. *For the Children of Ammon and Moab ſtood up againſt the Inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to ſlay and deſtroy them: and when they had made an End of the Inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to deſtroy another.*] They of Mount *Seir* were ordered to fall upon *Judah*, out of an Ambuſhment; but by ſome Miſtake they fell upon the *Ammonites*, their own Confederates; and they and the *Moabites* fell upon them, till they had intirely deſtroyed thoſe of *Seir*. And when that was done, they continued in ſuch Confuſion, that they fell one upon another, ſtill imagining they were deſtroying the *Jews*, who came upon them very early in the Morning, as the Prophet had directed.

Ver. 24. *And when Judah came toward the Watch-Tower in the Wilderneſs, they looked unto the Multitude, and behold, they were dead Bodies fallen to the Earth, and none eſcaped.*] Inſtead of meeting with any Enemy to oppoſe them, they ſaw them all lye dead upon the Ground; for this *Tower*, it is probable, ſtood upon the Cliff of *Ziz* (mentioned *v.* 16.) from whence they could behold how their Army lay.

Ver. 25. *And when Jehoſhaphat and his People came to take away the Spoil of them, they found among them in abundance, both Riches with the dead Bodies, and precious Jewels (which they ſtript off for themſelves)*] As they found rich Garments upon their Bodies, ſo they found great Treaſure among their Baggage (as we call it) and many precious Jewels; which they brought along with them, I ſuppoſe, that they might appear the more glorious, in the Triumph which they promiſed themſelves over the *Jews.*

More than they could carry away: and they were three Days in gathering the Spoil, it was ſo much.] They could not carry all the Spoil at once, but ſpent three Days in collecting it, and diſpoſing of it; for there was vaſt Proviſion, no doubt, which they had made for the Subſiſtence of ſuch a Multitude; and a great many Beaſts for the Carriages that brought it to them.

Ver. 26. *And on the fourth Day they aſſembled themſelves in the Valley of Berachah; for there they bleſſed the* LORD: *and therefore the Name of the ſame Place was called, the Valley of Berachah, unto this Day.*] One cannot think, that they deferred to give God Thanks for ſo ſignal a Victory, till four Days after it; but then they did it in a more ſolemn Manner than they could at firſt; the whole Body of the People aſſembling together, to acknowledge God's Goodneſs to them: Which they did in ſuch a remarkable Manner, that it gave to the Place ever after the Name of the *Valley of Bleſſing.*

Ver. 27. *Then they returned every Man of Judah and Jeruſalem, and Jehoſhaphat in the Forefront of them, to go to Jeruſalem with Joy.*] This is a further Inſtance of their Thankfulneſs to God for their Victory, that they did not return every Man to his own Home, after this Overthrow;

throw; but firſt went back to *Jeruſalem*, to bleſs him again for hearing their Prayers, and making good his Promiſes.

For the LORD had made them to rejoyce over their Enemies.] This they did with great Joy, wherewith God had filled their Hearts, by making them triumph over ſuch powerful Enemies.

Ver. 28. *And they came to Jeruſalem with Pſalteries, and Harps, and Trumpets, unto the Houſe of the LORD.*] To expreſs by theſe the Greatneſs of their Joy, and proclaim their Thankfulneſs to God.

Ver. 29. *And the Fear of God was on all the Kingdoms of thoſe Countries,*] On all the neighbouring Nations, who heard of this glorious Victory without fighting.

When they had heard that the LORD fought againſt the Enemies of Iſrael.] Here the *Targum* hath it, *When they heard that the WORD of the LORD fought*, &c.

Ver. 30. *So the Realm of Jehoſhaphat was quiet; for his God gave him Reſt round about.*] Here again the *Targum* ſaith, *The WORD of his God gave him Reſt.*

Ver. 31. *And Jehoſhaphat reigned over Judah: he was thirty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and five Years in Jeruſalem: and his Mother's Name was Azubah the Daughter of Shilhi.*] See 1 *Kings* xxii. 42. It is likely, his Mother was a very religious Woman, who had taken Care to bring up *Jehoſhaphat* in the Fear of the LORD; and happy had it been for him and his Family, if he had taken Care to marry his Son to ſuch another Woman.

Ver. 32. *And he walked in the Way of Aſa his Father, and departed not from it, doing that which was right in the Sight of the LORD.*] Whatſoever other Faults he had, he kept cloſe to the Worſhip of God alone, and did many other good Things as the Law of *Moſes* directed.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit, the high Places were not taken away;*] This ſhews, that the Meaning of thoſe Words, xvii. 6. is, that the high Places wherein God was worſhipped, were not taken away; though thoſe wherein Idols were ſerved, were deſtroyed.

For as yet the People had not prepared their Hearts unto the God of their Fathers.] The Reaſon of it is here given, the People could not bear it; for their Hearts were not diſpoſed to ſerve God exactly according to the Law of *Moſes*; but though they renounced Idolatry, and worſhipped none but the LORD, yet they would not have his Worſhip, by Sacrifices, reſtrained to one Place alone, but have the Liberty to ſacrifice elſewhere.

Ver. 34. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Jehoſhaphat, firſt and laſt, behold, they are written in the Book of Jehu the Son of Hanani, who is mentioned in the Book of the Kings of Iſrael.*] He was an eminent Prophet in the Time of *Baaſha* King of *Iſrael*, and lived to the End of *Jehoſhaphat*'s Reign. See 1 *Kings* xvi. 1, 7. He, as ſeveral other Prophets, wrote the Hiſtory of his own Time, out of which Monuments theſe Books were collected; and his Work was ſo highly eſteemed, that it was regiſtred in the Book of the Kings of *Iſrael*; which were Commentaries, as *Huetius* thinks, of what daily paſſed. *Demonſtr. Evang.* p. 202.

Ver. 35. *And after this*] That is, after the LORD had given him ſuch a glorious Victory, and ſtruck Terror into all his Enemies, and given him Reſt and Quiet round about.

Did Jehoſhaphat King of Judah join himſelf with Ahaziah King of Iſrael, who did very wickedly.] This was a great Weakneſs, to make Friendſhip with the Son, when he had been ſo ſharply reproved for joining with his Father *Ahab*, (*c.* xix. 2.) eſpecially ſince he was no better, but a very wicked Idolater; and tho' he did not join with him in making War, but only in Trade, yet God took it ill of him, and threatned to puniſh him for it, *ver.* 37. Into this he was betrayed by the Affinity which was between them, which ſhews how dangerous it is to marry with Idolaters.

Ver. 36. *And he joined himſelf with him to make Ships to go to Tarſhiſh: and they made the Ships in Ezion-gaber.*] They were Ships of *Tarſhiſh* made to go to *Ophir*; as we learn from 1 *Kings* xxii. 48, 49. where I have ſhewn, how this Place and that agree. *Bochart* thinks there was a Place called *Tarſhiſh* in the *Indian Ocean* near to *Ophir* (that is *Taprobana*) which the *Phœnicians* called by the ſame Name with the other *Tarſhiſh*, becauſe the ſame Commodities come from both. See his *Phaleg*, Lib. iii. Cap. 7.

Ver. 37. *Then Eliezer the Son of Dodavah of Mareſhah, propheſied againſt Jehoſhaphat, ſaying, Becauſe thou haſt joined thyſelf with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy Works.*] In the *Targum* it is again, *The WORD of the LORD hath deſtroyed thy Works.* Which he laid to Heart ſo much, that when *Ahaziah* afterwards deſired to join in ſome Voyage with him, he would not conſent; as we read in 1 *Kings* xxii. 29.

And the Ships were broken that they were not able to go to Tarſhiſh.] They were ſhatter'd in the very Place where they were built, in *Ezion-gaber*. See 1 *Kings* xxii. 48.

CHAP. XXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW Jehoſhaphat ſlept with his Fathers, and was buried with his Fathers in the City of David: and Jehoram his Son reigned in his ſtead.*] By his own Appointment, as appears from *v.* 3. He was deſigned King in the ſeventeenth Year of the Reign of *Jehoſhaphat*, and crowned in the twenty third Year, and afterward reigned eight Years; three with his Father, and five alone. See *v.* 5.

Ver. 2. *And he had Brethren, the Sons of Jehoſhaphat,*] They had the ſame Father, if not the ſame Mother; which made his Wickedneſs in killing them the more unnatural.

Azariah, and Jehiel, and Zechariah, and Azariah, and Michael, and Shephatiah:] The fourth Son is diſtinguiſhed in the *Hebrew* from the firſt, by the Addition of *hu*, the firſt being called *Azariah*, this *Azariahhu*.

All theſe were the Sons of Jehoſhaphat King of Iſrael.] He was King of *Iſrael* in a large Senſe, many of *Iſrael* being ſubject to him. So *Ahaz* is alſo called, xxviii. 19. where I ſhall give ſome further Account of it.

Ver. 3. *And their Father gave them great Gifts of Silver and Gold,*] After the Manner of the ancient Patriarchs. See *Gen.* xxv. 6.

And of precious Things,] The *Hebrew* Word ſignifies any thing that is excellent in its Kind; whether Jewels or Garments, or Fruits of the Earth, as *Beckius* obſerves out of *Solomon Abu Melech.*

With fenced Cities in Judah:] Over which he made them Governors. This he did very prudently, for providing ſo well for them, that they might not be tempted to envy the Kingdom to their Brother; nor quarrel among themſelves. But as *Strigelius* obſerves out of *Cicero, Sæpe optima cogitata peſſime cadunt:* Things excellently deſigned, have often very ill Event. For theſe Riches of theirs made their Brother firſt fear them; and then, being wickedly covetous, he was tempted to make them away, that he might get what they had into his Poſſeſſion.

But the Kingdom gave he to Jehoram, becauſe he was the firſt-born.] He could not but know his wicked Diſpoſition, by his Inclination to Idolatry; but was ſwayed purely by his being the Firſt-born, to ſettle the Kingdom upon him, tho' not ſo deſerving as his Brethren. For ſuch was the Power of the Kings of *Judah*, (as *Conringius* obſerves) that they took upon them to diſpoſe of the Kingdom, as if it had been their Patrimony. Some think, he ſuperſtitiouſly obſerved that Law, *Deut.* xxi. 13. for ſometime the younger Sons were preferred to the elder, as we find in the Sons of *Joſiah*, 2 *Kings* xxxi. 36. But (as Mr. *Selden* ſhews) common Uſage was otherwiſe, *Lib.* ii. *De Succeſſione ad Pontif. Cap.* 1. *p.* 202. where he tranſlates theſe Words, *Regnum autem tranſmiſit, &c.* not he *gave*, but he *tranſmitted the Kingdom to Jehoram,*

Ver. 4. *Now when Jehoram was riſen up to the Kingdom of his Father, he ſtrengthned himſelf, and ſlew all his Brethren with the Sword,*] Being advanced to the Throne, his firſt Buſineſs was, to make himſelf ſo ſtrong, that he might be able without Danger to murder all his Brethren. Which he did; that neither they nor their Poſterity might ever pretend to the Crown. Perhaps they were inclined to the true Religion, and therefore he made them away; leſt they ſhould oppoſe him, when he went about to alter it, and bring in the old Idolatry.

And divers alſo of the Princes of Iſrael.] Several of the moſt eminent Perſons in the Country, ſuch as the Judges, eſtabliſhed by *Jehoſhaphat* in *Jeruſalem*, and in the Country; leſt they ſhould revenge the Death of his Brethren. See *Grotius.*

Ver. 5. *Jehoram was thirty and two Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eight Years in Jeruſalem.*

Ver. 6. *And he walked in the Way of the Kings of Iſrael, like as did the Houſe of Ahab: for he had the Daughter of Ahab to Wife: and he wrought that which was evil in the Eyes of the LORD.*] Theſe two Verſes are the very ſame with 1 *Kings* viii. 17, 18. where ſee what I have noted.

Ver. 7. *Howbeit the LORD would not deſtroy the Houſe of David, becauſe of the Covenant that he had made with David, and as he promiſed to give a Light to him, and to his Sons for ever.*

Ver. 8. *In his Days the Edomites revolted from under the Dominion of Judah, and made themſelves a King.*

Ver. 9. *Then Jehoram went forth with his Princes, and all his Chariots with him, and he roſe up by Night, and ſmote the Edomites which compaſſed him in, and the Captains of the Chariots.*

Ver. 10. *So the Edomites revolted from under the Hand of Judah unto this Day. The ſame time alſo did Libnah revolt from under his Hand; becauſe he had forſaken the LORD God of his Fathers.*] There is little Difference between theſe four Verſes, and what we read in 2 *Kings* viii. 19, 20, 21, 22. I ſhall only note here, that this was the firſt Puniſhment God inflicted on him, for his Sin, in not following his good Father, but turning unto Idols.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, he made high Places in the Mountains of Judah,*] For the Worſhip of ſtrange Gods.

And cauſed the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem to commit Fornication, and compelled Judah thereto.] He not only gave them a bad Example, and enticed them to Idolatry: But by Threatnings and Compulſions he endeavoured to conſtrain them to conform to his Example.

Ver. 12. *And there came a Writing from Elijah the Prophet,*] It is certain *Elijah* was taken up into Heaven in the Time of *Jehoſhaphat:* Therefore *Joſephus* and the LXX imagine, (as *Grotius* obſerves) that from thence he ſent a Letter: Which is no more wonderful, than that *Judas Maccabæus* ſhould ſee in a Divine Dream *Onias* and *Jeremiah* praying for the People, (2 *Maccab.* xv.) ſo that the Meaning may be, that *Eliſha* ſaw *Elijah* appear to him, and bid him write theſe Words, and ſend them to *Jehoram.* But our Dr. *Lightfoot* is of Opinion, that it is not meant of that *Elijah*, who was carried up to Heaven, but of another of his Name, who ſent this Letter. His Reaſon is, becauſe he is always called *Elijah* the *Tiſhbite*, and never *Elijah* the *Prophet.* See him upon *Luke* i. 17. But in this, I think, he is ſingular; and it is not true, that he is always called the *Tiſhbite:* but ſometimes ſimply *Elijah*; and in 1 *Kings* xix. 16. God calls him *Prophet.* Therefore *Kimchi* ſeems to me to have given the moſt natural and plaineſt Senſe of theſe Words, in his Commentary on this Place: That *Elijah* foreſeeing, by the Spirit of Prophecy, before he went to Heaven, the Wickedneſs of *Jehoram*, ſpake theſe Words to one of the Prophets, and charged him to put them down in Writing, and ſend them in a Letter to *Jehoram*, when he grew ſo impious as is here related; and let him know, that *Elijah* commanded this Writing to be delivered to him: That ſo *Jehoram* being affected with it, as if it had been ſent from Heaven, might be moved to repent of the Evil he had done. And indeed this Paſſage will bear this Senſe, if we take the Words, *from Elijah*, not to relate to the firſt Words, *there came*; but to the immediately precedent, *a Writing.* He did not ſend a Writing, but it was ſent as his Writing. For there is nothing in the Words to intimate that this was written after his Death, but delivered after his Death: So that it might have been written (for any thing that appears

to

to the contrary) by *Elijah* himſelf, before he was taken up into Heaven.

Saying, Thus ſaith the LORD God of thy Father David,] He ſeems to upbraid him with his Degeneracy from ſo pious an Anceſtor, as *David* was from whom he deſcended.

Becauſe thou haſt not walked in the Ways of Jehoſhaphat thy Father, nor in the Ways of Aſa King of Judah.] His Sin was the greater, becauſe both his Father and his Grand-Father had left him an excellent Example.

Ver. 13. *But haſt walked in the Ways of the Kings of Iſrael, and haſt made Judah and the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem to go a Whoring, like the Whoredoms of the Houſe of Ahab,*] He was not only an Idolater himſelf, nor only by his Example corrupted others, but uſed his Authority to draw, or rather to force them into idolatrous Worſhip; and that of the very worſt Sort.

And alſo haſt ſlain thy Brethren of thy Father's Houſe, which were better than thyſelf.] This ſeems to ſignify that they were pious Perſons, who abhorred Idolatry: And therefore his Sin was the more heinous in cutting them off, proceeding from Enmity to God, as well as to them.

Ver. 14. *Behold, with a great Plague will the LORD ſmite thy People, and thy Children, and thy Wives, and all thy Goods.*] There was no Calamity that could be thought of (as *Vict. Strigelius* obſerves) which did not befal this wicked Prince, whoſe Kingdom was deſtroyed and depopulated by the fierceſt Nations; his Treaſures ranſack'd; his Wives carried into Captivity; his Children ſlain; and he himſelf laboured under a ſore Diſeaſe for two Years; and when he was dead had not the Honour of Royal Sepulture, ſuch as his Anceſtors had. All which Calamities were threatned in the Writing ſent him in the Name of *Elijah*; that he might not think they came by Chance, but by the ſpecial Direction of Almighty God, as a Puniſhment for his Wickedneſs. But why ſhould his People ſuffer, who are threatned in the firſt Place to be plagued? The Reaſon was, becauſe their baſe Fear made them comply with him in his Idolatry: And beſides, he was puniſhed by the Loſs of them.

Ver. 15. *And thou ſhalt have great Sickneſs by Diſeaſe of thy Bowels,*] A Dyſentery miſerably tormented him.

Till thy Bowels fall out,] For what ſhould he do with Bowels, who had no Pity and Compaſſion on his own Brethren?

By Reaſon of the Sickneſs Day by Day.] For two Years, as it is interpreted *ver.* 19. For *Days* ſometimes ſignifies a Year: And in the *Hebrew* the Words are, *Days upon Days*, that is, one Year after another.

Ver. 16. *Moreover, the LORD ſtirred up againſt Jehoram the Spirit of the Philiſtines,*] Who invaded him on the Weſt-ſide of his Kingdom, as the *Arabians* did on the Eaſt-ſide: Who ſtood in ſuch Awe of his Father, that they brought him Preſents, *c.* xvii. 11.

And the Arabians that were near to the Ethiopians.] It ſhould be tranſlated, *that were near to the Cuſhites*, a People inhabiting the inmoſt Parts of *Arabia*, not far from *Nabathea* and *Negid*, which was then called *Cuſh*, in the Confines of the Territories of *Babylon*, which was the ancient *Cuſh*: By which Name *Arabia*, or ſome Part of it is to be underſtood in many Places. See xiv. 9. and 2 *Kings* xix. 9. Whence the *Topaz of Cuſh* muſt be underſtood of the *Topaz of Arabia*, not of *Ethiopia*: In which Country there are no precious Stones, as *Ludolphus* was aſſured by a Prieſt of *Ethiopia*, and is confirmed by our Merchants. See Dr. *Hyde* in his late Book *De Relig. Veterum Perſarum*, Cap. i. p. 37. and my *Annotations* on the Place abovementioned.

The *Hebrew* Phraſe *aljad*, (*at hand*) is well tranſlated *near* by us, for ſo it ſignifies plainly in other Places. And *Forſterus* perhaps hath rightly obſerved, that the Bounds and Limits of Countries were called *jad* (i. e. *a Hand*) becauſe a Hand was there placed, to denote that there was the End of the Territory, which reached no farther.

Ver. 17. *And they came up into Judah, and brake into it,*] For his Soldiers were not able to defend it from this Irruption on both Sides.

And carried away all the Subſtance that was found in the King's Houſe, and his Sons alſo,] Whom they ſlew, *c.* xxii. 1.

And his Wives;] All except *Athaliah*, who hid herſelf, it is likely, in ſome ſecret Place, with her youngeſt Son.

So that there was never a Son left him, ſave Jehoahaz the youngeſt of his Sons.] Who is alſo called *Ahaziah*, *c.* xxii. 1. and by the Interpoſition of one Letter *Azariah*, ver. 6.

Ver. 18. *And after all this, the LORD ſmote him in his Bowels with an incurable Diſeaſe.*] He lived to ſee all theſe Calamities, which the Prophet threatned, come upon him: And then the WORD of the LORD, ſaith the *Targum*, ſmote him with a Diſeaſe, for which there was no Remedy.

Ver. 19. *And it came to paſs in Proceſs of Time, after the End of two Years, his Bowels fell out by Reaſon of his Sickneſs: ſo he died of ſore Diſeaſes:*] The laſt Words ſeem to import, that there was a Complication of other Diſeaſes, together with his Dyſentery: All which were very grievous, and a ſuitable Puniſhment to his horrid Wickedneſs.

And his People made no burning for him, like the burning for his Fathers.] See upon *c.* xvi. 14.

Ver. 20. *Thirty and two Years old was he when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jeruſalem eight Years, and departed without being deſired:*] Some think the Meaning is, he was weary of his Life, being ſo full of Pain, as to deſire to die, rather than live in ſuch Miſery. But the moſt natural Senſe is, that his People did not wiſh he ſhould live any longer, but were glad his Reign was ſo ſhort: As appeared by their Contempt of him, in making no Burning for him, nor burying him in the Sepulchre of the Kings, as it here follows.

Howbeit they buried him in the City of David, but not in the Sepulchre of the Kings.] They ſhewed ſome Reſpect to him, but not ſuch as expreſſed any Eſteem of him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

Ver. 1. *AND the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem made Ahaziah his youngeſt Son, King in his Stead:*] They declared him King, and ſet him on his Father's Throne: But the Kingdom was his of Right, without the Suffrage of the People.

For the Band of Men that came with the Arabians to the Camp,] Mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 16.

Had ſlain all the Eldeſt. So Ahaziah the Son of Jehoram King of Judah reigned.] This Band of Men came up with the *Arabians*, but, it ſeems, acted by themſelves; and killed thoſe in cold Blood, whom the *Arabians* had carried Captive, *c.* xxi. 17.

Ver. 2. *Forty and two Years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and he reigned one Year in Jeruſalem:*] Many ways there are to reconcile this with 2 *Kings* viii. 26. where it is ſaid he was two and twenty Years old when he began to reign. See my *Annotations* on that Place. The ſhorteſt and plaineſt Way is to acknowledge an Error in the Copyiſt or Tranſcriber. For ſome *Greek* Copies have here XXII Years old; and ſo it is in the *Syriack* and *Arabick* Tranſlations. And our great Primate *Uſher* found it ſo, in a Copy which he procured, at great Charge, from that of the Patriarch of *Antioch*. *Piſcator* alſo acknowledges, there is no other way, that he knew, to ſolve this Doubt.

His Mother's Name alſo was Athaliah the Daughter of Omri.] His Grand-Daughter, for ſhe was *Ahab*'s Daughter, *c.* xxi. 6. and ſee 2 *Kings* viii. 26.

Ver. 3. *He alſo walked in the Ways of the Houſe of Ahab: for his Mother was his Counſellor to do wickedly.*] She had the greater Power of him, becauſe ſhe had ſaved him together with herſelf, when the other Wives and Children of *Jehoram* were carried away Captive. And ſhe is ſaid to have adviſed him *to do wickedly*, becauſe ſhe led him into a worſe Idolatry than that of *Jeroboam*'s: Which is called *the Way of the Houſe of Ahab*; not becauſe they were the firſt Inventors of it, but the chief Eſtabliſhers of it in theſe Parts. It did not conſiſt merely in the Worſhip of God by an Image, which was the Way of *Jeroboam*, but in the Worſhip of other Gods beſide the God of *Iſrael*, viz. *Baal-gods*, or *Baalim:* Suppoſing either by theſe to have eaſier Acceſs to the Sovereign God, the LORD of Hoſts; or that theſe they might reſort unto at all Times, and for all Matters, as being nearer at Hand, and not of ſo high a Dignity; whereas *Jehovah* the God of *Iſrael*, moſt High, either managed not ſmaller Matters, or might not be troubled with them. For ſuch was the Conceit of the Heathen, that the Souls of great Men after Death, had the Honour to be Agents between the ſupreme God and Men, as being of a middle Nature between them; which the *Greeks* called *Dæmons*, and the Scriptures call *Baalim*. See Mr. *Mede*, Book i. *Diſcourſe* xliii. 243.

Ver. 4. *Wherefore he did Evil in the Sight of the LORD, like the Houſe of Ahab: for they were his Counſellors after the Death of his Father, to his Deſtruction.*] His Father was ſo bad, that there was no need any other ſhould endeavour to ſeduce him, while he lived: But when he was dead, his Mother's Kindred thought it neceſſary to confirm him in his Idolatry.

Ver. 5. *He walked alſo after their Counſel,*] In other Matters as well as Religion.

And went with Jehoram the Son of Ahab King of Iſrael, to war againſt Hazael King of Syria, at Ramoth-gilead: and the Syrians ſmote Joram.] Tho' he would not imitate his Grand-Father in that which was good in him, yet he followed his bad Example; in joining with *Ahab*'s Son, as *Jehoſhaphat* had with *Ahab*, in the like War.

Ver. 6. *And he returned to be healed in Jezreel, becauſe of the Wounds which were given him at Ramah, when he fought with Hazael King of Syria. And Azariah the Son of Jehoram King of Judah, went down to ſee Jehoram the Son of Ahab at Jezreel, becauſe he was ſick.*] Theſe two *Verſes* have been explained in 2 *Kings* viii. 28, 29.

Ver. 7. *And the Deſtruction of Ahaziah was of God by coming to Joram: for when he was come, he went out with Jehoram againſt Jehu the Son of Nimſhi, whom the LORD had anointed to cut off the Houſe of Ahab.*] See how this was done in 2 *Kings* ix. 21, 27. and what I have noted there.

Ver. 8. *And it came to paſs that when Jehu was executing Judgment upon the Houſe of Ahab, and found the Princes of Judah, and the Sons of the Brethren of Ahaziah, that miniſtred to Ahaziah, he ſlew them.*] As they were going to *Samaria*. See 2 *Kings* x. 13, 14.

Ver. 9. *And he ſought Ahaziah: and they caught him (for he was hid in Samaria) and brought him to Jehu: and when they had ſlain him, they buried him, becauſe (ſaid they) he is the Son of Jehoſhaphat, who ſought the LORD with all his Heart. So the Houſe of Ahaziah had no Power to keep ſtill the Kingdom.*] The Story of his Death is related here a little more particularly than in the Book of the *Kings*. See what I have noted there concerning the whole, 2 *Kings* ix. 27, 28.

Ver. 10. *But when Athaliah the Mother of Ahaziah ſaw that her Son was dead, ſhe aroſe and deſtroyed all the Seed Royal of the Houſe of Judah.*] See 2 *Kings* xi. 1.

Ver. 11. *But Jehoſhabeath the Daughter of the King,*] *i. e.* Of the former King, *Jehoram*.

Took Joaſh the Son of Ahaziah, and ſtole him from among the King's Sons that were ſlain, and put him and his Nurſe in a Bed-chamber.] See concerning this my *Annotations* upon 2 *Kings* xi. 2.

So Jehoſhabeath the Daughter of King Jehoram, the Wife of Jehoiada the Prieſt (for ſhe was the Siſter of Ahaziah) hid him from Athaliah, ſo that ſhe ſlew him not.] She was the Siſter of *Ahaziah* by the Father's Side, tho' not by the Mother's: For *Jehoram* had many Wives, as we read in the foregoing *Chapter*.

Ver. 12. *And he was with them hid in the Houſe of God ſix Years, and Athaliah reigned over the Land.*] See in the Place above-named what I have noted about the Place wherein he was hid in the Houſe of God; which the *Targum* here fancies was in the very *Holy of Holies*: In-

to which none but the High-Prieſt might enter, and that but once a Year. But if this ſhould paſs for Truth, we muſt not underſtand it of the moſt holy Place itſelf, but of ſome Chamber over it, as *Beckius* there obſerves, which will not juſtify this Expoſition; for, as I have obſerved before, there was no Entrance into the Room over it; nor is there any ground to think there was any Building over it.

CHAP. XXIII.

Ver. 1. *AND in the ſeventh Year Jehoiada ſtrengthened himſelf, and took the Captains of Hundreds, Azariah the Son of Jeroham, and Iſhmael the Son of Jehohanan, and Azariah the Son of Obed, and Maaſeiah the Son of Adaiah, and Eliſhaphat the Son of Zichri, into Covenant with him.*] It is not to be ſuppoſed that he took all the Captains of Hundreds that were in the Nation, into Confederacy with him; but ſuch whom he could depend upon, whoſe Names are here mentioned.

Ver. 2. *And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the Cities of Judah,*] Theſe Captains went about, and communicated the Deſign to the *Levites*, as Men that might be truſted with it.

And the Chief of the Fathers of Iſrael,] Some of which were under the Government of the King of *Judah*; and others, perhaps, were known to be well affected to Religion, and ſo were invited to give their Aſſiſtance. But it is moſt likely that *Judah* is here called *Iſrael* (as in ſeveral other Places) the principal Men of Authority of which were acquainted with *Jehoiada*'s Intentions.

And they came to Jeruſalem.] To ſettle their Reſolution with *Jehoiada*.

Ver. 3. *And all the Congregation made a Covenant with the King in the Houſe of God: and he ſaid unto them, Behold, the King's Son ſhall reign, as the LORD hath ſaid of the Sons of David.*] When all the fore-named Perſons were aſſembled at the Temple, the young King was produced, and they all ſware to be faithful to him. See 2 *Kings* xi. 4. Where, in the following *Verſes*, moſt of this *Chapter* hath been explained already.

Ver. 4. *This is the Thing that ye ſhall do; A third Part of you entring on the Sabbath of the Prieſts and of the Levites, ſhall be Porters of the Doors;*

Ver. 5. *And a third Part ſhall be at the King's Houſe; and a third Part at the Gate of the Foundation; and all the People ſhall be in the Courts of the Houſe of the LORD.*] See 2 *Kings* xi. 5, 6, 7. where this is delivered a little more largely.

Ver. 6. *But let none come into the Houſe of the LORD, ſave the Prieſts, and they that miniſter of the Levites,*] Who were then in waiting in their Courſe.

They ſhall go in, for they are holy:] They were conſecrated to the Service of God, and were bound to attend there.

But all the People ſhall keep the Watch of the LORD.] That is, of the *Houſe of the LORD*, as was ſaid before, *ver.* 5.

Ver. 7. *And the Levites ſhall compaſs the King round about, every Man with his Weapons in his Hand, and whoſoever elſe cometh into the Houſe, he ſhall be put to death: but be you with the King when he cometh in, and when he goeth out.*] It appears by 2 *Kings* xi. 8. that Part of the *Levites* were aſſigned to be the King's Guard; which did not belong to their Office (which was to guard the Temple, and miniſter there) but upon this extraordinary Occaſion they were thus employed, as Men upon whoſe Fidelity *Jehoiada* might rely.

Ver. 8. *So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the Prieſt had commanded, and took every Man his Men that were to come in on the Sabbath, with them that were to go out on the Sabbath: for Jehoiada the Prieſt diſmiſſed not the Courſes.*] This is more diſtinctly ſet down in 2 *Kings* xi. 7. to which I refer the Reader.

Ver. 9. *Moreover, Jehoiada the Prieſt delivered to the Captains of Hundreds, Spears, and Bucklers, and Shields, that had been King David's, which were in the Houſe of God.*] Theſe ſeem to have been hung up as Trophies in the Houſe of God, after *David*'s Victories. See there, *ver.* 10.

Ver. 10. *And he ſet all the People (every Man having his Weapon in his Hand) from the right Side of the Temple, to the left Side of the Temple, along by the Altar and the Temple, by the King round about.*] See there, *ver.* 11.

Ver. 11. *Then they brought out the King's Son, and put upon him the Crown, and gave him the Teſtimony, and made him King: and Jehoiada and his Sons anointed him,*] The ſame is ſaid 2 *Kings* xi. 12. only one thing is here added, that he was anointed by *Jehoiada and his Sons*; among whom *Zacharias* was one, whom the King moſt baſely requited. The *Targum* here hath a long Fable, that this was the Crown taken from the Head of the King of *Ammon*, wherein was a Magnet, *&c.*

And ſaid, God ſave the King.] They ſaid this, with clapping their Hands, as we read in the Book of the *Kings*.

Ver. 12. *Now when Athaliah heard the Noiſe of the People, running and praiſing the King, ſhe came to the People into the Houſe of the LORD.*] They ran from Place to Place proclaiming the King, and praiſing God, for ſetting him upon the Throne. This is more briefly related in 2 *Kings* xi. 13.

Ver. 13. *And ſhe looked, and behold, the King ſtood at his Pillar, at the entring in, and the Princes, and the Trumpets by the King: and all the People of the Land rejoyced, and ſounded with Trumpets, alſo the Singers with Inſtruments of Muſick, and ſuch as taught to ſing praiſe. Then Athaliah rent her Clothes, and ſaid, Treaſon, Treaſon.*] In this *Verſe* ſomething is added concerning their Expreſſions of Joy, with Inſtruments of Muſick, *&c.* otherwiſe it is the ſame with 2 *Kings* xi. 14.

Ver. 14. *Then Jehoiada the Prieſt brought out the Captains of Hundreds that were ſet over the Hoſt, and ſaid unto them, Have her forth of the Ranges: and whoſo followeth her, let him be ſlain with the Sword. For the Prieſt ſaid, Slay her not in the Houſe of the LORD.*] See 2 *Kings* xi. 15. where this is expreſſed more plainly.

Ver. 15. *So they laid Hands on her; and when ſhe was come to the entring of the Horſe-gate, by the King's Houſe, they ſlew her there.*] See

2 *Kings*

2 *Kings* xi. 16. For no doubt an Uſurper may be ſlain, by thoſe who have the ſupreme Power and Authority; whether it be in the King, or the Senate, or the People, as *Grotius* ſpeaks. To which he adds the Tutors of young Kings who are their Pupils, ſuch as *Jehoiada*, L. i. *De Jure Belli & Pacis*, Cap. iv. Sect. 8. where he very wiſely ſubjoins, that he cannot allow any private Man to have a Right to kill an Uſurper, *Sect.* 19. Such a one *Athaliah* was, for ſhe had no Right to reign, but invaded the Throne, by a tyrannical Force, as *Schichard* calls it, *Cap.* i. *Theorem* iii. *De Jure Regio.*

Ver. 16. *And Jehoiada made a Covenant between him, and between all the People, and between the King, that they ſhould be the* LORD's *People.*] I have explain'd this in 2 *Kings* xi. 17. where it is expreſly ſaid this Covenant was made between the LORD, and the People and the King. See there. Unto which I may here add, that there is no ſuch Difference between theſe two Verſes, as may be imagined. For *Jehoiada* the Prieſt ſuſtaining the Perſon of God, the Covenant was made with God, not with *Jehoiada*, who only repreſented God, to whom they promiſed Obedience.

Ver. 17. *Then all the People went to the Houſe of Baal, and brake it down, and brake his Altars, and his Images in Pieces, and ſlew Mattan the Prieſt of Baal before the Altars.*] See 2 *Kings* xi. 18.

Ver. 18. *Alſo Jehoiada appointed the Offices of the Houſe of the* LORD *by the Hand of the Prieſts the Levites, whom David had diſtributed in the Houſe of the* LORD, *to offer the Burnt-offerings of the* LORD, *as it is written in the Law of Moſes, with rejoicing and with ſinging, as it was ordained by David.*] What is ſet down briefly, at the End of that 18th Verſe, that the *Prieſt appointed Officers over the Houſe of the* LORD, is here ſet down more largely in this Verſe, and in the next. The firſt Words of which ſound thus in the *Hebrew*, *he put the Offices, the Offices of the Houſe of the* LORD, *in the Hand of the Prieſts and Levites:* Who perhaps had been put out of their Offices, by the former wicked Kings, or by *Athaliah*, and now were reſtored by *Jehoiada*, according to the Regulation made by *David.*

Ver. 19. *And he ſet the Porters at the Gates of the Houſe of the* LORD, *that none which was unclean in any thing ſhould enter in.*] Theſe alſo had been conſtituted by *David.* See 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 1, *&c.* For there is no earthly King, as *Maimonides* obſerves, whoſe Palace is not incompaſſed with ſtrong Guards: And therefore much more fit was it that the Dwelling-Place of God, the King of Kings, ſhould be ſurrounded by his Miniſters, *Prieſts* and *Levites*, who ſhould carefully watch that nothing did pollute it.

Ver. 20. *And he took the Captains of Hundreds, and the Nobles, and the Governors of the People, and all the People of the Land, and brought down the King from the Houſe of the* LORD: *and they came thro' the high Gate into the King's Houſe, and ſet the King upon the Throne of the Kingdom.*] He would have thoſe who had begun this Work, ſee it accompliſhed: And therefore they all accompanied the King from the Temple to his Palace, and ſaw him ſet on the Throne of his Father (ſee 2 *Kings* xi. 19.) whereby he took Poſſeſſion of the Kingdom, to which he had been anointed in the Temple.

Ver. 21. *And all the People of the Land rejoiced: and the City was quiet, after that they had ſlain Athaliah with thi Sword.*] See this explained in 2 *Kings* xi. 20.

CHAP. XXIV.

Ver. 1. *JOaſh was ſeven Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty Years in Jeruſalem: his Mother's Name alſo was Zibeah of Beerſheba.*

Ver. 2. *And Joaſh did that which was right in the Sight of the* LORD, *all the Days of Jehoiada the Prieſt.*] Theſe two Verſes are the ſame with thoſe 2 *Kings* xii. 1, 2.

Ver. 3. *And Jehoiada took for him two Wives, and he begat Sons and Daughters.*] He did not take theſe two Wives for the King, but for himſelf: Which was contrary to the conſtant Tradition of the *Jews*, that the High-Prieſt was to be ſo pure, as to have but one Wife at a Time: Which they endeavour to prove by Scripture, from *Levit.* xxi. 13, 14. The *Gemara Babylonica* reports this, and *Maimonides* aſſerts it (ſee *Braunius* in his *Selecta Sacra*, L. iii. Cap. 2.) Therefore *Jehoiada* is ſuppoſed to have had two Wives before he was High-Prieſt; or rather, one being dead, he took another. Or, as the *Talmudiſts* will have it, after he had divorced one he married another, as Mr. *Selden* obſerves, L. iii. *Uxor Hebr.* Cap. 19. But after all, it is not certain that *Jehoiada* was High-Prieſt, for he is every where called *Jehoiada the Prieſt*; and but once only *ver.* 6. *the Chief:* Which doth not neceſſarily imply that he was the High-Prieſt, but only a great Man, becauſe of his Relation to the Royal Family; or becauſe he was the chief Head of one of the XXIV Families of the Prieſts. But he ſeems to be diſtinguiſhed from the High-Prieſts in 2 *Kings* xii. 9, 10. and is not mentioned either in *Ezra* vii. or 1 *Chron.* vi.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs after this, that Joaſh was minded to repair the Houſe of the* LORD.] As is related ſomething more particularly in 2 *Kings* xii. 4, &c.

Ver. 5. *And he gathered together the Prieſts and the Levites, and ſaid unto them, Go out unto the Cities of Judah, and gather of all Iſrael Money to repair the Houſe of your God from Year to Year,*] That ſomething might be done every Year, till the Temple was put into good Repair. What Money this was that they were to collect, we are informed 2 *Kings* xii. 4.

And ſee that ye haſte the Matter: howbeit the Levites haſtened it not.] Things were in ſo bad a Condition, that it required the Work ſhould be begun with Speed: Yet ſuch was the Negligence of the *Levites*, and the Backwardneſs perhaps of the People to part with their Money, that in the twenty third of this King's Reign, nothing was done; as we are informed in 2 *Kings* xii. 6.

Ver. 6. *And the King called for Jehoiada the Chief, and ſaid unto him, Why haſt thou not required*

required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah, and out of Jeruſalem, the Collection, according to the Commandment of Moſes the Servant of the Lord, and of the Congregation of Iſrael, for the Tabernacle of Witneſs?] Such Oblations as were freely made in *Moſes* his Time for the building of the Tabernacle. See *Exod.* xxxv. 5. There was alſo, beſide this voluntary Oblation, a Tax ſet upon them. See *Exod.* xxx. 12, 13. It is called the *Tabernacle of Witneſs*, becauſe here were kept the *two Tables* in the Ark, which witneſſed the Covenant between God and them. See upon *Exod.* xxv. 16.

Ver. 7. *For the Sons of Athaliah, that wicked Woman, had broken up the Houſe of God,*] That is, *Ahaziah*, and the Sons of his Brethren mentioned *c.* xxii. 8. For his Brethren themſelves were carried Captive before their Father died, *c.* xxi. 17. Or, as *Abarbinel* expounds it, ſhe being a *wicked Woman*, played the Whore with another Man, by whom ſhe had ſeveral Baſtards, who committed this Impiety. Therefore they are called the *Sons of Athaliah*, their Father being unknown.

And alſo all the dedicate Things of the Houſe of the LORD] Which ſhould have been employed in the Reparation of it.

Did they beſtow upon Baalim.] Gave them either to adorn the Temples of thoſe falſe Gods, or to promote their Worſhip.

Ver. 8. *And at the King's Commandment they made a Cheſt, and ſet it without, at the Gate of the Houſe of the LORD.*] This is more largely related in 2 *Kings* xii. 9. See there.

Ver. 9. *And they made a Proclamation thro' Judah and Jeruſalem, to bring in to the LORD the Collection that Moſes the Servant of God laid upon Iſrael in the Wilderneſs.*] One like to that, according as every Man ſhould freely offer.

Ver. 10. *And all the Princes, and all the People rejoyced, and brought in, and caſt into the Cheſt,*] The great Men ſet ſo good an Example to the People, that they cheerfully joined with them in this good Work.

Until they had made an End.] Till every Body had given ſomething, or all that had a Mind had offered, and they ſaw no more would be given: Or till the Temple was repaired, and the Work finiſhed.

Ver. 11. *Now it came to paſs, that at what Time the Cheſt was brought unto the King's Office, by the Hand of the Levites,*] Who brought it from the Gate of the Houſe of the LORD (*ver.* 8.) that the King's Officers might examine what the Contribution amounted unto.

And when they ſaw that there was much Money, the King's Scribe, and the High-Prieſt's Officer came and emptied the Cheſt, and took it, and carried it to his Place again.] By the Hands of the *Levites* who brought it thither.

Thus they did Day by Day, and gathered Money in Abundance.] This is related a little more largely than in 2 *Kings* xii. 10. See what I have noted there.

Ver. 12. *And the King and Jehoiada gave it to ſuch as did the Work of the Service of the Houſe of the LORD, and hired Maſons and Carpenters to repair the Houſe of the LORD, and alſo ſuch as wrought Iron and Braſs, to mend the Houſe of the LORD.*] See 2 *Kings* xii. 11, 12, 13, &c. where this is more diſtinctly related. Only here we are told who put the Money into the Hands of thoſe that were to overſee the Work, *viz.* the *King* and *Jehoiada*, which is not there mentioned.

Ver. 13. *So the Workmen wrought, and the Work was perfected by them, and they ſet the Houſe of God in his State, and ſtrengthened it.*] For the Men were ſo honeſt, that there was no Time ſpent in calling them to an Account, how they laid out the Money; which they did very faithfully, 2 *Kings* xii. 15.

Ver. 14. *And when they had finiſhed it, they brought the reſt of the Money before the King and Jehoiada, whereof were made Veſſels for the Houſe of the LORD, even Veſſels to miniſter, and to offer withal, and Spoons, and Veſſels of Gold and Silver: and they offered Burnt-offerings in the Houſe of the LORD continually, all the Days of Jehoiada.*] It is likely *Athaliah* and her wicked Sons had embezzel'd the holy Veſſels, and employed them to the Service of *Baalim*. But till the Temple was compleatly repaired, none of the Money was converted to this other pious Uſe, of purchaſing Veſſels for the Sanctuary, as we are diſtinctly told in 2 *Kings* xii. 13.

Ver. 15. *But Jehoiada waxed old, and was full of Days when he died; an hundred and thirty Years old was he when he died.*] He ſeems to have lived long after this Work was finiſhed, being well ſtricken in Years when he undertook it. Many ſuch Examples of long-lived Men are collected by Primate *Uſher* in his *Chronologia Sacra*, Pars i. Cap. xii. p. 70.

Ver. 16. *And they buried him in the City of David among the Kings,*] This ſhews a good Diſpoſition in the King and the People at this Time, tho' they ſoon changed after he was dead and buried.

Becauſe he had done good in Iſrael] The good he had done was in *Judah*, which is often in this Hiſtory called *Iſrael*; becauſe they were the Principal Tribe among the *Iſraelites*, and were indeed the true *Iſrael* of God, while they continued to Worſhip him ſincerely.

Both towards God, and towards his Houſe.] He had been an Inſtrument in reſtoring the Divine Worſhip, which now they were ſenſible was a great Bleſſing; and in repairing the Decays which were in the Temple, and furniſhing it with Veſſels for the Divine Service.

Ver. 17. *Now after the Death of Jehoiada,*] In his Life-time they durſt not attempt this, for tho' he was old and feeble he retained great Authority.

Came the Princes of Judah, and made Obeiſance to the King:] Some of the great Men, who in their Hearts continued *Baalites*, deſired to be admitted into the King's Preſence, and made their Addreſſes with great Reverence, pretending the greateſt Devotion to his Service: And ſo falling into Diſcourſe with him concerning the State of Religion, and other Affairs, deſired at laſt, they might have leave to worſhip *Baal*, which *Jehoiada* had deſtroyed.

Then the King hearkened unto them.] To this dangerous Diſcourſe he liſtned and conſented to them: For fair Words and Flatteries eaſily deceive Princes, as *Grotius* here obſerves: And they wanted not ſpecious Reaſons to perſuade the

the King not to be ſo ſtrict, as to permit no God to be worſhipped but only one. Some of the *Jews* fancy, that they flattered him with a Conceit, that he himſelf was worthy of divine Honour, being wonderfully preſerved ſix Years in the Houſe of God; as the People flattered *Herod* after his Oration, ſaying, *It is the Voice of a God, not of a Man.*

Ver. 18. *And they left the Houſe of the LORD God of their Fathers, and ſerved Groves and Idols:*] Tho' at the firſt, it is likely, theſe great Men only worſhipped *Baal* themſelves; yet they had their Emiſſaries who perſuaded the People to join with them. So that the Houſe of God was deſerted, and they worſhipped Idols in the Groves.

And Wrath came upon Judah and Jeruſalem for this their Treſpaſs.] Which God puniſhed by the Hand of *Hazael*, King of *Syria*. See 2 *Kings* xii. 17, 18.

Ver. 19. *Yet he ſent Prophets to them, to bring them back again unto the LORD, and they teſtified againſt them: but they would not give Ear.*] God's Goodneſs was wonderful in ſending his Meſſengers to reduce ſuch a baſe People, whoſe Wickedneſs was no leſs wonderful, in that they hearkened to the great Men among them rather than to the Prophets of Almighty God.

Ver. 20. *And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the Son of Jehoiada the Prieſt, which ſtood above the People, and ſaid unto them,*] He had a Divine Motion to ſpeak publickly to the People and reprove them; which that he might do and be heard of all, he got up into an high Place, where they might all both ſee and hear him. *L'Empereur* in his *Annotations* upon *Codex Middoth*, p. 80. thinks, he got up into ſome Deſk or Pulpit in the Court of the Prieſts.

Thus ſaith God, Why tranſgreſs ye the Commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot proſper? becauſe ye have forſaken the LORD, he hath alſo forſaken you.] This he ſpake with great Vehemence, and, it is likely, enlarged upon this Subject ſo long, that it raiſed their Indignation. It is very remarkable, that tho' he ſpake by the Spirit of Prophecy, yet he only applied the general Prediction of *Moſes* (*Deut.* xxxi. 16.) unto the preſent Time; that they might all learn to have a greater Regard to *Moſes*, and continually meditate in his Law; unto which if they had attended, they would have eaſily diſcerned, who were true Prophets, and who were falſe.

Ver. 21. *And they conſpired againſt him, and ſtoned him with Stones, at the Commandment of the King*] Who, it is likely, was preſent when he reproved them; or, being told what he ſaid, ſent an Order to kill him; which ſhews their Error, who think *Joaſh* was not an Idolater himſelf, but only connived at the great Mens Idolatry, and gave them Liberty to exerciſe it. *Joſephus* rightly accuſes him of this Sin, of which if he had not been guilty, he would not ſure have ſlain the LORD's Prophet, who reproved it.

In the Court of the Houſe of the LORD.] This ſhews, that they were there aſſembled; of which he took the Advantage, to put them in mind of their Duty; and, if we may believe the *Jews*, it was upon the great Day of Expiation; for as *Bochartus* obſerves, *Hierozoicon*, Par. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 1. *Plebeius furor nullos habet limites, maxime cum Religionis velum illi obtenditur*; Popular Fury hath no Bounds, eſpecially when the Veil of Religion is thrown over it.

Ver. 22. *Thus Joaſh the King remembred not the Kindneſs which Jehoiada his Father had done to him, but ſlew his Son:*] This Sin, beſides the Contempt of God's Prophet, and of the Place where he was murdered, had an horrid Ingratitude in it; he being the Son of him, to whom the King owed his Life and his Kingdom; who aſſiſted his Father at his Unction, as ſome think, becauſe it is ſaid, *chap.* xxiii. 11. *Jehoiada and his Sons anointed him.* But if *Jehoiada* was High-Prieſt, this Son is not reckoned among the Succeſſors of *Aaron*, in 1 *Chron.* vi. And therefore it is likely he was a younger Son of *Jehoiada*; for if he had been his eldeſt, he would have had ſufficient Authority, without the Spirit of Prophecy, to reprove *Joaſh* for his Idolatry; as *Azariah* reſiſted *Uzziah* when he would have uſurped his Office. *Ludovicus Capellus* therefore thinks it probable, that his Brother the High-Prieſt conniving at *Joaſh*'s Apoſtaſy, this younger Brother was inſpired by God to reprove it; which Boldneſs *Joaſh* and his Courtiers thought they might puniſh with ſome Colour, by alledging, that he was not moved by God to it, but by his juvenile Heat, and Raſhneſs, which they ſtirred up the People to chaſtiſe. See *Chronol. ſacra*, p. 285.

And when he died, he ſaid, The LORD look upon it, and require it.] And ſo he did, both by external Wars, *v.* 23. and by a Conſpiracy againſt him, *v.* 25. It is not to be thought, that he died with a Spirit of Revenge; but by the Spirit of Prophecy foretold God would puniſh them for their hard Uſage of him. Thus the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. ſpeaks of *Alexander* the Copper-Smith, who had greatly oppoſed him, *The LORD reward him according to his Work*; which may be underſtood as a Sentence pronounced againſt him.

The *Jews* tell a ſtrange Story in the *Gemara Sanhedrin*, Cap. xi. how *Nebuzaradan*, when he burnt the Temple, ſaw Blood bubbling up in a certain Place; and enquiring into the Matter, he underſtood, that a Prieſt and Prophet of the LORD had been ſlain there, becauſe he foretold their Deſtruction. Whereupon he killed all the Doctors of the Law, but ſtill the Blood was not at reſt; then all the Scholars in their Schools, but ſtill it was not quiet; then all the Prieſts, and at laſt many thouſands of the People, but ſtill it continued to bubble: So that he ſaid, *Zachariah, Zachariah*, wouldeſt thou have me to deſtroy all the Nation? and then it reſted, *Sect.* xxiv. In other Books they ſay, there were ſeven Tranſgreſſions upon this Day, in which they kill'd a Prieſt, a Prophet, a Judge, ſhed innocent Blood, polluted the Court of the Lord's Houſe, and the Sabbath, and the Day of Expiation.

Ver. 23. *And it came to paſs at the End of the Year, that the Hoſt of Syria came up againſt him:*] God was very ſpeedy in puniſhing this and the reſt of the Wickedneſs they had committed.

And they came to Judah and Jeruſalem, and deſtroyed

deſtroyed all the Princes of the People from among the People,] Who had adviſed King *Joaſh* to reſtore the Worſhip of *Baal*; this was a diſtinct War from that mentioned in 2 *Kings* xii. 17, 18. Here *Hazael* is not ſaid to have come up, but only his Army, and that a ſmall Party. There it is not ſaid, he took *Jeruſalem*; but here he deſtroyed all the Princes. There it is ſaid, *Joaſh* diverted *Hazael* from him by Preſents; here, that they ſpoiled the City, and ſent the Prey to *Syria*. We are therefore thus to underſtand the Whole, that when they did Evil in the Sight of the LORD, he ſent *Hazael* to afflict them, who, we read in the Book of *Kings*, took *Gath*, and ſet his Face, as if he meant to ſet upon *Jeruſalem*; whereupon *Joaſh* took the hallowed Things, and thereby procured his Departure from them; but in the End of the Year, *Zachariah* being murdered, this other War begun, which is here related in this Book.

And ſent all the Spoil of them unto the King at Damaſcus.] Who was not here at this Invaſion, but contented himſelf to ſend a few Forces againſt *Judah*, as the next Words tell us.

Ver. 24. *For the Army of the Syrians came with a ſmall Company of Men, and the LORD delivered a very great Hoſt into their Hand,*] This declar'd the Puniſhment the more remarkably to proceed from the Hand of God, who took away their Courage, ſo that with a great Hoſt they could not reſiſt an Handful of their Enemies.

Becauſe they had forſaken the LORD God of their Fathers:] According to the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, *v.* 20.

So they executed Judgment againſt Joaſh.] They left him in a miſerable Condition; for all Puniſhments are called *JUDGMENTS* among the *Hebrews*.

Ver. 25. *And when they were departed from him, (for they left him in great Diſeaſes)*] Many think, he was ſorely wounded in the Battle; which brought him into great Diſeaſes; and they increaſed, it is likely, by the Grief and Anguiſh of his Mind, to ſee his Country ruin'd; and by the Hatred and Contempt into which he was fallen, which encouraged his own Servants (as it follows) to conſpire againſt him.

His own Servants conſpired againſt him, for the Blood of the Sons of Jehoiada the Prieſt,] This doth not denote they killed more of his Sons than one; but, according to the frequent Uſe of this Language, the Plural Number is put for the Singular.

And ſlew him on his Bed, and he died:] Perhaps they were of his Bed-Chamber, and ſo could more eaſily compaſs their Deſign. Howſoever, he was ſo weak and feeble that he could make no Reſiſtance, and was ſo little eſteemed, that his Guard minded not what became of him. This Bed was in his Houſe of *Millo*, as we read 2 *Kings* xii. 21. which is ſaid to be in the Way to *Silla*; becauſe there was another Houſe of *Millo*, from which this is thus diſtinguiſhed.

And they buried him in the City of David, but they buried him not in the Sepulchres of the Kings.] The ſame is ſaid of *Ahaz*, xxviii. 27. Tho' the People could not puniſh wicked Kings for their Impieties while they lived; yet they ſet Blots upon their Memory when they were dead, as *Grotius* obſerves, *Lib.* i. *de Jure Belli & Pacis, Cap.* iii. *Sect.* 16. *Egregio Temperamento*, as he ſpeaks, by a moſt admirable Temperament; wherewith the Sacredneſs of the ſupreme Power was preſerved, and yet Kings out of Fear of future Judgment were kept from altering Religion. But it may be doubted, whether this was done perpetually; for we find bad Kings builded themſelves Sepulchres, 2 *Kings* xxi. 18, 26.

Ver. 26. *And theſe are they that conſpired againſt him; Zabad the Son of Shimeath an Ammoniteſs, and Jehozabad the Son of Shimrith a Moabiteſs.*] They were mungrel Fellows, whoſe Fathers were *Jews*, but their Mothers Aliens; for ſo the Manner of this impious People was, to make Marriages contrary to the Law.

Ver. 27. *Now concerning his Sons, and the Greatneſs of the Burdens laid upon him, and the repairing of the Houſe of God, behold they are written in the Story of the Book of the Kings.*] Some by *Burdens* underſtand the ſore Puniſhments God inflicted on him, called in Scripture, *The Burden of the LORD.* Others, the great Tribute laid upon him by the *Syrians*; which was a heavy Burden, and a ſore Puniſhment.

And Amaziah his Son reigned in his ſtead.] Though the Father was not beloved, it did not hinder the Succeſſion of his Son.

CHAP. XXV.

Ver. 1. *Amaziah was twenty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine Years in Jeruſalem: and his Mother's Name was Jehoaddan of Jeruſalem.*] See 2 *Kings* xiv. 1.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect Heart.*] He followed the right Religion, and worſhipped God aright, but not with ſuch Sincerity as *David* his Father did, 2 *Kings* xiv. 3. See *Grotius* upon *c.* xxvi. 4. where he obſerves his Son did in Fact what the Law required, but not with a ſolid Piety.

Ver. 3. *And it came to paſs, when the Kingdom was eſtabliſhed to him, that he ſlew his Servants that had killed the King his Father.*] They ſeem to have been Men of ſome Power and Intereſt in the Court, whom he durſt not meddle withal till he was well ſettled in his Authority. See 2 *Kings* xiv. 5.

Ver. 4. *But he ſlew not their Children, but did as it is written in the Law in the Book of Moſes, where the LORD commanded, ſaying, The Fathers ſhall not die for the Children, neither ſhall the Children die for the Fathers, but every Man ſhall die for his own Sin.*] The very ſame is obſerved there, 2 *Kings* xiv. 6.

Ver. 5. *Moreover, Amaziah gathered Judah together, and made them Captains over thouſands, and Captains over hundreds, according to the Houſes of their Fathers, throughout all Judah and Benjamin:*] All that belonged to one Family, he put under the Command of one Leader; whereby they became the more unanimous.

And he numbred them from twenty Years old and above, and found them three hundred thouſand choice Men, able to go forth to War, that could handle

handle Spear and Shield.] Behold here, how their Iniquities had diminiſhed their Numbers, ſince the Days of *Jehoſhaphat* (*i. e.* in the Space of eighty two Years) for this King could bring but three hundred thouſand fighting Men into the Field, and *Jehoſhaphat* brought near four Times as many. See upon *Chap.* xvii. *ult.*

Ver. 6. *He hired alſo an hundred thouſand mighty Men of Valour out of Iſrael, for an hundred Talents of Silver.*] In two Things he ſhewed his Heart was not perfect with God; (as it is noted *v.* 2.) for, *firſt*, he ſinned in making a League with the X Tribes, contrary to what the Prophet *Azariah* had declared, *Chap.* xix. And, *ſecondly*, he invited them to Battle without any Provocation; whereas he ſhould have done, as the LORD commanded, 1 *Kings* xii. 24. and left them to end their Quarrels among themſelves; only repelling them if they had invaded him, but no more.

Ver. 7. *But there came a Man of God to him, ſaying, O King, let not the Army of Iſrael go with thee;*] This was the Prophet *Amos*, Father of the Prophet *Iſaiah*, if we will believe the *Jews*, particularly *Kimchi* upon this Place; but this is a fooliſh Tradition, built on a Miſtake that *Amos* the Prophet was *Iſaiah*'s Father.

For the LORD is not with Iſrael, to wit, with all the Children of Ephraim.] In the *Targum* it is, *The WORD of the LORD will not help Iſrael*; who had highly offended him by the Idolatry, which *Jeroboam* of the Tribe of *Ephraim* introduced.

Ver. 8. *But if thou wilt go, do it, be ſtrong for the Battle: God ſhall make thee fall before the Enemy: for God hath Power to help and to caſt down.*] If he had a ſettled Reſolution not to deſiſt, the Prophet bid him go and try, whether with the greateſt Power he could muſter up, he ſhould be able to prevail againſt the LORD; who could either help a few, or deſtroy a great many.

Ver. 9. *And Amaziah ſaid unto the Man of God, But what ſhall we do for the hundred Talents, which I have given to the Army of Iſrael?*] That which ſtuck with him was the Money he was likely to loſe; for they would not return that, if he diſmiſſed them from his Army.

And the Man of God anſwered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this.] This Objection was preſently anſwered, if he would but obey God, and truſt in his Goodneſs; who was able to give his faithful Servants more than that came to. And as *Grotius* notes, he is rich enough, who is impoveriſhed for God's Sake.

Ver. 10. *Then Amaziah ſeparated them, to wit, the Army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again:*] This argued ſome Goodneſs in him, tho' his Heart was not perfect with God.

Wherefore their Anger was greatly kindled againſt Judah, and they returned home in great Anger.] Becauſe they looked upon them as Enemies of God, and durſt not imploy them: St. *Hierom* thinks they carried Idols along with them.

Ver. 11. *And Amaziah ſtrengthened himſelf,*] With his own Men only.

And led forth his People, and went to the Valley of Salt, and ſmote of the Children of Seir,] Who dwelt in Mount *Seir*.

Ten thouſand.] See 2 *Kings* xiv. 7. where this Story is told more briefly; for what follows in the next Verſe, is there omitted.

Ver. 12. *And other ten thouſand left alive, did the Children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the Top of the Rock, and caſt them down from the Top of the Rock, that they were broken all in Pieces.*] This was a very ancient Puniſhment among the *Romans*, as we learn from *Livy*, *Plutarch*, *Dionyſius Halicarnaſſæus*, and others; and was uſed among other Nations, as Mr. *Selden* ſhews, *Lib.* i. *De Synedriis*, *Cap.* 17. where he obſerves an illuſtrious Example of this among the *Iſraelites*, who threw *Jezabel* down upon the Stones out of the Windows, by the Command of *Jehu*.

Ver. 13. *But the Soldiers of the Army, which Amaziah ſent back, that they ſhould not go with him to Battle,*] The Men of *Ephraim*, whom the Prophet forbad him to join withal; and were therefore ſent home.

Fell upon the Cities of Judah, from Samaria, even unto Beth-horon;] They went away from *Amaziah* in a great Rage, (*v.* 10.) which inſtigated them to revenge the Affront put upon them, in this Manner; taking hold of the fair Opportunity, which preſented itſelf, by his War with *Edom*, which had drained his Country of all the Forces that ſhould have oppoſed them.

And ſmote three thouſand of them, and took much Spoil.] Thus *Amaziah* was puniſhed for having entred into a Society with Idolaters, tho' at the Prophet's Reproof he broke it off; and God, it is not unlikely, alſo ſuffered this Calamity to fall upon him, becauſe he uſed his Victory over the *Edomites* with too much Cruelty.

Ver. 14. *Now it came to paſs, after that Amaziah was come from the Slaughter of the Edomites, that he brought the Gods of the Children of Seir,*] Which he ſhould have burnt with Fire.

And ſet them up to be his Gods, and bowed down himſelf before them, and burned Incenſe unto them.] A moſt prodigious Sottiſhneſs, as the Prophet ſhews him in the next Verſe. *Ahaz* was wiſer, (tho' very wicked) who ſacrificed to the Gods of thoſe People who had overcome him; hoping they might be perſuaded to help him alſo, xxviii. 23. Or, perhaps, *Amaziah* worſhipped them, for Fear they ſhould owe him a Spite, and contrive ſome Miſchief againſt him, in Revenge of what he had done againſt the *Edomites*. See Dr. *Jackſon*, in his Book of the *Original of Belief*, Chap. xvii. Parag. 5. 10.

Ver. 15. *Wherefore the Anger of the LORD was kindled againſt Amaziah, and he ſent unto him a Prophet, which ſaid unto him, Why haſt thou ſought after the Gods of the People, which could not deliver their own People out of thine Hand?*] Nothing need be ſaid more to convince him of his monſtrous Stupidity; of which no Account could be given, unleſs we ſuppoſe them to have been ſuch beautiful Images, that he looked upon them till he fell in Love with them, and doted upon them, ſo that he was bewitched into a ſenſeleſs Idolatry. *Fabius Maximus* (as *Strigelius* here notes) was much wiſer,

wiſer, who having conquered *Tarentum*, and being asked what ſhould be done with their Gods, *Deos iratos Tarentinis relinqui juſſit*, bad them leave their Gods that were angry with the *Tarentines*: For what Vanity is it, (as he adds) to hope for any Safety from thoſe, that cannot preſerve themſelves? But ſuch is the Madneſs of Idolaters, that it is reproved by ſober Heathens.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs as he talked with him, that the King ſaid unto him, Art thou made of the King's Counſel?*] Yes, undoubtedly, for he was made ſo by God; and did nothing but what belonged to his Office, *Jerem.* i. 10. But *Amaziah* thought not of this; but ſcornfully aſked him, Who made him a Counſellor of State?

Forbear; why ſhouldſt thou be ſmitten?] He bids him meddle no more in this Matter, leſt he ſhould be provoked to deal with him, as they did with *Zachariah*, xxiv. 21.

Then the Prophet forbare, and ſaid, I know that God hath determined to deſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not hearkened unto my Counſel.] He forbare to adviſe or reprove him any further, but only denounced the Sentence God had paſſed upon him, for this Contempt of him, and his other Sins; which came to paſs, *v.* 20, 27.

Ver. 17. *Then Amaziah King of Judah took Advice,*] He would not be adviſed by the Prophet; but conſulted thoſe that led him to his Deſtruction.

And ſent to Joaſh the Son of Jehoahaz, the Son of Jehu King of Iſrael, ſaying, Come, let us ſee one another in the Face.] He was adviſed, it ſeems, without firſt deſiring Satisfaction for the Damage done him, (*v.* 12.) in which perhaps *Joaſh* had no Hand, to make War upon him, and provoke him to Battle. See 2 *Kings* xiv. 17, 18, *&c.* where this, and the following Verſes are explained.

Ver. 18. *And Joaſh King of Iſrael ſent to Amaziah King of Judah, ſaying, the Thiſtle that was in Lebanon, ſent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, ſaying, Give thy Daughter to my Son to Wife: and there paſſed by a wild Beaſt that was in Lebanon, and trode down the Thiſtle.*

Ver. 19. *Thou ſayeſt, Lo, thou haſt ſmitten the Edomites, and thine Heart lifteth thee up to boaſt: abide now at Home, why ſhouldeſt thou meddle to thine Hurt, that thou ſhouldeſt fall, even thou and Judah with thee?*] See this explained there, 2 *Kings* xiv. 9, 10.

Ver. 20. *But Amaziah would not hear, for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the Hand of their Enemies, becauſe they ſought after the Gods of Edom.*] God blinds the Minds of thoſe whom he intends to deſtroy for their Sins.

Ver. 21. *So Joaſh the King of Iſrael went up, and they ſaw one another in the Face, both he and Amaziah King of Judah, at Beth-ſhemeſh, which belongeth to Judah.*] For there was another *Beth-ſhemeſh* in the Tribe of *Naphtali*, *Joſh.* xix. 38. *Judges* i. 33.

Ver. 22. *And Judah was put to the worſe before Iſrael, and they fled every Man to his Tent.*] Theſe two Verſes are in the ſame Words, 2 *Kings* xiv. 11, 12.

Ver. 23. *And Joaſh the King of Iſrael took Amaziah King of Judah, the Son of Joaſh, the Son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-ſhemeſh, and brought him to Jeruſalem, and brake down the Wall of Jeruſalem, from the Gate of Ephraim to the Corner-gate, four hundred Cubits.*] See there *v.* 13.

Ver. 24. *And he took all the Gold and the Silver, and all the Veſſels that were found in the Houſe of God with Obed-edom,*] The *Targum* here explains it, that *Obed-edom* conſecrated theſe Veſſels to God's Service, when *David* brought the Ark to his Houſe, and God bleſſed him for his Care in looking after it; but *Kimchi* judges better, who takes *Obed-edom* to have been ſet over theſe Treaſures, in the Cuſtody of which his Son ſucceeded him.

And the Treaſures of the King's Houſe, the Hoſtages alſo, and returned to Samaria.] Theſe *Hoſtages* the *Targum* takes for the Sons of the principal Men of the City; with whom the Generality of the *Hebrew* Interpreters agree: So *Jarchi*; the Children of *Iſrael* did not reſtore to *Amaziah* the Kingdom of *Judah*, but upon Condition, that he ſhould give him the Children of great Men for a Security of his Fidelity, and that he ſhould not rebel againſt him hereafter.

Ver. 25. *And Amaziah the Son of Joaſh, King of Judah, lived after the Death of Joaſh Son of Jehoahaz, King of Iſrael, fifteen Years.*] See upon 2 *Kings* xiv. 17.

Ver. 26. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Amaziah, firſt and laſt, behold, are they not written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Iſrael?*] See there, *v.* 18.

Ver. 27. *Now after the Time that Amaziah did turn away from following the LORD, they made a Conſpiracy againſt him in Jeruſalem, and he fled to Lachiſh: but they ſent to Lachiſh after him, and ſlew him there.*] He turned from God before the Death of *Joaſh*; therefore this Conſpiracy was laid a great while before it was diſcovered; and then he fled to *Lachiſh*, where it took Effect. Or, as *Jacobus Capellus* conjectures (in his *Hiſt. ſacra & exotica*) the Wars abroad put a Stop to this Sedition at home: But when they were over, and he returned home, and had a Son, then the Conſpiracy was renewed again, under the ſpecious Name of being Guardians to the young Prince, and taking better Care of him, than his Father was likely to do.

Ver. 28. *And they brought him upon Horſes, and buried him with his Fathers in the City of Judah.*] That is, in the City of *David*, as it is explained, 1 *Kings* xiv. 20.

CHAP. XXVI.

Ver. 1. THEN *all the People of Judah took Uzziah,*] Who was called alſo *Azariah*, 2 *Kings* xiv. 21. xv. 1.

Who was ſixteen Years old, and made him King in the room of his Father Amaziah.] They made him King, when he was ſixteen Years old; for his Father left him an Infant of four Years old: So that there was an *Interregnum* of twelve Years, the Kingdom being adminiſtred by a Vice-Roy, or by the High-Prieſt and the Elders. See *Ludovicus Capellus* in his *Chronologia Sacra*, p. 182.

Ver. 2. *He built Eloth, and reſtored it to Judah, after that the King ſlept with his Fathers.*] He repaired it, after he had retaken it from the *Iſraelites:* This being, I ſuppoſe, one of the Cities, that the Soldiers, whom his Father *Amaziah* diſmiſſed, had taken, (ſee 2 *Kings* xiv. 22.) and which, while he lived, he could not recover.

Ver. 3. *Sixteen Years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two Years in Jeruſalem: his Mother's Name alſo was Jecoliah of Jeruſalem.*

Ver. 4. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, according to all that his Father Amaziah did.*] Theſe two Verſes are the very ſame with thoſe 2 *Kings* xv. 2, 3. See there.

Ver. 5. *And he ſought God in the Days of Zechariah,*] He perſiſted in the true Religion, as long as *Zechariah* lived. By whom is not meant him whoſe Book of Prophecies is extant in the Bible, for he lived three hundred Years after; nor the Son of *Jehoiada*, who was ſlain ſome Years ago: But it is probable, the Son of that *Zechariah*, who was called after his Father's Name, and was eminent for his Divine Wiſdom.

Who had Underſtanding in the Viſions of God:] It is not ſaid he was a Prophet, but that he was a Man very ſkilful in expounding the ancient Prophecies, and giving Inſtruction out of them; as *Grotius* underſtands it.

And as long as he ſought the LORD, God made him to proſper.) Of which he gives Inſtances in the following Verſes.

Ver. 6. *And he went forth and warred againſt the Philiſtines, and brake down the Wall of Gath, and the Wall of Jabneh, and the Wall of Aſhdod, and built Cities about Aſhdod, and among the Philiſtines.*] From this Verſe, unto the *fifteenth*, this Divine Writer ſhews, how excellent a Prince this was, and how God proſpered him, while he continued truly religious: For he was ſkilled in Huſbandry as well as in warlike Affairs; and was very ſolicitous for the Good of his People. The former of theſe is mentioned *v.* 10. and the other in the reſt of the Verſes; which tell us, how prudently he demoliſhed all the Fortifications of his Enemies, on the Frontiers; and provided his own Frontiers with Works, Gariſons, Arms and Engines of War.

Ver. 7. *And God helped him againſt the Philiſtines, and againſt the Arabians that dwelt in Gurbaal, and the Mehunims.*] I have noted often before, that theſe *Mehunims* were a People in *Arabia deſerta*. See 1 *Chron.* iv. 41. 2 *Chron.* xx. 1. *Judges* x. 11, 12. of which this Place gives a clear Proof.

Ver. 8. *And the Ammonites gave Gifts to Uzziah,*] Made him Preſents, that they might preſerve his Friendſhip.

And his Name ſpread abroad, even to the entring in of Egypt, for he ſtrengthened himſelf exceedingly.] His Power grew ſo very great, that he was formidable, not only to the *Philiſtines* in the Weſt, and to the *Arabians* and others in the Eaſt, but to the Borders of *Egypt* in the South.

Ver. 9. *Moreover, Uzziah built Towers in Jeruſalem at the Corner-gate, and at the Valley-gate, and at the Turning of the Wall, and fortified them.*] In his Father's Time the Wall of *Jeruſalem* was broken down four hundred Cubits, as we read in the foregoing Chapter, *v.* 23. which, it is likely, was built again before this Time: But *Uzziah* made it ſtronger by Towers, which he built for its Defence; one of which was at that very Gate where the Breach ended, *viz.* the Corner-gate.

Ver. 10. *Alſo he built Towers in the Deſert,*] To defend the Shepherds from the ſudden Incurſions of their Enemies; particularly the *Arabs*, who had formerly broken in upon them, xxi. 16.

And digged many Wells, for he had much Cattle, both in the low Country and in the Plains: Huſbandmen alſo, and Vine-dreſſers in the Mountains,] Some therefore take the Towers forementioned to have been Country-houſes, where Huſbandmen dwelt; and where their Cattle in hard Weather were ſheltered, and the Fruits of the Earth were laid up.

And in Carmel:] By this is not meant the famous Mount of that Name, (for that was not in the Tribe of *Judah*) but a very fertile Country, as the Word *Carmel* ſignifies in ſeveral Places, *Iſaiah* xvi. 10. *Jerem.* ii. 7. xlviii. 33.

For he loved Huſbandry.] As the greateſt Men (I have often obſerved) did in ancient Times, and followed the Plough, and fed Cattle themſelves. See 1 *Kings* xix. 19.

Ver. 11. *Moreover, Uzziah had an Hoſt of fighting Men that went out to War by Bands,*] They were ſent out by Parties, ſeveral Ways; for it appears by what follows they were very numerous.

According to the Number of their Account, by the Hand of Jeiel the Scribe,] He was the Secretary of War, (as we now ſpeak) who took an Account of the ſeveral Bands of Men, that went out, and of the Number whereof they conſiſted.

And Maaſeiah the Ruler, under the Hand of Hananiah, one of the King's Captains.] Theſe two, I ſuppoſe, were great Officers, who were to overſee *Jeiel*, that there was no Fraud in his Account.

Ver. 12. *The whole Number of the Chief of the Fathers of the mighty Men of Valour, were two thouſand and ſix hundred.*] This is ſufficient to ſhew he had a very great Army, (there being ſo many principal Perſons employed to command them) but a particular Account is given of them in the next Verſe.

Ver. 13. *And under their Hand was an Army, three hundred thouſand and ſeven thouſand and five hundred, that made War with mighty Power, to help the King againſt the Enemy.*] Perhaps theſe were a ſtanding Force, ready to repel their Enemies if they invaded them; beſides that Hoſt, which went forth by Bands, to annoy their Enemies on all Sides, (*v.* 11.) and then he was grown much more powerful than his Father. See xxv. 5.

Ver. 14. *And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the Hoſt, Shields, and Spears, and Helmets, and Habergeons, and Bows, and Slings to caſt Stones.*] All Sorts of Arms, both defenſive and offenſive;

offenſive; but here is no mention of Swords; with which, I ſuppoſe, all the People were always provided.

Ver. 15. *And he made in Jeruſalem Engines, invented by cunning Men, to be on the Towers, and upon the Bulwarks, to ſhoot Arrows and great Stones withal:*] The *Targum* by theſe Engines underſtands Towers perforated: Whereas the Text plainly tells us, they were Engines, out of which they ſhot Arrows and threw Stones, from the Towers and from the Walls. *Bochartus* thinks, the Word properly imports, they were contrived for the Projection of Stones, *Lib.* iii. of his *Phaleg*, *Cap.* vii. and in his *Canaan*, Lib. i. Cap. xxxv.

And his Name ſpread far abroad,] Beyond the entring in of *Egypt* (*v.* 8.) unto diſtant Countries.

For he was marvellouſly helped till he was ſtrong.] God aided him ſo wonderfully in all his Undertakings, that he feared no Enemy, *v.* 7.

Ver. 16. *But when he was ſtrong, his Heart was lifted up to his Deſtruction:*] To the Loſs of all his Authority. How hard is it to bear great Proſperity with Moderation and humble Thankfulneſs!

For he tranſgreſſed againſt the LORD his God, and went into the Temple of the LORD, to burn Incenſe upon the Altar of Incenſe.] What ſhould tempt him to this Folly, it is hard to give an Account. Perhaps he had a vain Ambition to imitate Heathen Princes, who in many Places executed the Prieſthood alſo. And *Jacobus Capellus* thinks, that which puffed him up with Pride, was, that now he had not only a Son, *viz. Jotham*, but a Grand-ſon, *Ahaz*, *ad A. M.* 3231.

Ver. 17. *And Azariah the Prieſt went in after him, and with him fourſcore Prieſts of the LORD, that were valiant Men.*] See my *Annotantions* on 1 *Chron.* vi. 10.

Ver. 18. *And they withſtood Uzziah the King, and ſaid unto him,*] It is plain by this, that they did not withſtand his Attempt by Force of Arms; but by Reaſons, Perſuaſions, and Exhortations. And perhaps, they ſurrounded the Altar, ſo that he could not, without offering Violence to them, approach it.

It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to burn Incenſe unto the LORD, but to the Prieſts the Sons of Aaron, that are conſecrated to burn Incenſe:] They repreſented to him, that he invaded the Office of the Prieſts, who were conſecrated to this Service; which he was not, and therefore ought not to meddle with it.

Go out of the Sanctuary, for thou haſt treſpaſſed,] He had gone too far already, in going into the Holy-Place; whereby he had offended the Divine Majeſty; but they beſeech him to proceed no further.

Neither ſhall it be for thine Honour from the LORD God.] They repreſent to him, that he could get no Honour, but loſe very much by aſpiring to this Dignity of the Prieſthood, which the LORD had placed in other Hands.

Ver. 19. *Then Uzziah was wroth, and had a Cenſer in his Hand to burn Incenſe:*] Which he would not lay aſide upon their Admonition; but fell into a great Paſſion, becauſe he was hindred in that which he deſigned.

And while he was wroth with the Prieſts,] And perhaps threatning, that he would have his Will.

The Leproſy even roſe up in his Forehead,] Where it could not be concealed, but was apparent to all that were preſent.

Before the Prieſts in the Houſe of the LORD, from beſide the Incenſe-Altar.] Where they ſtood to keep him from it.

Ver. 20. *And Azariah the chief Prieſt, and all the Prieſts looked upon him, and behold, he was leprous in his Forehead, and they thruſt him out from thence,*] There was no need to uſe Force to thruſt him out, for he haſted himſelf, as it follows, to be gone: Therefore they only admoniſhed him moſt earneſtly to depart, becauſe the Law permitted not a Leper to remain in a City, much leſs to come into the Houſe of God.

Yea, himſelf haſted alſo to go out, becauſe the LORD had ſmitten him.] And he was afraid of a ſorer Puniſhment, if he ſtaid there. See *Grotius De Imperio S. P. circa ſacra*, p. 251.

Ver. 21. *And Uzziah the King was a Leper unto the Day of his Death,*] The Puniſhment was Capital for meddling raſhly with Divine Miniſtrations, as we ſee from the Beginning, in the Caſe of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, *Levit.* x. 1, 2. and ſee *Numb.* iii. 10. xviii. 7. Now the Leproſy was a Kind of Death, becauſe it ſeparated thoſe who were ſmitten with it from the Society of Men, as if they were dead, and no Part of this World.

And dwelt in a ſeveral Houſe being a Leper, for he was cut off from the Houſe of the LORD:] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *he dwelt in an Houſe of Freedom*; ſo ſuch Places were called, becauſe ſuch as were there, were exempt from the common Affairs, and ſhut up from the Converſation of Men; whence ſuch as are laid in their Grave, are ſaid to be *free among the Dead*, (*Pſal.* lxxxviii. 5.) becauſe removed from all the Affairs and Converſation of the World. See Dr. *Hammond* upon that Place, *Annot.* c.

And Jotham his Son was over the King's Houſe, judging the People of the Land.] See 2 *Kings* xv. 5.

Ver. 22. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Uzziah, firſt and laſt, did Iſaiah the Prophet, the Son of Amos, write.*] This ſhews, the Prophets were wont (as I have before obſerved) to write the Hiſtory of their own Times. For *Iſaiah* propheſied in the Beginning of *Uzziah*'s Reign, and, as *Abarbinel* thinks, before *Hoſea*, who lived in the ſame Period of Time, and propheſied before *Jeremiah*, and *Ezekiel*.

Ver. 23. *So Uzziah ſlept with his Fathers, and they buried him with his Fathers in the Field of the Burial which belonged to the Kings;*] This was in the City of *David*, as we read in 2 *Kings* xv. 7.

For they ſaid, He is a Leper:] Therefore he was not buried in the Sepulchre of the Kings his Predeceſſors; but had a *ſeveral* Burial-place when he was dead, as he had a ſeveral Houſe while he lived.

And Jotham his Son reigned in his ſtead.

CHAP. XXVII.

Ver. 1. *JOtham was twenty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ſixteen Years in Jeruſalem: his Mother's Name alſo was Jeruſhaſh, the Daughter of Zadok.*

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, according to all that his Father Uzziah did:*] The very ſame is ſaid in 2 *Kings* xv. 33, 34.

Howbeit, he entered not into the Temple of the LORD.] Some imagine, he was ſo frighted at what befel his Father, that he did not ſo much as go into the Court of the Temple, or that he did not offer Sacrifices in the Temple, but in High-Places. But this doth not well agree with the Words foregoing: Therefore the Meaning rather is, that he imitated his Father in all that was good in him; but did not profanely enter into the Temple to offer Incenſe, as he did.

And the People did yet corruptly.] For they offered Incenſe in High-Places, 2 *Kings* xv. 35. and, as ſome think, committed Idolatry.

Ver. 3. *He built the high Gate of the Houſe of the LORD,*] It was built before by *Solomon*, but he repaired it, (2 *Kings* xv. 35.) and, as ſome think, added a very glorious Structure to it.

And on the Wall of Ophel he built much.] The *Targum* tranſlates it, *a Palace:* But others underſtand by *Ophel* an high Place, or Cliff, where there was a Tower. *Pellicanus* thinks, the Meaning is, that he much beautified, as well as repaired the Porch of the Lord's Houſe, which was an hundred and twenty Cubits high.

Ver. 4. *Moreover, he built Cities in the Mountains of Judah, and in the Foreſts he built Caſtles and Towers.*] That is, he took Care to fortify his Kingdom ſtrongly on all Sides, againſt his Enemies.

Ver. 5. *He fought alſo with the King of the Ammonites, and prevailed againſt them.*] This People had been entirely ſubdued by *David*, as we read 2 *Sam.* x. and *c.* xii. 31. but now it ſeems they had recovered ſo much Strength, that they invaded the Country of *Judah*; but were overthrown by *Jotham*.

And the Children of Ammon gave him the ſame Year an hundred Talents of Silver, and ten thouſand Meaſures of Wheat, and ten thouſand of Barley.] He made them Tributaries to him; and they began the very ſame Year to pay the Tribute.

So much did the Children of Ammon pay unto him, both the ſecond Year and the third.] Either this was the Agreement, that for three Years they ſhould make this Acknowledgment; or, at the three Years End they grew ſo ſtrong again, that they refuſed to continue it longer.

Ver. 6. *So Jotham became mighty, becauſe he prepared his Ways before the LORD his God.*] Directed his Counſels and Actions aright, according to the Rule of God's Word. *Solomon Jarchi* here obſerves, that all the Kings of *Judah* had ſome ill Thing laid to their Charge, but only *Jotham:* For *David* himſelf ſinned grievouſly in the Matter of *Uriah: Solomon* was drawn away by his Wives to countenance Idolatry: *Rehoboam* forſook the Law of God; and *Abijah* walked in his Steps: *Aſa* took the Treaſures of God's Houſe, and ſent them to the King of *Syria*; and likewiſe put the Prophet in the Stocks: *Jehoſhaphat* entred into Society with the Wicked; and ſo he goes on with the reſt. But in *Jotham* (ſaith he) there is no Fault found, which is a wonder, when there were ſo few good People among them. For his Integrity was not ſo great, as the Corruption of his People, who immediately after his Death joined with *Ahaz* in his abominable Idolatries.

Ver. 7. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Jotham, and all his Wars, and his Ways,*] He had Wars not only with the *Ammonites*, but with the *Syrians*, and with the Ten Tribes, as may be gathered from 2 *Kings* xv. 37.

Lo, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Iſrael and Judah.] The Affairs of the Kings of *Judah* are commonly ſaid to be recorded in the Chronicles of the Kings of *Judah:* But this King's Actions, it ſeems, were ſo eminent, that the *Iſraelites* alſo recorded ſome of them in their Books.

Ver. 8. *He was five and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and reigned ſixteen Years in Jeruſalem.*] This was ſaid before, *v.* 1. and it is not eaſy to give an Account, why it is here repeated; unleſs it be true, which *Kimchi* ſaith, that *Jotham* was born the ſame Year that his Father was ſtruck with a Leproſy, but was not King till he grew up, and was inſtructed in the Government; which was managed during his Minority by the Princes of the People: But *Jacobus Capellus* rather thinks, he reigned ſixteen Years by himſelf alone; and then took his Son into Society with him in the Government of the Kingdom.

Ver. 9. *And Jotham ſlept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the City of David: and Ahaz his Son reigned in his ſtead.*] See 2 *Kings* xv. 38.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Ver. 1. *AHAZ was twenty Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned ſixteen Years in Jeruſalem: but he did not that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, like David his Father.*] See 2 *Kings* xvi. 2. where there are the very ſame Words.

Ver. 2. *For he walked in the Ways of the Kings of Iſrael, and made alſo molten Images for Baalim.*] He not only worſhipped the golden Calves, (which was the Way of the Kings of *Iſrael*) but many other Gods of the Nations round about; which are all comprehended under the Name of *Baalim.* See what I have noted upon *Judges* ii. 11.

Ver. 3. *Moreover, he burnt Incenſe in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom,*] Where *Moloch* was worſhipped.

And burnt his Children in the Fire,] Or, made them to paſs thro' the Fire; for the Words are ambiguous. The *Targum* here ſaith, the WORD of the LORD ſnatched *Hezekiah* out of the Fire; becauſe he foreſaw three Saints would ſpring from him; and here he tells a long Tale of *Hananiah, Miſhael* and *Azariah*, who were thrown into the fiery Furnace.

After the Abominations of the Heathen, whom the LORD had caſt out before the Children of Iſrael.] This was the moſt deteſtable Idolatry that was practiſed among the ancient Inhabitants of *Canaan*, as appears from *Levit.* xviii. 21. xx. 2, 3, 4, *&c.*

Ver. 4. *He ſacrificed alſo, and burnt Incenſe in the High-Places.*] Not unto God, but unto his Idols, whom he worſhipped alſo *on the Hills, and under every green Tree*; as it here follows.

Ver. 5. *Wherefore the LORD his God*] The LORD is called *his God*, becauſe he was ſo by the Right of his Dominion over him, and his Kindneſs to him for his Father's ſake.

Delivered him into the Hand of the King of Syria,] That by this Puniſhment he might return from his evil Ways. Theſe two Kings, *Rezin* King of *Syria*, and *Pekah* King of *Iſrael*, ſeem to have come upon him together, whereby he was put to ſome Diſtreſs.

And they ſmote him,] That is, the *Syrians* ſlew many of his People.

And carried away a great Multitude of them Captives, and brought them to Damaſcus:] This was after that Invaſion mentioned 2 *Kings* xvi. 5.

And he was alſo delivered into the Hand of the King of Iſrael, who ſmote him with a great Slaughter.] As is related in the next Verſe.

Ver. 6. *For Pekah the Son of Remaliah ſlew in Judah an hundred and twenty thouſand in one Day, which were all valiant Men; becauſe they had forſaken the LORD God of their Fathers.*] Who therefore forſook them, and took away their Courage, that they could make no Reſiſtance; for otherwiſe, it had not been poſſible to make ſo great a Slaughter in one Day.

Ver. 7. *And Zichri, a mighty Man of Ephraim, ſlew Maaſeiah the King's Son, and Azrikam the Governor of the Houſe, and Elkanah that was next to the King.*] They ſeem to have taken *Jeruſalem*, (tho' they did not keep it) and to have ſlain theſe great Perſons. The *Targum* tranſlates the laſt Words, *the Arkapta of the King*: That is, as ſome interpret it, the Captain of his Hoſt. But our Tranſlation comes neareſt to the *Hebrew*, *Second to the King*: Who was inferior to the King alone; inſomuch that the LXX tranſlate it δἰάδοχον, he that immediately followed the King, and ſucceeded him; his *Viceroy*, as ſome interpret it.

Ver. 8. *And the Children of Iſrael carried away Captive of their Brethren two hundred thouſand Women, Sons and Daughters, and took alſo away much Spoil from them,*] This is an Argument that they were quite diſpirited, and had no Heart to defend themſelves, being not only ſlaughtered like Sheep, but carried Captive by Droves.

And brought the Spoil to Samaria.] Into their own Country, towards *Samaria*; but they had not yet brought it into the City of *Samaria*, ver. 13.

Ver. 9. *But a Prophet of the LORD was there, whoſe Name was Oded:*] By this it appears that God continued his Prophets among the *Iſraelites*, to bring them to Repentance, if they would have hearkened to their Admonitions.

And he went out before the Hoſt that came to Samaria,] Bringing their Captives and Spoil in great Triumph thither.

And ſaid unto them, Behold, becauſe the LORD God of your Fathers was wroth with Judah, he hath delivered them into your Hand,] He would not have them lifted up with their Victory; which was not to be aſcribed ſo much to their Valour, as to the Anger of God againſt *Judah*, who abandoned them to their Fury.

And ye have ſlain them in a Rage that reacheth up unto Heaven.] That had no Meaſure, and cried to Heaven for Vengeance upon the *Iſraelites*.

Ver. 10. *And now ye purpoſe to keep under the Children of Judah and Jeruſalem*] This ſeems to denote that they had ſacked *Jeruſalem*.

For Bond-men and Bond-women unto you:] To uſe them as Slaves of another Nation, of whom they might make Money, by ſelling them to their Neighbour, or make them Drudges to ſerve them for nought.

But are there not with you, even with you, Sins againſt the LORD your God?] He bids them conſider, that they who thought themſelves God's Favourites becauſe he had made them ſo victorious, had Sins enough to anſwer for; for which if he puniſhed them as they deſerved, they might be reduced to the ſame Condition with the Brethren of *Judah*.

Ver. 11. *Now hear me therefore, and deliver the Captives again, which ye have taken captive of your Brethren: for the fierce Wrath of the LORD is upon you.*] If they did not ſet them at Liberty, he threatens ſudden Deſtruction, which was ready to break forth upon them for their Cruelty.

Ver. 12. *Then certain of the Heads of the Children of Ephraim, Azariah the Son of Johanan, Berechiah the Son of Meſhillemoth, and Jehizkiah the Son of Shallum, and Amaſa the Son of Hadlai, ſtood up againſt them that came from the War,*] Theſe Perſons had ſome Goodneſs in them, as well as Courage, and great Authority with the People and Soldiers.

Ver. 13. *And ſaid unto them, Ye ſhall not bring in the Captives hither:*] That is, into the City of *Samaria*.

For whereas we have offended againſt the LORD already,] By making ſuch an unmerciful Slaughter of their Brethren.

Ye intend to add more to our Sins, and to our Treſpaſs: for our Treſpaſs is great, and there is fierce Wrath againſt Iſrael.] Or, *tho' our Treſpaſs is great*, and deſerves to be puniſhed, with a fierce Wrath, as we have exerciſed againſt *Judah*.

Ver. 14. *So the armed Men left the Captives and the Spoil, before the Princes and all the Congregation.*] To diſpoſe of them as they pleaſed. A wonderful Inſtance of Obedience, in reſtoring not only the Captives which were very valuable, but all the Spoil alſo, which, no doubt, was conſiderable. What might not theſe great Men have done to bring them to repent of their Idolatry, if they had been truly religious, and exerted their Authority?

Ver. 15. *And the Men which were expreſſed by Name,*] There were ſome nominated and appointed, I ſuppoſe, by the Heads of the Peo-

ple, to take care of the Captives, and ſee them well treated.

Roſe up, and took the Captives, and with the Spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and ſhod them, and gave them to eat, and to drink, and anointed them,] They not only gave them neceſſary Suſtenance, but refreſhed their Wearineſs, like the good *Samaritan* in the Parable, who poured Oil and Wine into the Wounds of a poor Traveller. This was an extraordinary Goodneſs, not only to releaſe poor Captives without doing them Hurt, or making any Gain of them, but to diſmiſs them with a *Viaticum* (as *Strigelius* ſpeaks) giving them all things neceſſary for their Return home. And it was ſtill a greater Kindneſs to provide *Vehicles* (as it here follows) for the infirm Multitude, and bring them to their own Country without hard Travel.

And carried all the feeble of them upon Aſſes, and brought them to Jericho, the City of Palm-trees, to their Brethren: then they returned to Samaria.] So great was the Power of the Prophet at this Time, that he turned their barbarous Cruelty into the tendereſt Humanity. But, as I ſaid, they were not ſo eaſily converted from Idolatry, unto which they had ſo ſtrong an Inclination, that nothing could perſuade them to forſake it.

Ver. 16. *At that time did King Ahaz ſend unto the King of Aſſyria to help him.*] When *Rezin* King of *Syria* invaded him, 2 *Kings* xvi. 6, 7. This is the firſt Time that we read of the King of *Aſſyria*, excepting 2 *Kings* xv. 19. where *Pul* King of *Aſſyria* is mentioned as a powerful Prince, who invaded the *Iſraelites*. Before his Time we read nothing of that Monarchy, which grew by Degrees to its Greatneſs from ſmall Beginnings. For in *David*'s Time, or whenſoever *Pſalm* lxxxiii was written, the King of *Aſſyria* was but a petty Prince, like thoſe of *Moab* and *Ammon*, and the like, with whom he joined, (*ver.* 8.) to enſlave the *Iſraelites*; but now had ſwallowed up all thoſe little Princes, and grown to ſuch an Height that none could ſtand before them. But if their large Empire had been a long ſtanding, we ſhould in all Probability have heard of them before this Time, as we do often afterwards.

Ver. 17. *For again the Edomites had come and ſmitten Judah, and carried away Captives.*] When *Rezin* fell upon them, the *Edomites* took that Advantage, and made great Ravage in the Land of *Judah*.

Ver. 18. *The Philiſtines alſo had invaded the Cities of the Low-country,*] Which lay next to them.

And of the South of Judah, and had taken Beth-ſhemeſh, and Ajalon, and Gederoth, and Shoco with the Villages thereof, and Timnah with the Villages thereof, Gimzo alſo and the Villages thereof: and they dwelt there.] They prevailed ſo far as to make an Inroad further into the Country of *Judah*; and not only poſſeſſed themſelves of the Cities here mentioned, but ſettled in them. For in this weak Condition into which *Ahaz* was fallen, they took their Revenge for the Miſchief, which *Uzziah* had done them, who ſubdued them as far as *Gath*, *c.* xxvi. 6.

Ver. 19. *For the LORD brought Judah low, becauſe of Ahaz*] It was purely upon his Account that God gave them up into the Hand of the *Philiſtines*; for that very Year in which *Ahaz* died, the Prophet *Iſaiah* foretold his Son ſhould afflict them, *Iſa.* xiv. 27, 28, 29. and accordingly *Hezekiah* ſmote them as far as *Gaza*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 8.

King of Iſrael;] We cannot gather from hence, that he is called *King of Iſrael*, becauſe he walked in their Ways, for a good King is ſo called, *c.* xx. 2. And the *Maſorites* obſerve, that ſix Times we read the King of *Iſrael* inſtead of King of *Judah*, becauſe they all deſcended from *Iſrael*. So *Beckius* here expounds it, in a large Senſe, he was King of *Iſrael*: For *Iſrael* is not here oppoſed to *Judah*, but comprehends it. Therefore the *Targum* hath, the *King of Judah*: And ſo the LXX, and the *Vulgar Latin*. For *Iſrael* was once the Name of the whole People, and after the Diviſion of the Kingdom, the two Tribes were ſtill a Part of *Iſrael* in the ancient Senſe of the Word. See *Buxtorf*, who obſerves out of the *Hebrew Grammarians*, that the Manner of the Scripture is to put the *Genus* ſometimes for the *Species*, and the *Species* for the *Genus*. *Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis*, Cap. 7. Par. ii.

For he made Judah naked,] Deprived them of the Divine Protection, by his foul Tranſgreſſions.

And tranſgreſſed ſore againſt the LORD.] The *Targum* renders it, *the Houſe of Judah ceaſed from the Worſhip of God*; which *Ahaz*, in a Manner wholly aboliſhed, and thereby tranſgreſſed more grievouſly than all his Predeceſſors.

Ver. 20. *And Tiglath-pilezer King of Aſſyria came unto him,*] As he deſired, by the Meſſengers he ſent to him, *ver.* 10.

And diſtreſſed him, but ſtrengthened him not.] In 2 *Kings* xvi. 9. it is ſaid, that he did *help him*; how therefore did he *diſtreſs him?* Both theſe are true, for as he did come to his Aſſiſtance againſt the King of *Syria*, ſo he took *Damaſcus*, carried the People Captive, and delivered *Ahaz* from the Power of the *Syrians*, 2 *Kings* xvi. 7, 8, 9. But this did *Ahaz* little Good, for he helped him not to recover the Cities the *Philiſtines* had taken from him, nor did he lend him any Forces, nor enable him to recruit his own; but rather weakned him by exhauſting his Treaſures, and by deſtroying *Samaria*, whereby the Way was opened to invade his Country the more eaſily in the next Reign. Thus many Countries in latter Ages, by calling in the Aſſiſtance of ſome foreign Prince againſt their Enemies, have been overrun, and conquered by thoſe who came to their Help.

Ver. 21. *For Ahaz took away a Portion out of the Houſe of the LORD, and out of the Houſe of the King, and of the Princes, and gave it unto the King of Aſſyria: but he helped him not.*] Did not make his Condition better, but ſo much the worſe. See 2 *Kings* xvi. 8.

Ver. 22. *And in the Time of his Diſtreſs did he treſpaſs yet more againſt the LORD:*] He was not at all amended by the ſore Calamities which fell on him, but introduced more Idolatry than had been practiſed before.

This

This is that King Ahaz.] The Word *Hu* is ſometimes a Word of Contempt, as *Kimchi* obſerves, *Gen.* xxxvi. ult. *Numb.* xxvi. 9. And *Ahaz* deſerved to be branded, as the moſt notorious Offender that had ever been among the Kings of *Judah:* And was remarkable for this alſo, that he never proſpered in any thing he undertook.

Ver. 23. *For he ſacrificed unto the Gods of Damaſcus, which ſmote him:*] A moſt monſtrous Stupidity, to imagine they had any Power over him, who could not defend themſelves from *Tiglath-Pilezer:* But being of Opinion that they were Gods, he ſacrificed to them to appeaſe them, that they might do him no further Hurt; doing as the ancient *Romans*, who wooed by larger Sacrifices the Gods of their Enemies to come over to their Side, and be their Friends; as Dr. *Jackſon* diſcourſes, in his *Original of Unbelief*, Chap. xvii. Paragr. 5.

And he ſaid, Becauſe the Gods of the Kings of Syria help them, therefore will I ſacrifice to them, that they may help me:] Not againſt the *Syrians*, but he fooliſhly imagined they might help him againſt the *Edomites*, *Philiſtines*, and other Enemies.

But they were the ruin of him and of all Iſrael.] They were ſo far from being his Friends, that they proved the Deſtruction of him, and of his whole Country: For tho' it was not in their Power to do him either Harm or Good, yet his worſhipping of them undid him and all his People.

Ver. 24. *And Ahaz gathered together the Veſſels of the Houſe of God, and cut in Pieces the Veſſels of the Houſe of God,*] That the Prieſts might not be able to miniſter before God for want of them, *c.* xxix. 19. and that he might employ the Money he made of them (for what he cut in Pieces, I ſuppoſe, he ſold) in building *Altars*, (as it follows) *in every Corner of Jeruſalem.*

And ſhut up the Doors of the Houſe of the LORD,] That no Man might come to worſhip God there, but ſacrifice every where, but only where they ſhould: And this continued till the Beginning of his Son's Reign, *c.* xxix. 3.

Ver. 25. *And in every ſeveral City of Judah he made High-Places to burn Incenſe unto other Gods,*] He took care the People ſhould not think of going up to *Jeruſalem*; by erecting, at his own Charge, High-Places in every City, wherein to perform Divine Service to what God they pleaſed.

And provoked to anger the LORD God of his Fathers.] With whom he did not join other Gods, but worſhipped him not at all.

Ver. 26. *Now the reſt of his Acts, and of all his Ways, firſt and laſt, behold they are written in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Iſrael.*] In 2 *Kings* xvi. 19. it is only ſaid, they were written in the Book of the Kings of *Judah:* But *Ezra* it ſeems found that the Book of the Kings of *Iſrael* contained ſome memorable Paſſages of his Reign; there being, as is here recorded, great Wars between them and *Judah.*

Ver. 27. *And Ahaz ſlept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the City, even in Jeruſalem: but they brought him not into the Sepulchres of the Kings of Iſrael:*] They are called the Kings of *Iſrael*, becauſe they had an ancient Right to govern the whole twelve Tribes.

And Hezekiah his Son reigned in his Stead.

CHAP. XXIX.

Ver. 1. *HEzekiah began to reign when he was five and twenty Years old, and he reigned nine and twenty Years in Jeruſalem: and his Mother's Name was Abijah the Daughter of Zechariah.*] See upon 2 *Kings* xviii. 1, 2. where I have noted, that *Ahaz* therefore was very young when he begat *Hezekiah.* And we may grant, as *Jacobus Capellus* thinks, that he was but *ten* Years old (tho', as I have there ſhewn, *Bochartus* thinks he was more) for tho' this was wonderful, yet not incredible, as his Words are. For he refers us to *Scaliger* in his firſt *Oration* againſt *Paræus*, where he mentions a City, in which a Boy not twelve Years old begat a Child, of a Girl, a Couſin of his not ten Years old: And adds, *Rem notam narro, &c.* I tell a known Story, whoſe Memory is ſtill freſh in *Aquitain.* See his *Hiſtor. ſacra & exotica, ad Annum Mundi* 2292.

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, according to all that David his Father had done.*] The ſame is recorded in 2 *Kings* xviii. 2.

Ver. 3. *He, in the firſt Year of his Reign, in the firſt Month,*] This demonſtrates his great Piety and Zeal for God, that he began ſo ſoon to reform Religion, and did not ſtay till he was eſtabliſhed in his Throne. For the ſureſt way to eſtabliſh himſelf, he thought was to eſtabliſh true Religion; tho' he run a great Hazard in attempting the aboliſhing Idolatry, which had been confirmed by ſome Years Preſcription.

Opened the Doors of the Houſe of the LORD,] Which his Father had ſhut up, *c.* xxviii. 24.

And repaired them.] For by long Neglect they were gone to Decay.

Ver. 4. *And he brought in the Prieſts and the Levites,*] Whoſe Buſineſs it was to take Care of Religion, and look after Things ſacred, and admoniſh Kings of their Duty. But *Hezekiah* was beforehand with them, and prevented their Endeavours; not only exciting them to reform what was amiſs, but uſing the moſt proper Arguments to preſs them to it.

And gathered them together into the Eaſt-ſtreet,] Which was before the Eaſt-gate of the Temple, where the Entrance into it was.

Ver. 5. *And ſaid unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, ſanctify now yourſelves, and ſanctify the Houſe of the LORD God of your Fathers, and carry forth the filthineſs out of the Holy-Place.*] The *Abomination*, as the *Jews* tranſlate it: That is, the Altar of *Damaſcus*, and all the Idols that were upon it. See 2 *Kings* xvi, 10, *&c.* Theſe were brought by *Ahaz* into the Temple; that is, into the Court of the Prieſts, which is called the *Holy-Place*, in *Levit.* vi. 16, *&c.*

Ver. 6. *For our Fathers have treſpaſſed, and done that which was evil in the Eyes of the LORD our God, and have forſaken him,*] He urges them to this pious Work, from the Conſideration of the great Sin of their Forefathers, and their

horrible Contempt of the Service of God, as it follows in the next Words.

And have turned away their Faces from the Habitation of the LORD, and turned their Backs.] This seems to signify that *Ahaz* brought in a Way of Worship directly contrary to the Law of God; which commanded them to worship toward the Ark, which was plac'd in the West: But he ordered they should turn their Backs upon that (which was a Disrespect, and Contumely to the Divine Majesty) and worship toward the East, where he had set his Altar: And at last he shut up the Doors of the Temple, that they should not worship there at all, as it is again observed in the next Verse.

Ver. 7. *Also they have shut up the Doors of the Porch,*] That none might enter into the Temple, but it might be left a desolate Place.

And put out the Lamps,] The Priests having nothing to do there.

And have not burnt Incense, nor offered Burnt-offerings in the holy Place, unto the God of Israel.] But made high Places in every City, to burn Incense unto other Gods, as it is *ver.* 25. of the foregoing Chapter.

Ver. 8. *Wherefore the Wrath of the LORD was upon Judah and Jerusalem,*] After the Confession of their Sins, he represents to them the Calamities wherewith God had punished them.

And he hath delivered them to Trouble, to Astonishment, and to Hissing, as you see with your Eyes.] Sent such a pannick Fear and Terror into them (such as is mentioned *c.* xx. 22.) that they could not stand before their Enemies, but became a Scorn to them; for it had not been possible, that they should slay such a vast Number of them in one Day (as we read *c.* xxviii. 6.) if they had not been perfectly astonished, and bereaved of their Senses.

Ver. 9. *For lo, our Fathers have fallen by the Sword, and our Sons and our Daughters, and our Wives are in Captivity for this.*] Or rather, *were* in Captivity, till the tender Mercy of God released them; and it is likely some were still in Captivity to other Nations, tho' the *Israelites* had dismissed their Captives; for they were distressed in *Ahaz*'s Time by the *Edomites*, and *Philistines*; the former of which carried away Captives, as we read *c.* xxviii. 17, 18.

Ver. 10. *Now it is in mine Heart to make a Covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that his fierce Wrath may turn away from us.*] He resolved therefore to renew the Covenant between God and the People, because he foresaw there was immediate Destruction impending upon the whole Nation for their Iniquities, unless they did heartily and speedily repent of them; for they were grown to the greatest Heighth of Impiety, his Father having by Degrees proceeded to the utmost Pitch of Idolatry; which though God had many Ways punished very severely, yet he persisted in his Wickedness; and to the very End of his Life amended nothing, but grew worse and worse; therefore this good King thought it absolutely necessary forthwith to make a thorough Reformation, and engage the whole Nation in a solemn Covenant to worship God purely. Thus *Conradus Pellicanus*.

Ver. 11. *My Sons, be not now negligent:*] He beseeches the *Levites*, in the most tender Language, no longer to go along with the People in their Error, but to bestir themselves to make them better.

For the LORD hath chosen you to stand before him, to serve him, and that you should minister unto him, and burn Incense.] This was the Work of the *Priests*, unto whom he speaks as well as to the *Levites*, remembring them what their Office was, to which they were peculiarly chosen, *viz.* to take care to see his Laws observed, and to minister to him, according to his Directions; and therefore not to omit the Performance of their Duty in the House of God, now that it was open to them.

Ver. 12. *Then the Levites arose, Mahath the Son of Amasai, and Joel the Son of Azariah, of the Sons of the Kohathites: and of the Sons of Merari; Kish the Son of Abdi, and Azariah the Son of Jehalelel: and of the Gershonites; Joah the Son of Zimmah, and Eden the Son of Joah:*

Ver. 13. *And of the Sons of Elisaphan; Shimri, and Jeiel: and of the Sons of Asaph; Zechariah, and Mattaniah:*

Ver. 14. *And of the Sons of Heman; Jehiel, and Shimei: and of the Sons of Jeduthun; Shemaiah, and Uzziel.*] These were principal Persons among the *Levites*, who readily complied with the King's Exhortation, and engaged their Brethren also (as it here follows) in the same Work, which they undertook, of cleansing the House of the LORD.

Ver. 15. *And they gathered their Brethren, and sanctified themselves,*] By washing their Bodies, I suppose, and other Rites prescribed by the Law.

And came, according to the Commandment of the King, by the Words of the LORD, to cleanse the House of the LORD.] The King had a great Power in Things commanded by God: The Exercise of which Power is here very properly called, *The Commandment of the King, by the Words of the LORD:* Or, as in the Margin, *In the Business of the LORD.* The like we read *c.* xxx. 12. See *Grotius* in his Book *de Imperio summarum Potestatum circa sacra*, p. 59.

Ver. 16. *And the Priests went into the inner Part of the House of the LORD, to cleanse it,*] That is, into the Sanctuary (for into the most Holy none might go but the High Priest) whither the *Levites* might not come.

And brought out all the Uncleanness that they found in the Temple of the LORD, into the Court of the House of the LORD.] That is, the Court of the Priests, where the *Levites* attended upon them, and ministred unto them.

And the Levites took it to carry it out abroad into the Brook Kidron.] They cast the Filth into the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*, or *Tophet*, thro' which *Kidron* ran, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 10, 12.

Ver. 17. *Now they began on the first Day of the first Month to sanctify,*] This was the Month *Abib*, as our great Primate *Usher* observes, but not on the Day he was made King, but nine Months after his Father's Death: See his *Chronolog. sacra*, p. 82.

And on the eighth Day of the Month came they to the Porch of the LORD:] Which they cleansed together with the outward Courts, and the Chambers

Chambers of the Temple, in which they ſpent eight Days more, as the next Words ſignify: The Houſe having been long ſhut up, and no Body coming into it, muſt needs be full of Duſt, and the Veſſels become ruſty; in the ſcouring of which, and reſtoring them to their Splendor, and wiping the Walls of the Houſe, they muſt neceſſarily ſpend a great deal of Time, for the Neglect had been great, and their Diligence extraordinary; it being probable, that this Sanctification was by waſhing both the Walls of the Houſe, and the Floor, and every Thing elſe.

So they ſanctified the Houſe of the LORD in eight Days, and in the ſixteenth Day of the firſt Month they made an End.] The Pollution was ſo univerſal, and their Exactneſs ſo great in reſtoring all Things to their Purity, that they could not finiſh their Work in leſs Time. Some think they ſpent eight Days in cleanſing all the Places from Filth; and other eight Days in ſanctifying the Temple, and all belonging to it; tho' how this Sanctification was performed, we are not told.

Ver. 18. *Then they went in to Hezekiah the King, and ſaid, We have cleanſed all the Houſe of the LORD, and the Altar of Burnt-offering, with all the Veſſels thereof, and the Shew-bread Table, with all the Veſſels thereof.*] All which they ſet in their right Places, after they had removed all Defilements from them.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, all the Veſſels which King Ahaz in his Reign did caſt away in his Tranſgreſſion,*] The *Targum* explains it very ſignificantly, *Which he prophaned, and rendred abominable by Idols of other Countries, particularly from* Damaſcus. And ſo *Kimchi*, *Which he tranſlated to idolatrous Uſes.*

Have we prepared and ſanctified:] The *Targum* gives a quite contrary Senſe of the Words, *We have ſet them apart and hidden them, and prepared others in their Place.* And indeed the *Talmudiſts* (as *Beckius* here obſerves upon the *Targum*) are of Opinion, that all the Veſſels which *Ahaz* profaned in his Reign were ſet aſide, and others conſecrated in their ſtead; for they thought them not any longer fit to be employed in the Divine Service: But *Kimchi* underſtands theſe Words as we do, that they purged and purified the Veſſels which he had profaned.

And behold, they are before the Altar of the LORD.] Before the Altar of Burnt-offering (I ſuppoſe) unto which they went the next Morning, and offered Sacrifices; with the Blood of which, perhaps, they were further purified.

Ver. 20. *Then Hezekiah the King roſe early, and gathered the Rulers of the City, and went up to the Houſe of the LORD.*] Now he engaged the principal Perſons in the City to join with him in his Reformation of Religion, when all Things were ready for the Performance of the Duties thereof.

Ver. 21. *And they brought ſeven Bullocks, and ſeven Rams, and ſeven Lambs, and ſeven He-goats, for a Sin-offering for the Kingdom, and for the Sanctuary, and for Judah:*] It is very obſervable, that the Word *Tſaphir*, which here ſignifies the *He-goat*, was never uſed by the *Hebrews* till after the Captivity of *Babylon*, when we find it in *Daniel*, who lived in the Captivity, *c.* viii. 21. And here being uſed, and in no other Place beſide, it is ſome Argument, that *Ezra* was the Author of this Book, which he wrote after their Return from that Captivity, in which he had learned the *Chaldee* Language, and thence mixed ſome *Chaldee* Words with the *Hebrew*, whereof this is one: And therefore *Daniel*, to explain it, adds the *Hebrew* Word *Seir* to it; juſt as in the *New Teſtament*, the Word ὁ πατὴρ is added to *Abba*.

And he commanded the Prieſts the Sons of Aaron to offer them on the Altar of the LORD.] There are two Laws in the Books of *Moſes*, requiring a Sacrifice to be offered for the Sin of the whole Congregation, when they were in an Error. The firſt is in *Levit.* iv. 13, 14. where a Bullock is required to be offered, when they were ignorantly ſeduced to do ſomething forbidden by the Law, tho' they did not forſake their Religion. The other is in *Numb.* xv. 22, 23, 24. where a Goat is commanded to be offered together with a Bullock, when they acted contrary to their Religion, and were fallen by Error into the Practice of external Rites: And the Bullock was offered for a Burnt-offering in Token that they owned no other God but the LORD, nor any other Religion but that preſcribed by *Moſes:* And the Goat for a Sin-offering, that they might expiate the Guilt they had contracted, by doing contrary to their Religion. Now this good King *Hezekiah* being ſenſible, that they had not only acted contrary to their Religion, but in effect aboliſhed it, by ſhutting up the Doors of the Temple, and omitting the daily Sacrifice, and every where exerciſing ſtrange Worſhip, appointed ſeven Bullocks for a Burnt-offering, and as many Goats for a Sin-offering (tho' the Law never requir'd more than one Goat) thinking theſe numerous Sacrifices (together with Rams and Lambs) were, if not neceſſary, yet very fit, becauſe of the great and long Neglect of his Divine Service, and becauſe of the Multitude and long Continuance of their other Sins againſt the LORD, for which they now begged Forgiveneſs. Thus after the Captivity they offered twelve Bullocks for Burnt-offerings, and twelve Goats for Sin-offerings (*Ezra* viii. 35.) according to the Number of the Children of *Iſrael:* For as they knew one Goat was neceſſary, ſo they thought a great Number would be becoming in ſuch Caſes.

Ver. 22. *So they killed the Bullocks, and the Prieſts received the Blood, and ſprinkled it on the Altar: likewiſe when they had killed the Rams, they ſprinkled the Blood upon the Altar: they killed alſo the Lambs, and they ſprinkled the Blood upon the Altar.*] According to the Direction of the Law, *Levit.* viii. 15.

Ver. 23. *And they brought forth the He-goats for the Sin-offering, before the King and the Congregation, and they laid their Hands upon them.*] As the Law alſo directed, *Levit.* iv. 14, 15. viii. 22.

Ver. 24. *And the Prieſts killed them, and they made Reconciliation with their Blood upon the Altar, to make Atonement for all Iſrael: for the King commanded that the Burnt-offering, and the Sin-*

Sin-offering ſhould be made for all Iſrael.] The Burnt-offering, to acknowledge the LORD to be the only God; and the Sin-offering, to make Expiation for all their Offences againſt his ſupreme Authority. And they were made not only for *Judah*, but for all *Iſrael*; a great many of the Ten Tribes being now joined to them.

Ver. 25. *And he ſet the Levites in the Houſe of the LORD with Cymbals, with Pſalteries, and with Harps, according to the Commandment of David, and of Gad the King's Seer, and Nathan the Prophet: for ſo was the Commandment of the LORD by his Prophets.*] What King *David* had ordained was approved by the Prophets; who liked the Deſign, and by Authority from God, ſettled this Courſe of Divine Service, 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 5. xxv. 1. 2 *Chron.* viii. 14. xxiii. 18. The *Targum* here tranſlates the laſt Words, *For by the WORD of the LORD this Ordinance was made by the Prophets.*

Ver. 26. *And the Levites ſtood with the Inſtruments of David, and the Prieſts with the Trumpets.*] Which were ordained by *Moſes*, *Numb.* x. 10.

Ver. 27. *And Hezekiah commanded to offer the Burnt-offering upon the Altar: and when the Burnt-offering began, the Song of the LORD began alſo*] When the Drink-offering was poured out, then began the Song; as the Practice is deſcribed in After-times, by the Son of *Sirach*, *Eccleſ.* i. 25, 26, *&c.* See Dr. *Lightfoot* in his *Temple-Service.* What the Song of the LORD was, we are told *v.* 30.

With the Trumpets, and with the Inſtruments ordained by David King of Iſrael.] See 1 *Chron.* xxv. 1, 6. Theſe Hymns and Doxologies were in the Nature of Prayers to God, as Mr. *Mede* obſerves, *Book* ii. *Cap.* 6. *p.* 365.

Ver. 28. *And all the Congregation worſhipped, and the Singers ſang, and the Trumpets ſounded: and all this continued until the Burnt-offering was finiſhed.*] They all adored, as ſoon as the Sacrifice and the Praiſes of God began, and continued praiſing God till all was done.

Ver. 29. *And when they had made an End of offering, the King and all that were preſent with him, bowed themſelves and worſhipped.*] As they began ſo they concluded the Service, with Adoration of the Divine Majeſty.

Ver. 30. *Moreover, Hezekiah the King, and the Princes,*] Who now joined with him, in furthering the Reformation.

Commanded the Levites to ſing Praiſe unto the LORD, with the Words of David, and of Aſaph the Seer:] Theſe were the Prophets who compoſed the Songs, that the *Levites* ſung, as I obſerved upon 1 *Chron.* xxv. 6. But the Author of the Pſalms aſcribed to *Aſaph*, (in the Book of *Pſalms*) ſeems to be one that lived in After-times; perhaps of the ſame Family with this famous *Aſaph*, who lived in *David*'s Days, and ſo called by his Name.

And they ſang Praiſes with Gladneſs, and they bowed their Heads, and worſhipped.] Not only upon this Day, but continually, as *David* had appointed; and *Jehoſhaphat* in his Reign reſtored, xx. 19, 20. But this Order had been interrupted in the Time of ſucceeding idolatrous Princes, eſpecially in the Time of *Ahaz*; but now revived by this good King *Hezekiah.*

Ver. 31. *Then Hezekiah anſwered and ſaid, Now ye have conſecrated yourſelves unto the LORD,*] By offering Sacrifices of Reconciliation with him, whom they had acknowledged to be their LORD; and were a-new entred into their Office.

Come near, and bring Sacrifices, and Thank-offerings into the Houſe of the LORD. And the Congregation brought in Sacrifices and Thank-offerings,] Theſe were Peace-offerings, whereby they acknowledged God's great Goodneſs to them; and gave him Thanks for this happy Change of Religion.

And as many as were of a free Heart, Burnt-offerings.] Theſe were not like the Sacrifices of Thankſgiving, as *Kimchi* obſerves, which were in great part eaten by the Offerers: For Burnt-offerings were entirely conſumed upon the Altar, in Honour of God; and therefore it argued greater Piety, and Largeneſs of Heart to offer them.

Ver. 32. *And the Number of the Burnt-offerings which the Congregation brought, was threeſcore and ten Bullocks, an hundred Rams, and two hundred Lambs: All theſe were for a Burnt-offering to the LORD.*] Theſe were not ſo many in Number as had been offered in former Times; for the Nation was now grown poorer, in Compariſon to what it was heretofore.

Ver. 33. *And the conſecrated Things were ſix hundred Oxen, and three thouſand Sheep.*] All theſe were devoted to the Service of God, beſides the Burnt-offerings before-mentioned.

Ver. 34. *But the Prieſts were too few,*] For they who had ſacrificed to Idols were excluded from their Miniſtry; and they who had not, were not all prepared and ſanctified to do their Duty. For it appears by what follows, they were backward unto this Work, to which *Hezekiah* called them; and therefore could not prepare all the Burnt-offerings (which was their proper Work, *Levit.* i. 5.) much leſs all the other Sacrifices, which were numerous.

So that they could not flay all the Burnt-offerings:] This was the Work of the Prieſts, *Levit.* i. 6. and could not be done but by thoſe who were ſkilful in the Buſineſs. So *Bochartus* obſerves out of the Heathen Poet, that it was practiſed with great Art and Induſtry, (Μισύλλοντ' ὀπταμένως) by thoſe who had Knowledge and Skill to do it dextrouſly. *Hierozoicon*, Par. i. Lib. ii. Cap. 33. p. 324.

Wherefore their Brethren the Levites did help them till the Work was ended,] In Caſes of great Neceſſity, they did not ſtand nicely upon the Obſervation of the Ceremonial Law. For both now, and in the Days of *Joſiah*, (xxxiv. 11.) ſome Things were admitted, which that Law did not allow. For as now the *Levites* flayed the Sacrifices, (which was the Work of Prieſts alone, *Levit.* i. 6.) ſo all the People were allowed to keep the Paſſover in the ſecond Month; and the *Levites* offered the Paſchal Lambs, which were brought by thoſe that were unclean, and the unclean eat them.

And until the other Prieſts had ſanctified themſelves:] Then the *Levites* might no longer continue to do their proper Work.

For the Levites were more upright in Heart to ſanctify themſelves, than the Prieſts.] In the foregoing Reign, as *Jarchi* thinks, ſuch as feared God (that is, would not worſhip Idols) were forced to conceal themſelves, and lie hid: So that when *Hezekiah* came to the Crown, they did not preſently appear, nor were they forward to be cleanſed and ſanctified. But the *Levites* were Men of greater Integrity than the Prieſts; at leaſt there were more Men of Zeal found among them, that readily offered themſelves to the Service of God. See xxx. 17.

Ver. 35. *And alſo the Burnt-offerings were in Abundance, with the Fat of the Peace-offerings, and the Drink-offerings for every Burnt-offering.*] This is another Reaſon why the Number of the Prieſts was not ſufficient to diſcharge the Work of this Day; becauſe there were not only Abundance of Burnt-offerings to be flayed, but the Fat of Peace-offerings to be burnt, and a Drink-offering to attend every Burnt-offering; which muſt neceſſarily employ many Hands.

Ver. 36. *And Hezekiah rejoyced, and all the People, that God had prepared the People:*] Had given this good Mind to them, to join ſo forwardly in this Reformation.

For the Thing was done ſuddenly.] Which argued a divine Motion, whereby they were excited without long Perſuaſions.

CHAP. XXX.

Ver. 1. *AND Hezekiah ſent to all Iſrael and Judah, and wrote Letters alſo to Ephraim and Manaſſeh,*] I look upon the laſt Words as ſignifying, that more particularly he wrote Letters to theſe two Tribes, as he ſent Meſſengers to the reſt; for they were the Tribes neareſt to him, whom he could not command, but only invite and admoniſh them of their Duty: For they were bound by the Law, as well as the People of *Judah*, (ſee *v.* 5.) and great Numbers of them had ſettled themſelves in the Land of *Judah*, in the Reign of *Aſa*, xv. 9.

That they ſhould come to the Houſe of the LORD at Jeruſalem, to keep the Paſſover unto the LORD God of Iſrael.] This was a Feſtival that uſed to be celebrated in this very Month wherein he began his Reformation; which he reſolved therefore to keep with great Solemnity; and it could be kept no where but at *Jeruſalem*, whither he invited the *Iſraelites* to come: And it ſeems, *Hoſhea* King of *Iſrael*, at this Time did not forbid the Meſſengers of *Hezekiah* to come and invite them, nor his People to go; as *Jacobus Capellus* obſerves: Which I cannot but look upon as a remarkable Inſtance of God's Goodneſs towards this ſinful People in the Kingdom of the Ten Tribes, that he raiſed up, at the very laſt when they were ripe for Deſtruction, ſuch a King to reign over them, as had ſo much Goodneſs in him, that he did not hinder any of his Subjects who would go and worſhip at *Jeruſalem*. Nor did he prohibit thoſe from coming into his Country, who were ſent to invite them to it. So that the *Iſraelites* could not pretend they were compelled to be Idolaters, for fear of the King's Diſpleaſure.

Ver. 2. *For the King had taken Counſel, and his Princes, and all the Congregation in Jeruſalem, to keep the Paſſover in the ſecond Month.*] The Time being elapſed, (by ſuch Means as here follow) for its Obſervation in the firſt Month, (which was the proper Seaſon) he took Advice with thoſe who were his proper Council in ſuch Matters, to keep it in the next. For by the *Princes and all the Congregation in Jeruſalem*, are meant the great Synagogue, conſiſting of the Senate of that City, and the other Senators called from other Places. So *Grotius* underſtands it, upon St. *Matthew* x. 17. And thus our Mr. *Thorndike* alſo, in fewer Words; He means the Conſiſtory, called *the Princes*, as they are called in the Prophet *Jeremiah* xxvi. 10, 11. See *Rights of the Church*, p. 231. For *Jehoſhaphat* having ſettled Judges in every City, it is likely they remained in ſome Authority till this Time.

Ver. 3. *For they could not keep it at that Time,*] At the Time appointed by the Law, on the fourteenth Day of the firſt Month; for the Reaſon here following.

Becauſe the Prieſts had not ſanctified themſelves ſufficiently, neither had the People gathered themſelves together at Jeruſalem.] *Ahaz* had made ſuch Confuſion in the Worſhip of God, by ſhutting up the Doors of the Temple, (that no Divine Service might be there performed) and by erecting Idols every where, and many other Ways; that as the Prieſts by long Diſuſe could not be ſanctified ſo ſoon as was neceſſary, nor the People have time to aſſemble, ſo the Temple itſelf could not be purged till the ſixteenth Day of the firſt Month (xxix. 17.) and conſequently the Time was paſt for keeping the Paſſover, which was to have been on the fourteenth: They thought it beſt therefore to adjourn it to the next Month, rather than ſtay till the next Year; eſpecially ſince God himſelf allowed in ſome Caſes, thoſe that could not keep it in the firſt Month, to keep it in the ſecond, (*Numb.* ix.) and what was allowed to particular Perſons, they thought might be allowed to the whole Congregation of *Iſrael*.

Ver. 4. *And the Thing pleaſed the King, and all the Congregation.*] The Advice of the Great Council was approved by the King, and by every one elſe.

Ver. 5. *So they eſtabliſhed a Decree,*] This was the Work of a Court, or Great Council.

To make Proclamation throughout all Iſrael,] By the King's Authority.

From Beer-ſheba even to Dan,] From one End of the Country to the other.

That they ſhould come to keep the Paſſover unto the LORD God of Iſrael at Jeruſalem: for they had not done it of a long Time in ſuch Sort as it was written.] The Ten Tribes had never kept it, ſince the Diviſion of the Kingdom by *Jeroboam* (at leaſt not in ſuch a Manner as the Law preſcribed) being hindred by his threatning Interdicts from going to *Jeruſalem*; as their Forefathers were by their long tedious Travels in the Wilderneſs, *Joſh.* v. And as for *Judah*, it appears from *v.* 26. they had never kept it with ſuch Solemnity, ſince the Time of *Solomon*.

Ver. 6. *So the Poſts went with the Letters from the King and his Princes throughout all Iſrael and Judah,*] They ſent Poſts, that timely Notice might

might be given to every one, to prepare themſelves for this Service.

And according to the Commandment of the King, ſaying, Ye Children of Iſrael, turn again unto the LORD God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Iſrael, and he will return to the Remnant of you that are eſcaped out of the Hand of the Kings of Aſſyria.] That is, *Pul* and *Tiglath Pileſer*, who had carried a great many of them captive, 2 *Kings* xv. 29. 1 *Chron.* v. 26.

Ver. 7. *And be not ye like your Fathers, and like your Brethren, which treſpaſſed againſt the LORD God of their Fathers, who therefore gave them up to Deſolation, as you ſee.*] And would certainly give them up alſo, if they continued to provoke him, as they did.

Ver. 8. *Now be ye not ſtiff-necked, as your Fathers were,*] It is a Metaphor (as I have obſerved elſewhere) from refractory Oxen which will not go forward, but withdraw their Necks and their Shoulders from the Yoke, and go backward.

But yield yourſelves unto the LORD,] In the Hebrew, *give your Hand*; concerning which Phraſe, ſee 1 *Chron.* xxix. 24.

And enter into his Sanctuary, which he hath ſanctified for ever:] Come to worſhip at *Jeruſalem*, which was the only Place appointed by God for his Service, as long as that Law laſted.

And ſerve the LORD your God, that the Fierceneſs of his Wrath may turn away from you.] Which otherwiſe was ready to make an utter End of them; as it had done of their Brethren.

Ver. 9. *For if ye turn again unto the LORD, your Brethren and your Children ſhall find Compaſſion before them that lead them captive, ſo that they ſhall come again into this Land: for the LORD your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his Face from you, if ye return unto him.*] Theſe were the Contents of the Letter, which *Hezekiah* ſent throughout all *Iſrael*; concluding with a moſt exuberant Grace, (as *Strigelius* juſtly calls it) which not only promiſed to them that they ſhould continue in their Land; but they alſo, who were carried captive, ſhould be reſtored to them. This, no doubt, *Hezekiah* had Authority from God to declare to them, that he might move them to Repentance. For *Moſes* had declared this, which *Hezekiah* applies to them in their Circumſtances.

Ver. 10. *So the Poſts paſſed from City to City, through the Country of Ephraim and Manaſſeh, even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to ſcorn, and mocked them.*] Being long accuſtomed to ſerve other Gods, their Hearts were ſo hardened, that the Generality of the Ten Tribes ſcoffed at this moſt gracious Invitation to Repentance: For which they paid very dearly ſhortly after, *Salmanaſſer* coming ſix Years after this, and taking *Samaria*, and carrying the whole Nation captive, 2 *Kings* xvii. 6. xviii. 10.

Ver. 11. *Nevertheleſs, divers of Aſher and Manaſſeh, and of Zebulun, humbled themſelves, and came to Jeruſalem.*] Here is not ſo much as one of *Ephraim* mentioned; but in ſome other Tribes there were thoſe found, who laid to Heart their Apoſtaſy, and came to *Jeruſalem*, humbly begging Pardon. Yet *Ephraim* is mentioned afterwards as partaking of the Paſſover, (*v.* 18.) ſome of them, it is likely, upon Conſideration, following the Example of their Brethren, tho' at firſt they mocked at the Meſſage.

Ver. 12. *Alſo in Judah the Hand of God was to give them one Heart, to do the Commandment of the King, and of the Princes,*] There was a marvellous Unanimity in *Judah*; who were ſo obedient to the Motions of the Divine Grace, (without which ſo great a Change could not have been made) as generally to comply with the King's Proclamation, made with the Conſent of the Princes.

By the Word of the LORD.] They looked upon it as a divine Command, which was brought to them by that Authority. And it appeared ſo to be, by the mighty Power of God, which wrought their Hearts to a chearful Obedience.

Ver. 13. *And there aſſembled at Jeruſalem much People, to keep the Feaſt of unleavened Bread in the ſecond Month, a very great Congregation.*] This confutes the Fancy of the *Talmudiſts*, who ſay, *Hezekiah* added a Month to this Year by Intercalation; that is, made another Month *Adar*, which was the laſt Month of the Year; and ſo kept this Paſſover in the firſt Month of the next Year. But this is directly contrary to the expreſs Words of this Verſe, which ſays, they kept it in the ſecond Month. Nor is the Opinion of the *Karaites* truer, who fancy, that tho' they kept the Paſſover in the ſecond Month, yet they did not keep all the Parts of it, but only offered the Sacrifice of the Paſchal Lamb: The Feaſt of unleavened Bread being performed in the firſt Month. But this doth not agree with *v.* 21. which ſaith expreſly, *they kept the Feaſt of unleavened Bread ſeven Days.*

Ver. 14. *And they aroſe, and took away the Altars that were in Jeruſalem, and all the Altars for Incenſe took they away,*] They began as ſoon as they came to *Jeruſalem*, to ſhew their Zeal againſt Idolatry, by throwing down the Altars that *Ahaz* had erected in High-Places, either for Sacrifice, or burning Incenſe; which were very many. See xxviii. 24.

And caſt them into the Brook Kidron.] They ſtamped them to Powder, I ſuppoſe, and then caſt it into this Brook.

Ver. 15. *Then they killed the Paſſover on the fourteenth Day of the ſecond Month: and the Prieſts and the Levites were aſhamed,*] They bluſhed to ſee the People ſo forward, and themſelves ſo negligent.

And ſanctified themſelves, and brought in the Burnt-offerings into the Houſe of the LORD.] They that had not done it already, (xxix. 34. and *v.* 3. of this Chapter) now ſanctified themſelves, that they might perform their Office; there being many Sacrifices to be offered upon this Day. See upon *Deut.* xvi. 2.

Ver. 16. *And they ſtood in their Places after their Manner, according to the Law of Moſes the Man of God:*] That they might diſpatch their Buſineſs the more readily.

The Prieſts ſprinkled the Blood, which they received of the Hand of the Levites.] Private Perſons, as well as the *Levites*, might receive the Blood from the Beaſt, but the Prieſts alone could ſprinkle it.

Ver. 17. *For there were many in the Congregation that were not ſanctified: therefore the Levites had the Charge of the killing of the Paſſovers,*] The *Paſſover* doth not only ſignify the Paſchal Lamb, but all the Sacrifices that accompanied it, as I have ſhewn in the fore-named Place, *Deut.* xvi. 2.

For every one that was not clean to ſanctify them unto the LORD.] Abundance of the People, that came to keep this Paſſover, were not clean; and therefore there needed the more Sacrifices to be offered for their cleanſing, which was one Reaſon why the *Levites* were employed in it, otherwiſe there had not been a ſufficient Number to perform this Duty.

Ver. 18. *For a Multitude of the People, even many of Ephraim, and Manaſſeh, Iſſachar and Zebulun, had not cleanſed themſelves,*] And therefore ought not, according to the Law, to have come to the Sanctuary, much leſs eaten the Paſſover.

Yet did they eat the Paſſover otherwiſe than it was written:] They did not underſtand, after ſuch a long Night of Ignorance and Superſtition, what Ceremonies were required for their cleanſing: Or rather, they had not Time to uſe them. Yet having an eager and pious Deſire to commemorate their wonderful Deliverance out of the *Egyptian* Bondage, they were permitted in their Uncleanneſs to eat the Paſſover, leſt they ſhould be diſcouraged, if they were denied it, in their Return to the true Religion.

But Hezekiah prayed for them, ſaying, The good LORD pardon every one,] He had a Confidence that God was ſo gracious, that he would not ſtand ſtrictly upon the Obſervation of external Rites, when he ſaw Mens Hearts honeſt and upright.

Ver. 19. *That prepareth his Heart to ſeek God, the LORD God of his Fathers,*] Who with pure and holy Intentions came diſpoſed to worſhip God, and acknowledge him to be the LORD.

Tho' he be not cleanſed according to the Purification of the Sanctuary.] But wanted ſuch ritual Purifications as were required of thoſe that were admitted to worſhip God at the Sanctuary.

Ver. 20. *And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the People.*] Some imagine that God ſmote them with ſome Diſeaſe, becauſe of their Impurity, which upon his Prayer was cured. But the Scripture uſes this Phraſe, for granting Pardon, and freeing Men from the Guilt of Sin: As is apparent from *Iſa.* vi. 10. *leſt they ſhould be converted, and be healed,* i. e. pardoned.

Ver. 21. *And the Children of Iſrael that were preſent at Jeruſalem, kept the Feaſt of unleavened Bread ſeven Days with great Gladneſs:*] Which was appointed to be obſerved after the killing of the Paſſover. See *Exod.* xii. 15, 16, *&c.*

And the Levites and the Prieſts praiſed the LORD Day by Day, ſinging with loud Inſtruments unto the LORD.] All the ſeven Days they ſang Praiſes to God with Muſick, when the Sacrifices were offered.

Ver. 22. *And Hezekiah ſpake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good Knowledge of the LORD:*] He encouraged them to continue to inſtruct the People more fully in their Duty, by commending them for their Care and Diligence; and promiſing, it is likely, to reward them, for what they had done in propagating the true Knowledge of God.

And they did eat throughout the Feaſt ſeven Days, offering Peace-offerings, and making Confeſſion to the LORD God of their Fathers.] Acknowledging his great Goodneſs unto them, which is called confeſſing, in the holy Language, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 23, 24.

Ver. 23. *And the whole Aſſembly took counſel to keep other ſeven Days:*] They adviſed, it is likely, with thoſe mentioned, *ver.* 2.

And they kept other ſeven Days with Gladneſs.] They did not obſerve other ſeven Days of unleavened Bread; but offered Sacrifices, with Praiſes and Thankſgivings, and Feaſting, ſeven Days.

Ver. 24. *For Hezekiah King of Judah did give to the Congregation a thouſaad Bullocks, and ſeven thouſand Sheep; and the Princes gave to the Congregation a thouſand Bullocks, and ten thouſand Sheep:*] Part of theſe Sacrifices were offered unto God, and the Prieſts had another Part, and the reſt was diſtributed to the Multitude, that they might feaſt and be merry all the ſeven Days, which was an extraordinary Solemnity; but by this Means not only all the *Iſraelites* were provided for who kept this great Feaſt, but all the Strangers alſo that came with them to *Jeruſalem.*

And a great Number of the Prieſts ſanctified themſelves.] So that there were a ſufficient Number to offer the Sacrifices, and to ſprinkle the Blood, tho' not to flay them all.

Ver. 25. *And all the Congregation of Judah, with the Prieſts and the Levites, and all the Congregation that came out of Iſrael, and the Strangers that came out of the Land of Iſrael, and that dwelt in Judah, rejoyced.*] From hence we may conclude, that many Strangers that were in the Kingdom of *Iſrael* became Proſelytes at this Time, to the true Religion revived in *Judah.*

Ver. 26. *So there was great Joy in Jeruſalem: for ſince the Time of Solomon the Son of David, King of Iſrael, there was not the like in Jeruſalem.*] He held a wonderful great Feaſt for a vaſt Number of People, fourteen Days, as we read 1 *Kings* viii. 65.

Ver. 27. *Then the Prieſts the Levites aroſe, and bleſſed the People:*] That is, ſuch of the *Levites* as were Prieſts, ſtood up and diſmiſſed the Congregation with a Bleſſing: For it was their Office alone to bleſs, 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 13. And this Bleſſing is ordained in *the Law of Moſes,* by a divine Commandment, *Numb.* vi. 22, 23. and was continued by them as long as the Sanctuary ſtood. Yea, it was uſed, if we may believe the *Jews,* not only in the Temple, but in the Synagogues; not only in the Land of *Canaan,* but in all Countries where they met to worſhip God; and they think themſelves bound to it by the Divine Law. See *Campegius Vitringa,* in his Book *De Synagoga Veteri,* P. ii. L. iii. Cap. 20.

And their Voice was heard, and their Prayer came up to his holy Dwelling-Place, even unto Heaven.] This ſhews that their Bleſſing was a Prayer to God to bleſs them, of which the Bleſſing ordained

dained by *Moſes* is a Proof. And perhaps God at this Time, by ſome viſible Token, teſtified his Acceptance of them; but it is not likely the Divine Writer would have concealed ſuch a Miracle.

CHAP. XXXI.

Ver. 1. *NOW when all this was finiſhed,*] In the latter End of the ſecond Month, after the Paſſover, and the following Feſtivals were over, and they had received good Inſtructions from the pious *Levites* (xxx. 22.) they now produced the Fruit of all this, by deſtroying the Monuments of Idolatry.

All Iſrael that were preſent, went out to the Cities of Judah, and brake the Images in Pieces, and cut down the Groves, and threw down the high Places, and the Altars] Which *Ahaz* had made in all the fenced Cities of *Judah*, *chap.* xxviii. 25.

Out of all Judah and Benjamin, in Ephraim alſo and Manaſſeh, until they had utterly deſtroyed them all.] They had no Authority in the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, to which *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh* belonged; but ſome think that as *Hezekiah* ſent Letters to all *Iſrael* to come and keep the Paſſover, ſo he went by a Divine Motion to thoſe Tribes which were neareſt to him, and without the Conſent of *Hoſhea* King of *Iſrael*, deſtroyed their Images, and other idolatrous Monuments: But theſe Words may ſignify no more than that he did this in all Parts of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh*, who were fallen off to *Judah*, and come under his Government, *chap.* xv. 9.

Then all the Children of Iſrael returned every Man to his Poſſeſſion into their own Cities.] This argues great Zeal, that they would not return Home, till they had done all they could to eſtabliſh and promote true Religion. Of ſo great Import it is (as *Pellicanus* here obſerves) to have a good King, and a well inſtructed People.

Ver. 2. *And Hezekiah appointed the Courſes of the Prieſts, and the Levites after their Courſes, every Man according to his Service,*] He reſtored the Order which *David* had inſtituted, which had been interrupted ſince the Days of *Jehoſhaphat*, who walked in the Ways of *David*, *c.* xvii. 3.

The Prieſts and the Levites for Burnt-offerings, and for Peace-offerings, to miniſter and to give thanks, and to praiſe] Not only upon ſuch ſolemn Feaſts as the Paſſover (which they had lately kept) but every Day they ſung praiſe to God, when the Sacrifices were offered.

In the Gates of the Tents of the LORD.] That is, in the LORD's Houſe, which anciently was a Tent, as he repreſents to *David*, 2 *Sam.* vii. 6. And all Houſes were called by that Name, *Pſalm* lxix. 25.

Ver. 3. *He appointed alſo the King's Portion of his Subſtance, for the Burnt-offerings, to wit, for the Morning and Evening Burnt-offerings, and the Burnt-offerings for the Sabbaths, and for the New Moons, and for the ſet Feaſts, as it is written in the Law of the LORD.*] There was a particular Sacrifice, I ſuppoſe, offered for the King every Day, at his own Coſt and Charge: Beſides which, *Hezekiah* likewiſe maintained the Morning and Evening Sacrifices every Day, and eſpecially on the Sabbaths, and New Moons, and ſolemn Feaſts; becauſe the Condition of the People was ſo low, that they could not every one pay the Tax that was laid on them, on Purpoſe for the Maintenance of theſe Sacrifices: Yet the Firſt-fruits and the Tenths he ordered to be carefully paid, as it here follows; and theſe Words, it is poſſible, may mean no more, but that he made an Allowance out of his own Eſtate, for the Support of all the Expences ordinary and extraordinary, at the Altar.

Ver. 4. *Moreover, he commanded the People that dwelt in Jeruſalem,*] That by their good Example, others might be ſtirred up to their Duty.

To give the Portion of the Prieſts and the Levites, that they might be encouraged in the Law of the LORD.] For the Service of God could not be maintained, unleſs there was a due Proviſion made for the Maintenance of his Miniſters, who were always ſupported out of the publick Stock; for they who miniſter to the Community, ought by the Law of Nature (as *Eſtius* well obſerves) to be maintained by it; for their Miniſtry is not appointed for themſelves, but for the Salvation of all the People.

Ver. 5. *And as ſoon as the Commandment came abroad, the Children of Iſrael brought in Abundance the Firſt-fruits of Corn, Wine, and Oil, and Honey,*] The *Targum* tranſlates the Word, *Honey of Dates*, as the *Jews* commonly underſtand it, and ſo expound *Deut.* viii. 8. where ſeven Sorts of Things are mentioned, of which they brought the Firſt-fruits: But tho' Honey was not offered in Sacrifice to God (which is their Reaſon why they will not here underſtand *Honey*, properly ſo called) yet I ſee no Reaſon why they might not bring the Firſt-fruits of it, and give it to the Prieſts for their own Uſe.

And of all the Increaſe of the Field,] Which *Kimchi* expounds of the Fruits of the reſt of the Trees, *viz.* Fig-trees and Pomegranates.

And all the Tythe of all Things brought they in abundantly.] They paid Tythe, ſaith he, not only of the Corn, but of the Fruit-trees, and of the Herbs, which were not due by the Law; ſuch Herbs as thoſe mentioned by our Saviour, *Mint, Annis, and Cummin, Mat.* xxiii. 23. tho' theſe ſeem to have been of a later Date, invented by the *Phariſees*.

Ver. 6. *And concerning the Children of Iſrael and Judah, that dwelt in the Cities of Judah,*] As many of the *Iſraelites* as were under the Power and Dominion of *Judah*, did the ſame that they did.

They alſo brought in the Tythe of Oxen and Sheep,] As the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* had brought in the Tythe of ſuch Things as are fore-mentioned, which they had in their Store-houſes; ſo they in the Country brought in alſo the Tythe of Oxen and Sheep, which were not kept in the Cities.

And the Tythe of holy Things, which were conſecrated unto the LORD their God,] That is, ſaith *Jarchi*, the Tythe which the *Levites* paid to the Prieſts: But *Kimchi* takes it for Things conſecrated,

conſecrated, which they had dedicated to God's Service; of which they alſo gave Tythe, tho' they were exempted from the Law of the Tything.

And laid them by Heaps.] In a great Abundance, as is before ſaid.

Ver. 7. *In the third Month they began to lay the Foundation of the Heaps, and finiſhed them in the ſeventh Month.*] They began to offer Firſt-fruits in the third Month, when their Harveſt began; and finiſhed the Tything in the ſeventh Month, when their Harveſt was ended, *Exod.* xxiii. 16.

Ver. 8. *And when Hezekiah and the Princes came and ſaw the Heaps, they bleſſed the LORD and his People Iſrael.*] They gave Thanks to God, who had given them ſuch Plenty of good Things, and likewiſe given them an Heart to offer ſo plentifully; and they commended the People, and prayed God to increaſe their Store; for that's the Meaning of bleſſing the People, praiſing their Liberality, and praying God to reward it.

Ver. 9. *Then Hezekiah queſtioned with the Prieſts and the Levites concerning the Heaps.*] Aſking them, as ſome underſtand it, what they meant to let them lie ſo careleſly, as if they were neglected, and did not lay them up in ſome ſafe Place; but others think he means, how it came to paſs, that there were ſtill ſuch great Heaps left, and no more ſpent: Which the following Anſwer ſeems to favour, tho' the next Words incline to the former.

Ver. 10. *And Azariah the chief Prieſt of the Houſe of Zadok,*] The Head of the Family of the Prieſts of the Line of *Zadok*.

Anſwered him, and ſaid, Since the People began to bring the Offerings into the Houſe of the LORD,] Which was from the very Beginning of Harveſt.

We have had enough to eat, and have left Plenty; for the LORD hath bleſſed his People, and that which is left is this great Store.] His Meaning ſeems to be, that they had not ſpared to make uſe of the plentiful Proviſion which was brought to them; and had alſo laid up as much as they had Room to receive, and all theſe Heaps were ſtill left.

Ver. 11. *Then Hezekiah commanded to prepare Chambers in the Houſe of the LORD, and they prepared them.*] To build new Store-houſes, beſides thoſe which *Solomon* had made; becauſe there was not Room enough wherein to lay all the Offerings and Tythes, and other dedicated Things.

Ver. 12. *And brought in the Offerings, and the Tythes, and the dedicated Things faithfully: Over which Cononiah the Levite was Ruler, and Shimei his Brother was the next.*] As he took Care they ſhould all be faithfully laid up, ſo he ſet truſty Perſons to ſee that they were no leſs faithfully preſerved, for their proper Uſes: Of which theſe two Brethren were the Chief.

Ver. 13. *And Jehiel, and Azaziah, and Nahath, and Aſahel, and Jerimoth, and Jozabad, and Eliel, and Iſmachiah, and Mahath, and Benaiah, were Overſeers under the Hand of Cononiah, and Shimei his Brother,*] Theſe were inferior Officers, under the Command of the two fore-named Brethren, who had the principal Overſight, and theſe were Aſſiſtants to them.

At the Commandment of Hezekiah the King, and Azariah the Ruler of the Houſe of God.] For ſo it was ordered by the King, with the Advice of *Azariah*, who was before-mentioned (*ver.* 10.) as a chief Perſon among the Prieſts.

Ver. 14. *And Kore the Son of Imnah the Levite, the Porter toward the Eaſt,*] At the Entrance of the Houſe of God.

Was over the Freewill-offerings of God, to diſtribute the Oblations of the LORD,] Unto the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, to whoſe Uſes they were appropriated by God: Or, as ſome think, to give out ſo much Flour, Oil, Wine, Frankincenſe, *&c.* as was neceſſary for the Sacrifices.

And the moſt holy Things.] So they called the Burnt-offerings, and the Offerings for Sin, and the Treſpaſs-offerings, and the two Lambs for Peace-offerings, on the laſt Day of the Feaſt of Tabernacles; as *Beckius* obſerves out of *Maimonides*.

Ver. 15. *And next him were Eden, and Miniamin, and Jeſhua, and Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah, in the Cities of the Prieſts, in their ſet Office, to give to their Brethren by Courſes, as well to the Great as to the Small.*] Theſe were to take Care of thoſe who ſtaid in their Cities, while others came in their Courſes to wait at *Jeruſalem*: None of which wanted the Portion allotted to them, both for themſelves, and for their little Children.

Ver. 16. *Beſides their Genealogy of Males, from three Years old and upward, even unto every one that entreth into the Houſe of the LORD, his daily Portion for their Service in their Charges, according to their Courſes.*] Tho' none of the *Levites* were permitted to come into the Houſe of the LORD, to do Service, till they were twenty Years old; yet their Males (as Mr. *Selden* obſerves from this Place) who were three Years old or more, were allowed to come into the Temple with their Parents; and in the Diſtribution, the other Infants being pretermitted, theſe were provided for. *Kimchi* here obſerves, that Males under three Years old were not capable of entring into the Houſe of the LORD: But Females neither then, nor after they were older, were capable of this Privilege.

Ver. 17. *Both to the Genealogy of the Prieſts by the Houſe of their Fathers, and the Levites from twenty Years old and upward, in their Charges by their Courſes.*] Theſe Words *twenty Years old* (as the ſame great Perſon obſerves) relate not to the Prieſts but to the *Levites*; who, according to the Law of *Moſes*, were not obliged to their Function, till they were thirty Years old, *Num.* iv. 3. But *David*, in the latter End of his Reign, a little before the Building of the Temple, admitted them to officiate at the Age of twenty Years, 1 *Chron.* xxiii. 26, 27. See *Selden, de Succeſſion. ad Pontif.* Lib. ii. Cap. 4.

Ver. 18. *And to the Genealogy of all their little Ones, their Wives, and their Sons, and their Daughters, through all the Congregation:*] The fore-named Officers gave to every Family their Portion; not only to the Prieſts, but to their Wives and Children; of which (it appears by

theſe Verſes) an exact Regiſter was kept, according to which they made their Diſtribution.

For in their ſet Office they ſanctify'd themſelves in Holineſs.] Or rather, according to the *Hebrew*, for *in Faith*, or *with Fidelity* (ſome tranſlate it in the Margin *in Truſt*) *they ſanctified themſelves in Holineſs*; that is, attended upon their Miniſtry at the Houſe of God, nothing doubting they ſhould be provided of all things neceſſary; for this ſeems to be a Reaſon, why ſuch Care was taken of their Wives and Children, becauſe their Huſbands were wholly given up to the Service of God, and could not follow any other Employment, whereby to provide for the Maintenance of their Families.

Ver. 19. *Alſo of the Sons of Aaron the Prieſts, which were in the Fields of the Suburbs of their Cities, in every ſeveral City,*] Care was taken of thoſe that lived in the Country, tho' at the greateſt Diſtance, as well as of thoſe that lived in or near *Jeruſalem*, or waited in their Courſes there. They that were not in waiting, but at home with their Families, had Proviſion made for them, as if they had been at the Houſe of God.

The Men that were expreſſed by Name, to give Portions to all the Males among the Prieſts, and to all that were reckoned by Genealogies among the Levites.] The fore-named Perſons were intruſted with this Buſineſs, to ſee that none wanted a Maintenance.

Ver. 20. *And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the* LORD *his God.*] Whatſoever he thought was pleaſing to God, conformable to the Law, and profitable for his People, he performed with Integrity of Heart.

Ver. 21. *And in every Work that he began in the Service of the Houſe of God, and in the Law and in the Commandments, to ſeek his God, he did it with all his Heart, and proſpered.*] Whatſoever he went about, either for the Advancement of Religion, or the good Government of his People, he did it ſincerely, and with great Zeal; ſo that God proſpered him both in Peace and in War.

CHAP. XXXII.

Ver. 1. *AFTER theſe Things, and the Eſtabliſhment thereof,*] After the Reformation of Religion, and the Eſtabliſhment of it, by ſettling the Maintenance of the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, (whom he appointed, according to the Ordinance of *David*, to attend in their Courſes) he proſpered ſo, that he reſolved to be ſubject no longer to the King of *Aſſyria*; who thereupon came and invaded his Country, 2 *Kings* xviii. 7.

Sennacherib, King of Aſſyria, came and entred into Judah,] This was in the fourteenth Year of the Reign of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Kings* xviii. 13.

And encamped againſt the fenced Cities,] Many of which he took; God thinking fit to try the Faith of *Hezekiah*, and by diſappointing *Sennacherib*, to get himſelf the greater Glory.

And thought to win them for himſelf.] To conquer the whole Country, even *Jeruſalem* itſelf.

Ver. 2. *And when Hezekiah ſaw, that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purpoſed to fight againſt Jeruſalem,*] His Succeſs puffed him up, ſo that he deſigned, as plainly appeared, to beſiege the capital City of the Kingdom.

Ver. 3. *He took Counſel with his Princes, and his mighty Men,*] Tho' the Prophet *Iſaiah* had aſſured him of God's Protection, he did not neglect to conſult the beſt Means of his Preſervation.

To ſtop the Waters of the Fountains which were without the City:] To fill them up with Earth, that it might not be known there was any Water there; which they turned another Way, and by Pipes and Channels under Ground brought it to *Jeruſalem*.

And they did help him.] Aſſiſted him in this Work.

Ver. 4. *So there was gathered much People together who ſtopt all the Fountains, and the Brook that ran through the midſt of the Land,*] That is *Gihon*, as *Kimchi* underſtands it, which ſome take to be *Kidron*; it was no eaſy Thing to dry up this Brook; but it is ſuppoſed, the Head of it was not far from the City, which being ſtopped up, they diverted the Current; and by Conveyance under Ground, brought it into great Pits within the City; which received the Water for the Uſe of the People. For we read afterward, *v.* 30. of his ſtopping up a Courſe of Water, which was above, and bringing it down to this Weſt-ſide of the City.

Saying, Why ſhould the Kings of Aſſyria come and find much Water?] Water was ſcarce in this Country; therefore they thought it prudent to diſtreſs their Enemies by the Want of it. He ſpeaks of *Kings*, in the plural Number, either becauſe there were many Kings that ſerved under the King of *Aſſyria*, or becauſe he was the great King, as he ſtiled himſelf.

Ver. 5. *Alſo he ſtrengthned himſelf, and built up all the Wall that was broken,*] There was a great Breach made in it by *Joaſh* King of *Iſrael* in the Days of *Amaziah*, *chap.* xxv. 25. Which, I ſuppoſe, was repaired in his Son's Days, who was a very powerful Prince, *chap.* xxvi. 9. and therefore he ſpeaks here of ſome other Breach, which had been made ſince that Time; and perhaps in the ſame Place, where thro' Neglect the Wall might poſſibly be fallen down.

And raiſed it up to the Towers,] It was broken down from the Gate of *Ephraim* to the Corner-Gate, (as we read in the fore-named Places) where there were Towers, for the Defence of the Gates, unto which he carried the Wall; ſo that it was intirely raiſed up again.

And another Wall without,] He compaſſed the City with another Wall without the old one, for its ſtronger Defence.

And repaired Millo in the City of David,] Some underſtand by *Millo* the Wall that was about *Sion*, on the North Part of the City: Or the Street within the City from the Palace to the Temple; which he repaired, that is, fortified and made ſtrong with a Wall, to defend the Entrance of it.

And made Darts and Shields in Abundance.] Both offenſive and defenſive Weapons, of which he took Care there ſhould be no Want.

Ver. 6. *And he ſet Captains of War over the People, and gathered them together to him in the Street of the Gate of the City,*] In the Street of the principal Gate which was very large.

And ſpake comfortably to them, ſaying,] Encouraged them to ſtand by him, in Defence of their City, Religion, and Liberties, which he aſſured them God would protect; as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 7. *Be ſtrong, and couragious, be not afraid, nor diſmayed for the King of Aſſyria, nor for all the Multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him.*] It is the Part of a good Commander to ſhew himſelf undaunted before his Soldiers; but eſpecially to perſuade them, that having a good Cauſe, God is on their Side; which the *Targum* in the next Verſe explains thus, *The WORD of the LORD our God is our Helper*; which ſignifies, as *Beckius* there thinks, more Perſons than one in the holy Trinity.

Ver. 8. *With him is an Arm of Fleſh, but with us is the LORD our God, to help us, and to fight our Battles. And the People reſted themſelves upon the Words of Hezekiah King of Judah.*] Relied on what he ſaid, as if it had been ſpoken to them by God himſelf.

Ver. 9. *After this did Sennacherib King of Aſſyria ſend his Servants to Jeruſalem (but he himſelf laid Siege againſt Lachiſh, and all his Power with him) unto Hezekiah King of Judah, and unto all Judah, that were at Jeruſalem, ſaying,*] See 2 *Kings* xviii. 17, &c. in which Place, and in *c.* xix. 10, &c. the following Speech is ſet down more largely, which here is abridged.

Ver. 10. *Thus ſaith Sennacherib, King of Aſſyria, Whereon do ye truſt, that ye abide in the Siege of Jeruſalem?*] 2 *Kings* xviii. 19. the laſt Words ſeem to ſignify, that for fear of the King of *Aſſyria*, they durſt not ſtir out of the Gates of *Jeruſalem*; for ſo we tranſlate the laſt Words in the Margin, *the ſtrong Hold of Jeruſalem.*

Ver. 11. *Doth not Hezekiah perſuade you to give over your ſelves to die by Famine, and by Thirſt, ſaying, The LORD our God ſhall deliver us out of the Hand of the King of Aſſyria?*] 2 *Kings* xviii. 22. He did not intend, it appears by this, to ſtorm the City, but to keep them pent up till they were ſtarved.

Ver. 12. *Hath not the ſame Hezekiah taken away his high Places, and his Altars, and commanded Judah and Jeruſalem, ſaying, Ye ſhall worſhip before one Altar, and burn Incenſe upon it?*] It is evident from hence, that the Worſhip of one God alone was known to be the Religion of the *Jews*; but *Sennacherib* would have had them believe, *Hezekiah* had diſhonoured him by confining his Worſhip and Service to one narrow Corner; which was before diffuſed and ſpread all over the City and Country; and therefore would not help them. See there, 2 *Kings* xviii. 22.

Ver. 13. *Know ye not what I and my Fathers have done unto all the People of other Lands? Were the Gods of the Nations of thoſe Lands any Ways able to deliver their Lands out of mine Hand?*] If the LORD had a Mind to help them, he would have them believe that he was not able; becauſe no Gods had been able to deliver thoſe that worſhipp'd them, from his Power.

Ver. 14. *Who was there among all the Gods of thoſe Nations, that my Fathers utterly deſtroyed, that could deliver his People out of mine Hand, that your God ſhould be able to deliver you out of mine Hand?*] Upon this Argument he enlarges himſelf very much in 2 *Kings* xix. 32, 33, 34, 35.

Ver. 15. *Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor perſuade you in this Manner, neither yet believe him: for no God of any Nation or Kingdom was able to deliver his People out of mine Hand, and out of the Hand of my Fathers: how much leſs ſhall your God deliver you out of mine Hand?*] See 2 *Kings* xviii. 29, 30.

Ver. 16. *And his Servants ſpake yet more againſt the LORD God, and againſt his Servant Hezekiah.*] The *Targum* tranſlates it, *They ſpake perverſely againſt the WORD of the LORD God*, &c. Which plainly declares, that Paraphraſt took the *WORD of God* to be a Divine Perſon, whoſe Servant *Hezekiah* was.

Ver. 17. *He wrote alſo Letters to rail on the LORD God of Iſrael, and to ſpeak againſt him, ſaying,*] One of theſe Letters is ſet down at large in 2 *Kings* xix. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

As the Gods of the Nations of other Lands have not delivered their People out of mine Hand, ſo ſhall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his People out of mine Hand.] He inſiſts upon this ſo often and ſo long, it being the moſt popular Argument he could uſe.

Ver. 18. *Then they cried with a loud Voice in the Jews Speech, unto the People of Jeruſalem, that were on the Wall, to affright them, and to trouble them, that they might take the City.*] By a Surrender of it into their Hand. See 2 *Kings* xviii. 26, 27, &c.

Ver. 19. *And they ſpake againſt the God of Jeruſalem, as againſt the Gods of the People of the Earth, which were the Work of the Hands of Man.*] They ignorantly fancied, there was no Difference between the God of the Univerſe, whom the *Jews* worſhipped, and the Gods of particular Countries, who pretended to no Power but only there; though in Truth they had no Power at all, being made by thoſe that worſhipped them.

Ver. 20. *And for this Cauſe Hezekiah the King, and the Prophet Iſaiah, the Son of Amos, prayed, and cried to Heaven.*] See 2 *Kings* xix. 1, 2, &c. 25, 26, &c.

Ver. 21. *And the LORD ſent an Angel, which cut off all the mighty Men of Valour, and the Leaders and Captains in the Camp of the King of Aſſyria:*] With a vaſt Number of common Soldiers, as we read 2 *Kings* xix. 35. The *Hebrew* Text no where mentions the Name of the Angel, nor the Time of the Year when this Stroke was given, nor the Kind of Plague whereby they were deſtroyed; but the *Targum* ſaith, the WORD of the LORD ſent *Gabriel* to do this Execution, who in the Paſſover Night ſmote them with Lightning; which is related in the *Babylonian Talmud*, after the ſame Manner; as *Beckius* obſerves upon the *Targum*.

One would think, that *Artabanus* had read or heard ſomething of this ſudden and dreadful Overthrow, when he diſſuaded *Xerxes* from invading *Greece*, being ſwoln with Confidence that nothing could withſtand him. *Doſt thou*

not obſerve, ſaith he, *how the higheſt and magnificent Buildings are wont to be ſtruck with Thunder, when the lower eſcape?* Φιλέει γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς τὰ ὑπερέχοντα πάντα κολοέειν, *For God loves to depreſs all Things that are lifted up.* And a little after, in the ſame Speech, he admoniſhes him; Οὐ γὰρ ἐᾷ φρονέειν ἄλλον μέγα ὁ Θεὸς ἢ ἑωυτόν, *For God doth not allow any other to think highly of themſelves, but only himſelf. Herodotus*, Lib. vii. Cap. 10.

So he returned with Shame of Face to his own Land. And when he was come into the Houſe of his God, they that came forth of his own Bowels, ſlew him there with the Sword.] See 2 *Kings* xix. 37. And with him the *Aſſyrian* Empire began to fall, and never recovered its former Strength; tho' it ſtill continued in great Power. For the next Year after *Sennacherib*'s Death, the *Medes* revolted; being encouraged to it, no doubt, by this great Defeat at *Jeruſalem:* And by their Example ſeveral other Nations fell off from the *Aſſyrians*, and aſſerted their Liberty; as *Hermannus Conringius* hath obſerved out of *Herodotus*, in his *Adverſaria Chronologica*, Cap. iv. But ſtill their Monarchy continued, as appears by what follows in the next Chapter of this Book.

Ver. 22. *Thus the LORD ſaved Hezekiah, and the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem from the Hand of Sennacherib the King of Aſſyria, and from the Hand of all other, and guided them on every Side.*] That is, defended them from all their Enemies; juſt as a Shepherd doth his Sheep, whom he leads into Places of Safety.

Ver. 23. *And many brought Gifts unto the LORD to Jeruſalem, and Preſents to Hezekiah King of Judah:*] His Neighbours were ſo far from moleſting him, that many came to worſhip God, and to do Honour to *Hezekiah*, who was ſo highly in God's Favour.

So that he was magnified in the Sight of all Nations from thenceforth.] That is, all the neighbouring Countries, who heard of theſe Things, had him in great Eſteem.

Ver. 24. *In thoſe Days Hezekiah was ſick to the Death, and prayed unto the LORD: and he ſpake unto him, and he gave him a Sign.*] Or, as it is in the Margin, *wrought a Miracle for him.* See a large Account of this in the twentieth Chapter of the ſecond Book of the *Kings*, and my *Annotations* there: Unto which this may be added, that *Pliny* ſaith, The Application of a very fat Fig to an hard Swelling, is a preſent Remedy. *Carbunculi, ſi ſine Ulcere eſt, quàm pinguiſſimum ficum imponi pene ſingulare remedium eſt*, Lib. xxiii. *Nat. Hiſtor.* Cap. 7. But the *Schechin*, wherewith *Hezekiah* laboured, (which we tranſlate *Boil*) was not of this Sort; for the Word ſignifies the worſt Kind of Ulcers: And therefore there was nothing in this Application of a Lump of Figs to leſſen the Wonder.

Ver. 25. *But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the Benefit done unto him:*] In his Deliverance from ſo powerful an Enemy, as he could not reſiſt, and from ſuch a dangerous Diſeaſe, as was incurable, without the ſpecial Hand of God.

For his Heart was lifted up;] By the Embaſſy ſent to him from the King of *Babylon*, who came to enquire of the Wonder done in the Land: Which, together with the Slaughter of *Sennacherib*'s Army, his ſhameful Retreat, the Preſents which had been ſent him from other Countries, and the Fame which he had got, made him have too high an Opinion, tho' not of his Power, which was very ſmall; yet of his Piety, which was very great. But inſtead of making him thankful, he grew ſo preſumptuous of God's Favour, as to be forgetful of his Benefits.

Therefore there was Wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jeruſalem.] Who, it ſeems, were as inſenſible as himſelf of the Mercies they had received; contenting themſelves, that they were not Idolaters, tho' they were not truly pious, and mindful of God's Benefits.

Ver. 26. *Notwithſtanding, Hezekiah humbled himſelf for the Pride of his Heart*] Upon the Admonition which the Prophet *Iſaiah* gave him; and the ſevere Sentence he pronounced againſt him, and his Family.

(Both he and the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem)] Who were awakened by the ſame Threatning.

So that the Wrath of the LORD came not upon them in the Days of Hezekiah.] But Peace and Truth was in his Days, as he ſpeaks, 2 *Kings* xx. 19.

Ver. 27. *And Hezekiah had exceeding much Riches and Honour: and he made himſelf Treaſuries for Silver, and for Gold, and for precious Stones, and for Spices, and for Shields, and for all Manner of pleaſant Jewels;*] All which he ſhewed to the King of *Babylon*'s Ambaſſadors, 2 *Kings* xx. 13.

Ver. 28. *Store-houſes alſo for the Increaſe of Corn, and Wine, and Oil; and Stalls for all manner of Beaſts, and Cotes for Flocks.*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *for Beaſt and Beaſt*; that is, *every Beaſt:* as in *Eſther* ix. 21. *Year and Year*; that is, *every Year:* and *v.* 28. *Generation and Generation*, i. e. *every Generation.*

Ver. 29. *Moreover, he provided him Cities, and Poſſeſſions of Flocks, and Herds in Abundance: for God had given him Subſtance very much.*] The great Riches of theſe Countries conſiſted in Abundance of Cattle, of all Sorts, as I have oft obſerved.

Ver. 30. *This ſame Hezekiah alſo ſtopped the upper Water-Courſe of Gihon,*] He ſeems to ſpeak of the ſame Thing which is mentioned before, *v.* 4. being a Work of ſuch great Labour and Art, that *Ezra* thought fit to make it memorable, by taking a more particular Notice of it, among his great Works. From the mention of the *upper Water-Courſe*, *Kimchi* gathers, there were ſeveral Streams of this Torrent.

And brought it ſtraight down to the Weſt-ſide of the City of David.] The Rivulet, I ſuppoſe, had many Windings before, and did not come ſtraight down to the City, as now it was made to do.

And Hezekiah proſpered in all his Works.] It is likely, he contrived many other Things for the Benefit of the City of *Jeruſalem*; none of which miſcarried.

Ver. 31. *Howbeit, in the Buſineſs of the Embaſſadors of the Princes of Babylon, who ſent unto him*

him to enquire of the Wonder that was done in the Land,] Which is mentioned at large, 2 *Kings* xx. 10, 11. *Iſaiah* xxxviii. 7, 8. In the former of which Places I have endeavoured to give an Account of it. But *Bochartus*, I find, ſtrongly oppoſes the Opinion of the Body of the Sun's going back: In his *Canaan*, Lib. i. Cap. xiv. p. 4. where he obſerves, that the Scripture in both Places ſpeaks of the Shadow's going back ten Degrees; and then it is ſaid, the *Sun went back*, that is, the Shadow of the Sun, or the Light of the Sun, which ſucceeded to the going back of the Shadow. And it muſt be confeſſed, that if the Sun had gone back, it would not have been a Miracle in *Judea* alone, but all the World over: And the King of *Babylon* needed not have ſent to enquire about the Wonder in that Land, becauſe it would have been a Wonder in his Land, and in all Lands, as well as in *Judea*. And ſo it was, for I have obſerved there out of *Herodotus*, that in *Egypt* they knew ſomething of the unuſual Motion of the Sun: And perhaps they now obſerved it in *Babylon*, and only ſent to enquire whether *Iſaiah* foretold it, which was a great Wonder. I have met alſo with one, who thinks, that the *Babylonians* being Worſhippers af the Sun, it was Part of *Hezekiah*'s Sin, that he did not take this Occaſion to perſuade the Ambaſſadors to worſhip God, who made and commanded the Sun; and could ſtop the Courſe of it when he pleaſed.

God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his Heart.] God ſuffered him to behave himſelf according to his own Inclinations, without any ſpecial Motion from him; that *Hezekiah* might know, he was not ſo ſtrong as he imagined, if he were left to himſelf without God. But it is generally thought, the laſt Words relate rather to God, who made Proof of him, as he had done of many other good Men, whether he would entirely obey him, or not. He tries none in that Senſe, of which St. *James* ſpeaks, *viz.* for an ill Intent, or to lead Men to Deſtruction; but for a good End, to improve them, and bring them to Salvation. Thus he tempted *Abraham*, *Gen.* xxii. 1. and the Children of *Iſrael*, *Exod.* xv. 25. xvi. 5. and *Ezekiel*, and many others, that it might appear, how they ſtood affected to him: Which God, no doubt, knew, and now ſaw the Pride and Vanity that lurked in *Hezekiah*'s Heart; which was hid from every one but God himſelf, who now ſuffered him to diſcover it for his Humiliation. For it was a greater Crime to be again puffed up, as he had been before his dangerous Sickneſs.

Ver. 32. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Hezekiah, and his Goodneſs, behold, they are written in the Viſion of Iſaiah the Prophet, the Son of Amoz,*] Who hath recorded his Prayer, which he made to God in his Sickneſs.

And in the Book of the Kings of Judah and Iſrael.] See xxvii. 7.

Ver. 33. *And Hezekiah ſlept with his Fathers, and they buried him in the chiefeſt of the Sepulchres of the Sons of David:*] Which was a Part of that Honour which they did him, mentioned in the next Words; for he deſerved it above all the Kings which they had ſince the Time of *David*.

And all Judah and the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem did him Honour at his Death:] Buried him, perhaps, with ſuch Solemnity and Expences as were made at the Funeral of King *Aſa*, *c.* xvi. 14. *Maimonides* ſaith, they appointed a Company of Students in the Law to ſit at his Sepulchre, and to mourn ſeven Days together. See *Schikcard* in his *Jus Regium*, p. 173. But this I look upon as merely *Rabbinical*.

And Manaſſeh his Son reigned in his Stead.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Ver. 1. *Manaſſeh was twelve Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and five Years in Jeruſalem:*] See 2 *Kings*, *c.* xxi. 1. where his Mother's Name is ſet down, which is here omitted.

Ver. 2. *But did that which was Evil in the Sight of the LORD, like unto the Abominations of the Heathen, whom the LORD had caſt out before the Children of Iſrael.*] The very ſame Words are in the fore-named Place, *ver.* 2. And here it follows *ver.* 9. that he did worſe than thoſe abominable Heathen; not only committing all the Sins of his Forefathers, but endeavouring to exceed them, and leave nothing undone wholly to ſubvert the Worſhip of God.

Ver. 3. *For he built again the High-Places which Hezekiah his Father had broken down, and he reared up Altars for Baalim,*] Imitated *Ahab* King of *Iſrael*, as it is explained there, 2 *Kings* xxi. 3.

And made Groves, and worſhipped all the Hoſt of Heaven, and ſerved them.] Theſe Groves, I ſuppoſe, were made about the Temple, which was utterly forbidden, *Deut.* xvi. 21. being an Heatheniſh Rite, (*Judges* vi. 25.) and mentioned by *Iſaiah* (lxvi. 17.) among the abominable Idolatries which they practiſed ſecretly in their Gardens. Yet the *Jews* in After-times did plant Trees about their *Proſeuchæ*, their Oratories, or Places of Prayer, as *Scaliger* obſerves in his *Fragmenta*, at the End of his Book *De Emend. Temporum*, p. 25. But they were not in the Law touching the Temple.

Ver. 4. *Alſo he built Altars in the Houſe of the LORD,*] In the Court of the Prieſts. See 2 *Kings* xxi. 4.

Whereof the LORD had ſaid, In Jeruſalem ſhall my Name be for ever.] This was the greater Profanation, becauſe God had choſen this Place to ſettle his Preſence in it.

Ver. 5. *And he built Altars for all the Hoſt of Heaven, in the two Courts of the Houſe of the LORD.*] In the Court of the People of *Iſrael*, and in the Court of the *Gentiles*. See there *ver.* 5.

Ver. 6. *And he cauſed his Children to paſs thro' the Fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom:*] There is mention made only of his Son in the Book of the *Kings*, but here of *his Children*, whom he conſecrated to *Moloch*.

Alſo he obſerved Times, and uſed Enchantments, and uſed Witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar Spirit, and with Wizards: he wrought much Evil in the Sight of the LORD to provoke him to Anger.] He ſeems to have ſtudied to find out what God had forbidden in his Law, that he might practiſe it. See there, 1 *Kings* xxi. 6.

Ver.

Ver. 7. *And he ſet a carved Image (the Idol which he had made) in the Houſe of God, of which God had ſaid to David, and to Solomon his Son, In this Houſe, and in Jeruſalem, which I have choſen before all the Tribes of Iſrael, will I put my Name for ever.*] This Verſe and the next are the ſame with 2 *Kings* xxi. 7, 8. where ſee my *Annotations*. I ſhall only add here, That this ſeems to have been an Image of more than ordinary note, which he *ſet up* with a great Deal of Ceremony. For among the Heathens, whom he imitated, *Images* did not become Gods, that is, were not made Objects of Worſhip, till being placed in the moſt holy Part of their Temples, there they were conſecrated by being anointed and crowned, by Sacrifices, Prayers and Adorations; and then ſetting up Candles burning before them: All which was concluded with a Feſtival, which ſometimes was made anniverſary. Many plain Inſtances there are of this, particularly in *Minutius Fœlix*, who mentions the Unction, Coronation, Adoration, and Prayers, whereby they were conſecrated.

Ver. 8. *Neither will I any more remove the Foot of Iſrael from out of the Land which I have appointed for your Fathers; ſo that they will take heed to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole Law, and the Statutes and the Ordinances by the Hand of Moſes.*

Ver. 9. *So Manaſſeh made Judah and the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem to err, and to do worſe than the Heathen, whom the LORD had deſtroyed before the Children of Iſrael.*] A moſt prodigious Change, from the Height of Piety in his Father's Time, into the Sink of Impiety in this. Which ſtrange Viciſſitude of Things ſhould admoniſh us not to be ſecure, as *Victorinus Strigelius* notes; who being Profeſſor of Theology at *Heidelburg*, left this Remark in his Lectures on this Place, near an hundred and forty Years ago. *Now we have the Word of God abundantly, in all Wiſdom; and pious Princes patronize both thoſe that preach, and thoſe that learn the Goſpel. But this Plenty of the Word we now enjoy (I tremble to ſpeak it, but I muſt ſpeak it, becauſe it will come to paſs) ſhall be taken away: And that ſad mournful Time will come, when the publick Aſſemblies of the Church ſhall be ſcattered, and a few pious Souls ſhall meet with Fear in a Corner, to communicate among themſelves the Fragments of the heavenly Doctrine, and give God thanks for thoſe Remainders:* Which we have ſeen fulfilled in that Country, and in *France*, and other Places.

Ver. 10. *And the LORD ſpake to Manaſſeh and to his People:*] By his Servants the Prophets. See *ver.* 18. The *Jews* ſay in *Seder Olam Rabba*, cap. xx. that *Joel*, *Nahum*, and *Habbakuk* propheſied in his Time; but he was ſo wicked that they would not ſo much as mention his Name in the Beginning of their Prophecies; which is not a good Reaſon.

But they would not hearken.] Neither he nor his People regarded what they ſaid.

Ver. 11. *Wherefore the LORD brought upon them the Captains of the Hoſt of the King of Aſſyria,*] The Royal Family failing in *Babylon*, the King of *Aſſyria (Eſſarhaddon)* brought that Kingdom under his Yoke again, and held it thirteen Years, as Primate *Uſher* obſerves in his *Annals*. And he hearing, from the Ambaſſadors of *Merodach Baladan*, what great Treaſures were in *Jeruſalem*, and that *Hezekiah* was dead, and *Manaſſeh* had forſaken that God who did ſuch great Things for his Father, ſent an Army againſt him, which he could not withſtand.

Which took Manaſſeh among the Thorns,] In a Thicket where he had hid himſelf, but was diſcovered.

And bound him with Fetters,] With Iron Chains faſtened to his Wriſts, or to his Legs, as we underſtand it.

And carried him to Babylon.] Which the King of *Aſſyria*, it is likely, had made his Seat, to ſecure his late Conqueſts. This was in the twenty ſecond Year of his Reign, as the *Jews* compute in *Seder Olam Rabba*, cap. xxiv. when they carried away with him the Idol in *Dan*, according to *Judges* xviii. 30. But however that be, it is very evident the *Aſſyrian* Monarchy was not fallen by the Defection of the *Medes* and other Nations, which I before mention'd, but ſtill continued in great Power; *Babylon* itſelf, which rebelled at the ſame Time with the *Medes*, being again ſubdued to its Obedience, as appears by their ſending *Manaſſeh* bound hither. So that they had not only *Cœlo-Syria* and *Phœnicia*, but *Meſopotamia* and *Chaldæa* under their Dominion, as *Conringius* obſerves, in the Book before named, upon the fore-going Chapter, *ver.* 21. How long their Power continued the Scripture doth not tell us; but *Manaſſeh* after his Return from his Captivity, ſeems to have been a free Prince, ſubject unto none, maintaining Forces in all his fenced Cities, *ver.* 14. of this Chapter.

Ver. 12. *And when he was in Affliction, he beſought the LORD his God, and humbled himſelf greatly before the God of his Fathers,*] This was three and thirty Years before his Death, as the *Jews* make Account, in the Book before mentioned. But both *Kimchi* and *Abarbinel* confeſs that this relies upon a weak Foundation, as doth the other Thing, that he was carried away in the twenty ſecond Year of his Reign.

Ver. 13. *And prayed unto him, and he was entreated of him, and heard his Supplication, and brought him again to Jeruſalem into his Kingdom. Then Manaſſeh knew that the LORD he was God.*] So true it is that *Vexatio dat Intellectum*, Trouble and Vexation give Underſtanding, and make Men know God and themſelves. Which is not univerſally true, for ſome are far from being brought to a right Senſe by their Miſeries; as *Ahaz*, this King's Grand-father, was never without ſome ſore Affliction or other, and yet never relented. But tho' *R. Johadan* was ſo charitable as to think that *Manaſſeh* had his Part in the other World, yet the Doctors in the Title *Sanhedrin* (Cap. xi. Sect. 1.) exclude him from any Portion in it, and ſay he was only reſtored to his Kingdom, but not to Life eternal. For this is the Doctrine they there lay down, There were three Kings, and four private Men, who have no Portion in eternal Life: The three Kings are *Jeroboam*, *Ahab*, and *Manaſſeh*; the four private Men, *Balaam*, *Doeg*, *Ahitophel*, and *Gehazi*.

Gehazi. But they have no Ground for this Sentence pronounced upon *Manaſſeh*, but the Wickedneſs of his Succeſſor; from whence they argue the Father's Repentance was not ſincere: The Folly of which ſufficiently appears from this Hiſtory of him and his Father *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 14. *Now after this, he built a Wall without the City of David, on the Weſt-ſide of Gihon, in the Valley, even to the entring in at the Fiſh-gate, and compaſſed about Ophel, and raiſed it up a very great Height, and put Captains of War in all the fenced Cities of Judah.*] He provided for the Safety of his Kingdom, and in the firſt Place built a Wall for the Defence of *Jeruſalem*; which ſome think was that which his Father made (*c.* xxxii. 5.) which he repaired and ſtrengthened, after it had been thrown down, perhaps by the King of *Aſſyria*'s Forces, when they carried him captive. The *Fiſh-gate* was the Gate where they ſold Fiſh (as the *Targum* expounds it) which was brought from *Joppa*. Concerning *Ophel*, ſee xxvii. 3.

Ver. 15. *And he took away the ſtrange Gods, and the Idol out of the Houſe of the LORD, and all the Altars that he had built in the Mount of the Houſe of the LORD, and in Jeruſalem, and caſt them out of the City.*] He had profaned the Houſe of the LORD, but had not ſhut up the Doors, as *Ahaz* did; and therefore he is ſaid only to have purged it from Idols, but not to have opened it, as *Jacobus Capellus* obſerves. Here particular Notice is taken of the Idol mentioned *ver.* 7. which confirms what I have noted there.

Ver. 16. *And he repaired the Altar of the LORD, and ſacrificed thereon Peace-offerings and Thank-offerings,*] For now he was ſenſible there was no other God but the LORD, who had wonderfully delivered him out of Captivity, and reſtored him to his Kingdom, when he implored his Mercy.

And commanded Judah to ſerve the LORD God of Iſrael.] This was a Proof of his true Repentance, that he endeavoured to bring his People back to the Service of God, whom he had miſled (*ver.* 9.) to the Worſhip of Idols. But as *Kimchi* notes, he was not able to do ſo much good as he had done miſchief, for the People continued their Inclination to Idolatry, and neglected the Study of the Law of God. For in *Joſiah*'s Reign (which preſently followed) it was Matter of great Surprize that they found the Book of the Law, when they were repairing the Temple; the Copies of it, as the *Jews* think, having been deſtroyed in the Time of *Manaſſeh* and *Amon*. But it is not credible which were preſerved in the Hands of the Ten Tribes, and without which the Church could not have been reform'd.

Ver. 17. *Nevertheleſs, the People did ſacrifice ſtill in the High-Places, yet unto the LORD their God only.*] This was an Error ſo rooted, that very good Kings could not correct it, ſuch as *Aſa* and *Jehoſhaphat*; in whoſe Days the People worſhipped the true God, but in an unlawful Place, as they now did.

Ver. 18. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Manaſſeh, and his Prayer unto his God, and the Words of the Seers that ſpake to him, in the Name of the LORD God of Iſrael, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Iſrael.*] So *Judah* is now called, who with *Benjamin*, were all that were left of the Children of *Jacob*, who was named *Iſrael*. But theſe Books here mention'd are not thoſe which we now have, but others that were loſt in the Captivity.

Ver. 19. *His Prayer alſo, and how God was entreated of him,*] He mentions his Prayer again; becauſe, I ſuppoſe, he made more than one. As if he had ſaid, *how he continued to pray till God was entreated of him:*

And all his Sin, and his Treſpaſs, and the Places wherein he built High-Places, and ſet up Groves and graven Images, before he was humbled:] This is one of the Places which plainly prove (as I have often noted) that *Aſcherim* (which we tranſlate *Groves*) ſignifies not the Groves themſelves, but the Images or Statues which were ſet up in them. For Groves are *planted*, not *ſet up* or erected, as it is here ſaid of *Manaſſeh*, that *he ſet up Groves*; that is, dedicated and conſecrated, as that Word ſignifies among *Greek* and *Roman* Writers. See xxxiv. 1. 2 *Kings* xiv. 23. *Jerem.* xvii. 2.

Behold, they are written among the Sayings of the Seers.] Or, of *Hoſai*, (as we tranſlate it in the Margin) who was a Prophet, it is likely, in thoſe Times, by whom many memorable Things in his Reign were recorded; particularly *his Prayer*, which he recorded, as *Iſaiah* did the Prayer of *Hezekiah* his Father.

Ver. 20. *So Manaſſeh ſlept with his Fathers, and they buried him in his own Houſe: and Amon his Son reigned in his Stead.*] See 2 *Kings* xxi. 18. It is likely he left it in his laſt Will, that he would be buried privately, as not worthy to lie by his Anceſtors.

Ver. 21. *Amon was two and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and reigned two Years in Jeruſalem.*] As the Sons of *Jeroboam*, and of *Baaſha*, and of *Ahab*, reigned two Years and no longer.

Ver. 22. *But he did that which was evil in the Sight of the LORD, as did Manaſſeh his Father: for Amon ſacrificed to all the carved Images which Manaſſeh his Father had made, and ſerved them.*] See 2 *Kings* xxi. 20, 21.

Ver. 23. *And humbled not himſelf before the LORD, as Manaſſeh his Father had humbled himſelf;*] He followed him in his Sin, but not in his Repentance.

But Amon treſpaſſed more and more.] Some of the *Jews* ſay, that he burnt the Book of the Law: Others, that he lay with his own Mother. But the great Sin which the holy Scriptures charge him with, is his Idolatry, which he more and more introduced, and never repented of it.

Ver. 24. *And his Servants conſpired againſt him, and ſlew him in his own Houſe.*

Ver. 25. *But the People of the Land ſlew all them that had conſpired againſt King Amon, and the People of the Land made Joſiah his Son King in his Stead.*] Theſe two Verſes are the very ſame with thoſe 2 *Kings* xxi. 23, 24. See there.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Ver. 1. *JOſiah was eight Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jeruſalem one and thirty Years.*

Ver. 2. *And he did that which was right in the Sight of the LORD, and walked in the Ways of David his Father, and declined neither to the right Hand nor to the left.*] Theſe two Verſes are the ſame with 2 *Kings* xxii. 1, 2. only there the Name of his Mother is ſet down, which here is omitted.

Ver. 3. *For in the eighth Year of his Reign, while he was yet young, he began to ſeek after the God of David his Father:*] He gave very early Proofs of his pious Inclinations; for when he was but ſixteen Years old, and had newly taken on him the Adminiſtration of Affairs, he began to worſhip God publickly, and propounded *David* to himſelf for his Pattern.

And in the twelfth Year he began to purge Judah and Jeruſalem from the high Places, and the Groves, and the carved Images, and the molten Images.] When he was twenty Years old, he begun to bring others to the true Religion, by reforming Abuſes in the Worſhip of God: For now he had got more Authority, and therefore deſtroyed idolatrous Worſhip, which he was inclined to do before, and had it in his Mind when he was a mere Youth. This is not ſo diſtinctly noted in the Book of the *Kings*, where nothing is recorded of him till what he did in the eighteenth Year of his Reign. And this is the more remarkable, becauſe he began the Reformation here ſpoken of, before *Jeremiah* begun to propheſy, which was not till the next Year, in the thirteenth of King *Joſiah*. See *Jerem.* i. 2.

Ver. 4. *And they brake down the Altar of Baalim in his Preſence;*] I have elſewhere obſerved that *Baalim* were *Demi-Gods*, as Mr. *Mede* truly calls them.

And the Images that were on high above them he cut down,] The *Hebrew* Word *Chamamim*, which we tranſlate *Images*, as moſt think, hath ſome Relation to the Sun; becauſe it comes from a Word that ſignifies Heat. And *Aben-Ezra* tranſlates it, *Houſes made for the Worſhip of the Sun.* The LXX ſometimes tranſlate it, εἴδωλα, ſometimes βδελύγματα, but do not tell us what *Idols* and *Abominations* theſe were. *Jo. Geuſius* thinks it was the Idol called *Thammuz*, by which Name *Oſiris*, *Jupiter Ammon*, or the Sun was underſtood: And indeed the Worſhip of all the Hoſt of Heaven is mentioned together with the Worſhip of *Baalim*, in the Idolatry which *Manaſſeh* committed, *chap.* xxxiii. 3.

And the Groves, and the carved Images, and the molten Images he brake in Pieces,] Here again *Aſcherim* ſignifies the *Idols in the Groves*; for the Groves themſelves were not *broke in Pieces*, but cut down.

And made Duſt of them, and ſtrowed it upon the Graves of them that had ſacrificed unto them.] To declare his Deteſtation of the ſmalleſt Remainders of them.

Ver. 5. *And he burnt the Bones of the Prieſts upon their Altars, and cleanſed Judah and Jeruſalem.*] Whereby he polluted theſe Altars, and made them abominable, and purged the Nation from their Idolatry, which was very great; for it is likely theſe were not *Levitical* Prieſts, but Prieſts made by their idolatrous Kings, either of other Nations, or ſuch as they could draw in of their own Nation (after the Manner of *Jeroboam*) to officiate to their ſtrange Gods.

Ver. 6. *And ſo did he in the Cities of Manaſſeh, and Ephraim, and Simeon, even unto Naphtali,*] Tho' *Salmanaſſar* had carried away the main Body of the ten Tribes from their own Land, yet there remained a great many of the poor People behind, as appears from this Place, and from *ver.* 9, 33.

With their Mattocks round about.] Some tranſlate it *Mauls*, others *Forks*, or ſuch like Inſtruments.

Ver. 7. *And when he had broken down the Altars and the Groves, and had beaten the graven Images into Powder, and cut down all the Idols throughout all the Land of Iſrael, he returned to Jeruſalem.*] For it appears by the Book of the *Kings* more fully, that he went himſelf in Perſon thro' the whole Country to ſee this Work done, which otherwiſe might have been performed negligently.

Ver. 8. *Now in the eighteenth Year of his Reign,*] When he was twenty ſix Years old he proceeded further, having diſpoſed the People to offer freely toward the Reparation of the Houſe of God, as it here follows.

When he had purged the Land and the Houſe,] That is, the Houſe of God.

He ſent Shaphan the Son of Azaliah, and Maaſeiah the Governor of the City, and Joah the Son of Joahaz the Recorder, to repair the Houſe of the LORD his God.] Here is a more perfect Narrative of the Reparation of the Temple than was given in the Book of the *Kings*, where only *Shaphan* is mentioned, as ſent to *Hilkiah*; but here two other Men of great Authority are joined with him, and ordered to ſee the Work ſet forward.

Ver. 9. *And when they came to Hilkiah the High Prieſt, they delivered the Money that was brought into the Houſe of God, which the Levites that kept the Doors had gathered of the Hand of Manaſſeh and Ephraim, and of all the Remnant of Iſrael, and of all Judah and Benjamin, and they returned to Jeruſalem.*] Theſe laſt Words import, that theſe *Levites* (having received what was given at the Door of the Tabernacle which they kept) travelled all the Country over, to collect what Money they could gather from well diſpoſed People, who contributed to this Work; which Money the three fore-named Perſons received from them when they returned to *Jeruſalem*: And beſides this, *Shaphan* alone ſeems to have been ſent to *Hilkiah*, to ſum up the Money that had been offered at the Temple for this Uſe, 2 *Kings* xxii. 4.

Ver. 10. *And they put it in the Hand of the Workmen, that had the Overſight of the Houſe of the LORD,*] Who were appointed to take Care of the Work, and to ſee it done.

And they gave it to the Workmen that wrought in the Houſe of the LORD, to repair and mend the Houſe.] The Overſeers gave it to the Artificers mentioned in the next Verſe, who were to buy Materials, and employ them in the Reparation.

Ver. 11. *Even to the Artificers and Builders gave they it, to buy hewn Stone and Timber for Couplings, and to floor the Houſes which the Kings of Judah had deſtroyed.*] It ſeems both the Outſide and Inſide, the Floor and the Roof, were run to Ruin by long Neglect, ſince the Days of *Joaſh*, when the Temple was laſt repaired:

Which

Which the *Jews* (in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. xxiv.) make account was two hundred and eighteen Years.

Ver. 12. *And the Men did the Work faithfully:*] So that no Account was taken of them.

And the Overſeers of them were Jahath, and Obadiah the Levites, of the Sons of Merari; and Zechariah, and Meſhullam, of the Sons of the Kohathites, to ſet it forward; and other of the Levites, all that could ſkill of Inſtruments of Muſick.] That is, all thoſe were well ſkilled in Muſick, and performed their Part in the Service of the Temple; which is here mentioned to ſignify that the principal *Levites* were ſet over this Work, to ſee it well done.

Ver. 13. *Alſo they were over the Bearers of Burdens, and were Overſeers of all that wrought the Work in any manner of Service:*] There being great Numbers of them, they might well inſpect every Perſon that was employed in this Work.

And of the Levites there were Scribes, and Officers, and Porters.] Theſe Overſeers were deputed to ſeveral Employments; for which none ſo fit as the *Levites*, who underſtood all manner of Things belonging to the Houſe of God, being to do conſtant Service there.

Ver. 14. *And when they brought out the Money that was brought into the Houſe of the LORD,*] And thereupon had begun the Reparation of the Houſe.

Hilkiah the Prieſt found a Book of the Law of the LORD given by Moſes.] The Word *given* is not in the *Hebrew:* Which muſt be applied not to the *Book*, but to the *Law of the LORD* given by *Moſes*. For we cannot certainly from hence conclude, that this was the very authentick Book, which *Moſes* laid up by the Ark. See 2 *Kings* xxii. 8. becauſe in the *Hebrew* it is ſaid the Book of the Law of the LORD *by the Hand of Moſes:* Which doth not ſignify, the Book was written by his own Hand, but that the Law therein contained was delivered to the People *by the Miniſtry of Moſes:* So the Phraſe, *by the Hand*, is uſed in very many Places, *Exod.* xxxv. 29. *Levit.* x. 11. xxvi. 45. *Numb.* iv. 37, 45, *&c.* See 2 *Kings* xviii. 8. and in this Book, xxxv. 6.

Ver. 15. *And Hilkiah anſwered and ſaid to Shaphan the Scribe, I have found the Book of the Law in the Houſe of the LORD. And Hilkiah delivered the Book to Shaphan.*] Who read it, 2 *Kings* xxii. 9.

Ver. 16. *And Shaphan carried the Book to the King, and brought the King word back again, ſaying, All that was committed to thy Servants, they do it.*] When he came to give an Account to the King, how he had executed his Command, (*v.* 8, 9, *&c.*) he delivered the Book to him.

Ver. 17. *And they have gathered together the Money that was found in the Houſe of the LORD, and have delivered it into the Hand of the Overſeers, and to the Hand of the Workmen.*] See 2 *Kings* xxii. 9.

Ver. 18. *Then Shaphan the Scribe told the King, ſaying, Hilkiah the Prieſt hath given me a Book. And Shaphan read it before the King.*

Ver. 19. *And it came to paſs, when the King had heard the Words of the Law, that he rent his Clothes.*] Theſe two Verſes are Word for Word in 2 *Kings* xxii. 10, 11. where I have explained them. I ſhall only here add, That *Jacobus Capellus* thinks, the reading of the Law, on every Sabbath and Feſtival, (which was divided for that Purpoſe, into ſeveral Sections) was as old as the Time of *Joſhua*; but was neglected in the Reign of wicked Kings, particularly in that of *Ahaz*. If it were again reſtored by *Hezekiah*, (which is uncertain) it was again aboliſhed by *Manaſſeh*; and perhaps not renewed when he repented; howſoever, diſcontinued again by *Amon:* So that both Prieſts and People omitting the reading of the Law, both publickly and privately, (for the publick Omiſſion cauſed a private Neglect) no Wonder, that upon finding the Book of the Law, and hearing it read, they were ſtartled at it, as if one were riſen from the Dead. *Hiſtoria ſacra & exotica, ad Annum Mundi* 3372.

Ver. 20. *And the King commanded Hilkiah, and Ahikam, the Son of Shaphan, and Abdon, the Son of Micah, and Shaphan the Scribe, and Aſaiah, a Servant of the King's, ſaying,*] He that is called here *Abdon*, is in 2 *Kings* xxii. 12. called *Achbor*; otherwiſe there is no Difference between this Verſe and that.

Ver. 21. *Go, enquire of the LORD for me, and for them that are left in Iſrael, and in Judah, concerning the Words of the Book that is found: for great is the Wrath of the LORD that is poured out upon us, becauſe our Fathers have not kept the Word of the LORD, to do after all that is written in this Book.*

Ver. 22. *And Hilkiah, and they that the King had appointed, went to Huldah the Propheteſs, the Wife of Shallum, the Son of Tikvath, the Son of Haſrah, Keeper of the Ward-robe (now ſhe dwelt in Jeruſalem, in the College) and they ſpake to her to that Effect.*

Ver. 23. *And ſhe anſwered them, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, Tell ye the Man that ſent you to me,*

Ver. 24. *Thus ſaith the LORD, Behold, I will bring Evil upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants thereof, even all the Curſes that are written in the Book which they have read before the King of Judah:*

Ver. 25. *Becauſe they have forſaken me, and have burned Incenſe unto other Gods, that they might provoke me to Anger with all the Works of their Hands; therefore my Wrath ſhall be poured out upon this Place, and ſhall not be quenched.*

Ver. 26. *And as for the King of Judah, who ſent you to enquire of the LORD, ſo ſhall ye ſay unto him, Thus ſaith the LORD God of Iſrael, concerning the Words which thou haſt heard,*

Ver. 27. *Becauſe thine Heart was tender, and thou didſt humble thyſelf before God, when thou heardeſt his Words againſt this Place, and againſt the Inhabitants thereof, and humbledſt thyſelf before me, and didſt rend thy Clothes, and weep before me; I have even heard thee alſo, ſaith the LORD.*

Ver. 28. *Behold, I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered to thy Grave in Peace, neither ſhall thine Eyes ſee all the Evil that I will bring upon this Place, and upon the Inhabitants of the ſame. So they brought the King Word again.*

There is little Difference in the Words between theſe Verſes, and 2 *Kings* xxii. 14, 15, &c. and none in the Senſe: He that is called there *Harhas*, is here called *Haſrah*, (ſome pronouncing his Name one Way, and ſome another.) And the *Targum* tranſlate thoſe Words, *v.* 27.

Thou didſt humble thyſelf before God, &c. in this Manner: *Thou didſt humble thyſelf before the WORD of the LORD, when thou didſt hear his Words againſt this Place*; which plainly ſuppoſe the WORD to be a Divine Perſon, who ſpake to *Moſes*, and gave him the Law.

Ver. 29. *Then the King ſent and gathered together all the Elders of Judah and Jeruſalem.*] See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 1.

Ver. 30. *And the King went up into the Houſe of the LORD, and all the Men of Judah, and the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, and the Prieſts and the Levites,*] In 2 *Kings* xxiii. 2. it is ſaid, the *Prieſts and the Prophets* went up: The *Levites* are omitted there, as the Prophets are omitted here; but both make up a compleat Narrative of the Perſons that went up to the Houſe of the LORD; for among the *Prieſts* and *Levites* there were ſome Prophets, ſuch as *Jeremiah*, *Zephaniah*, and others.

And all the People, Great and Small: and he read in their Ears all the Words of the Book of the Covenant, that was found in the Houſe of the LORD.] One cannot think that *Joſiah*, and all the Nation, were wholly Strangers to the Words contained in this Book, (tho' perhaps they ſeldom had read it) who conſiders, that *Jeremiah* and other Prophets were now living, who were very converſant in this Book, and inſtructed the People out of it; but they did not ſufficiently attend to the Words of it, and therefore *Joſiah* gathered a ſolemn Aſſembly on Purpoſe, that they might hear it read, and be moved to obſerve that which moſt affected him: But it is not to be ſuppoſed, that the whole Book was all read at one Time, but by Parcels at ſeveral Times, that they might conſider and weigh it: Eſpecially that Paſſage in *Deut.* xxviii. 38. where *Moſes* foretold the Captivity of *Samaria*, and afterwards of *Judah* and their King; which *Kimchi* thinks, *Hilkiah* might bid *Shaphan* take ſpecial notice of and read it to the King; which, (if it be true) no Doubt, he remarked to the People, that, if it were poſſible, they might be brought to Repentance, and prevent the great Calamities, which were threatned to them.

Ver. 31. *And the King ſtood in his Place, and made a Covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his Commandments, and his Teſtimonies, and his Statutes, with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, to perform the Words of the Covenant which are written in this Book.*] See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 3.

Ver. 32. *And he cauſed all that were preſent in Jeruſalem and Benjamin to ſtand to it. And the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem did according to the Covenant of God, the God of their Fathers.*] He did not compel them, but they offered themſelves freely, upon his Perſuaſion, to renew their Covenant with God; and promiſed to be firm to it: Which, perhaps, at that Time they really reſolved, tho' they ſoon revolted.

Ver. 33. *And Joſiah took away all the Abominations out of all the Countries that pertained to the Children of Iſrael,*] This is more largely related in 2 *Kings* xxiii. 4, 5, 6. and the following Verſes.

And made all that were preſent in Iſrael to ſerve, even to ſerve the LORD their God.] He perſuaded them to perform all Acts of religious Worſhip unto God, and unto none elſe.

And all his Days they departed not from following the LORD, the God of their Fathers.] But tho' he ſuppreſſed all external Idolatry, yet in their Hearts they ſtrongly inclined to it, and often practiſed it; as appears from *Jer.* iii. 10. xxv. 3, 4, &c.

CHAP. XXXV.

Ver. 1. *MOreover, Joſiah kept a Paſſover unto the LORD in Jeruſalem:*] This was in the eighteenth Year of his Reign, immediately after he had made a glorious Reformation, by aboliſhing all Idolatry: And accordingly it is related next to that in 2 *Kings* xxiii. 21, 22, 23. but very briefly, as the other is very largely.

And they killed the Paſſover on the fourteenth Day of the firſt Month.] At the Time preſcribed by the Law, *Exod.* xii. 6. For there was no Need, it ſeems, to adjourn it till the ſecond Month, as they did in the Days of *Hezekiah*.

Ver. 2. *And he ſet the Prieſts in their Charges, and encouraged them to the Service of the Houſe of the LORD,*] To do their Duty in their ſeveral Places, ſo that nothing might be omitted, which was requir'd to be done at this great Feſtival.

Ver. 3. *And ſaid unto the Levites that taught all Iſrael which were holy unto the LORD,*] That is, the *Levites* were holy unto the LORD; and therefore may be rendered, *and were holy*, &c. *i. e.* peculiarly dedicated to this Service of miniſtering to the Prieſts, and inſtructing the People.

Put the holy Ark in the Houſe, which Solomon the Son of David, King of Iſrael, did build;] *Jarchi* thinks, that *Manaſſeh*, or his Son *Amon*, had removed the Ark from its Place, as other enormous Things had been done by ſuch wicked Kings, 2 *Kings* xvi. 14. and xxviii. 24. of this Book, which may give a more probable Senſe of thoſe Words, xxxiii. 23. that *Amon treſpaſſed more and more*, than that which ſome of the *Jews* mention: For it was a great Addition to his Sin, if he diſplaced the Ark. Other *Jews* indeed interpret it after another Manner, and make a Fable out of theſe Words, as *Conſt. L'Empereur* obſerves upon *Codex Middoth*, pag. 97. and Dr. *Lightfoot*, of the *Temple*, pag. 91. But nothing is more natural than to think, that *Hilkiah* himſelf had removed the Ark, while the Temple was repairing, there being Defects in the moſt holy Place as well as other Parts of it: And it was not fit to let the Ark be expoſed to the Workmen. Yet *Jacobus Capellus* thinks it better to ſay the Word *Tenu* ought not to be tranſlated, *put*, but *keep*, or *look after* the Ark in the Houſe which *Solomon* built: For now, that they were eaſed of carrying it on their Shoulders, they ought to employ themſelves more carefully in all other Offices about it; *ad Annum Mundi* 3374.

It ſhall not be a Burden upon your Shoulders:] That is, hereafter; for they were to carry it to a ſettled Place, there to remain; and then they would be obliged no further to bear it on their

Shoulders, as they had done before it was fixed in the Temple.

Serve now the LORD your God, and his People Iſrael,] Serve God in Singing, and Playing upon Inſtruments, when the Sacrifices of God's People are offered, and you ſhall be excuſed from your former Burdens.

Ver. 4. *And prepare yourſelves by the Houſes of your Fathers, after your Courſes, according to the Writing of David, King of Iſrael,*] See 1 *Chron.* xxiii. and xxiv. and the following Chapters.

And according to the Writing of Solomon his Son.] See 2 *Chron.* viii. 14.

Ver. 5. *And ſtand in the holy Place*] In the Court of the Prieſts, where they were wont to ſtand, when they miniſtred unto God.

According to the Diviſions of the Families of the Fathers of your Brethren the People,] Who were to bring for every Family a Lamb, as *Moſes* commanded, *Exod.* xii. 3.

And after the Diviſion of the Families of the Levites.] Who were appointed to kill the Lamb for them.

Ver. 6. *So kill the Paſſover, and ſanctify your ſelves, and prepare your Brethren,*] That they might be capable to eat of it.

That they may do according to the Word of the LORD, by the Hand of Moſes.] Who commanded it to be eaten in one Houſe, *Exod.* xii. 46. He ſeems to require, that as the reſt of the Tribes came according to their Families, into which they were divided; ſo the *Levites* would give them a good Example, and come according to their Families.

Ver. 7. *And Joſiah gave to the People of the Flock, Lambs and Kids,*] For the Lamb might be taken either from the Sheep, or from the Goats, *Exod.* xii. 5.

All for the Paſſover-offerings, for all that were preſent, to the Number of thirty thouſand,] That the People might be at no Charge; at leaſt thirty thouſand Families were provided for at the King's Charge.

And three thouſand Bullocks: theſe were of the King's Subſtance.] Theſe Bullocks were for Offerings upon the ſeven Days of unleavened Bread, which followed the Paſſover.

Ver. 8. *And his Princes gave willingly unto the People, to the Prieſts, and to the Levites:*] As *Joſiah* provided Paſchal Lambs for the People, ſo ſome great Men provided not only for them, but for the *Prieſts* and the *Levites*; that they alſo might offer without Charge.

Hilkiah, and Zechariah, and Jehiel,] It appears by theſe Words, that the Princes here mentioned, were not Rulers of the People, but the Chief of the Prieſts: For *Hilkiah* was the High-Prieſt; and the other two were the Heads of the two great Families of the Prieſts, *Eleazar* and *Ithamar*; who are called the *Captains of the Hoſt*, as I obſerved upon 1 *Chron.* xxv. 1. See my *Annotations* there. This is a little more largely and diſtinctly expreſſed by *Bertram*, in his *Republica Judaica*, Cap. xv. where he ſaith, *Zechariah* was the Chief among the *ſecond* Prieſts of the Race of *Eleazar*, who was properly called *Nagid*, the Captain of the Temple; as *Jehiel* was the moſt illuſtrious Perſon among the *ſecond* Prieſts, who were the Progeny of *Ithamar*, and was properly called *Pakid*; and was ſet over the *Gerſhonites* and *Merarites*, as *Zechariah* was over the *Kohathites*.

Rulers of the Houſe of God,] Who were the ſame with thoſe who in the *New Teſtament* are called the ἡγούμενοι of the Temple; who governed the reſt of the Prieſts. So *Bertam, de Republica Judaica*, p. 296, 300.

Gave unto the Prieſts for the Paſſover-offerings, two thouſand and ſix hundred ſmall Cattle,] That is, Lambs and Kids.

And three hundred Oxen.] That through the whole Feſtival they might be able to rejoice with their Brethren.

Ver. 9. *Conaniah alſo, and Shemaiah, and Nethaneel, his Brethren, and Haſhabiah, and Jeiel, and Jozabad, Chief of the Levites,*] Who were Men of Eſtates, as well as in great Offices among their Brethren.

Gave unto the Levites for Paſſover-offerings, five thouſand ſmall Cattle, and five hundred Oxen.] That they might be provided for, as well as the Prieſts, to make it a Time of univerſal Joy.

Ver. 10. *So the Service was prepared, and the Prieſts ſtood in their Place, and the Levites in their Courſes, according to the King's Commandment.*] All Things were diſpoſed for the offering the Paſchal Sacrifice; the *Prieſts* ſtanding in their Place, and the *Levites* attending them.

Ver. 11. *And they killed the Paſſover,*] That is, the *Levites* killed the Lamb, and gave the Blood to the *Prieſts*.

And the Prieſts ſprinkled the Blood from their Hands,] For they alone could perform this Part of the Service.

And the Levites flayed them.] That the *Prieſts* might have nothing to do, but to ſprinkle the Blood of every one of them; which took up a great deal of Time. See xxix. 34.

Ver. 12. *And they removed the Burnt-offerings, that they might give according to the Diviſions of the Families of the People, to offer unto the LORD, as it is written in the Book of Moſes:*] It ſeems, ſome of the Lambs were given by *Joſiah* for Burnt-offerings; and theſe they diſpatched as faſt as they could, that they might give the Paſchal Lamb to every Family according to their Diviſions, after it had been offered to the LORD: For this was the principal Offering upon this Day.

And ſo they did with the Oxen.] All of which were not given for Peace-offerings, but ſome for Burnt-offerings; which they alſo offered as faſt as they could, that they might not hinder the Paſchal Lamb from being offered.

Ver. 13. *And they roaſted the Paſſover with Fire, according to the Ordinance:*] See *Exodus* xii. 8, 9.

But the other holy Offerings ſod they in Pots, and in Caldrons, and in Pans,] Tho' the Paſchal Lamb was to be roaſted; yet the other Euchariſtical Sacrifices, which attended it, (as the *Targum* expounds it) might be boiled in Water.

And divided them ſpeedily among all the People.] Gave every one of the People a Portion of the Oxen, that were offered for Peace-offerings; and did it ſo ſpeedily, that they had

 Time

Time to take Care of themſelves, as it here follows.

Ver. 14. *And afterwards they made ready for themſelves, and for the Prieſts: Becauſe the Prieſts the Sons of Aaron were buſied in offering Burnt-offerings and the Fat until Night; therefore the Levites prepared for themſelves, and for the Prieſts the Sons of Aaron.*] This is a great Inſtance of the Zeal and Diligence of the Prieſts, for whom the principal Perſons among them had made a large Proviſion; but they did not eat of the Paſchal Lamb, nor of the Peace-offerings till Night, being employed in offering Burnt-ſacrifices, and burning the Fat till that Time; againſt which the *Levites* prepared for them and for themſelves.

Ver. 15. *And the Singers the Sons of Aſaph were in their Place, according to the Commandment of David, and Aſaph, and Heman, and Jeduthun the King's Seer; and the Porters waited at every Gate, they might not depart from their Service, for their Brethren the Levites prepared for them.*] This ſeems to import, that the Singing and Muſick continued till all the Sacrifices were offered, that is, till Night; and none were ſuffered to depart from the Service, the Porters ſtanding at every Gate to hinder them, if they attempted it. And their Brethren, who were not Singers, took Care to provide for them their Portion, when they had done.

Ver. 16. *So all the Service of the LORD was prepared the ſame Day to keep the Paſſover, and to offer Burnt-offerings upon the Altar of the LORD, according to the Commandment of King Joſiah.*

Ver. 17. *And the Children of Iſrael that were preſent, kept the Paſſover at that Time, and the Feaſt of unleavened Bread ſeven Days.*] Theſe two Verſes are a ſummary Account of what went before, that the whole Solemnity was performed in every Part of it, according to the King's Direction.

Ver. 18. *And there was no Paſſover like to that kept in Iſrael from the Days of Samuel the Prophet,*] We do not read in the Book of *Samuel* of any Paſſover kept in his Days; therefore the Book wherein this was recorded is loſt, as many other Books of the Prophets are.

Neither did all the Kings of Iſrael keep ſuch a Paſſover as Joſiah kept, and the Prieſts and the Levites, and all Judah and Iſrael that were preſent, and the Inhabitauts of Jeruſalem.] The laſt Clauſe ſhews wherein his Paſſover went beyond all other. *David* and *Solomon* were greater Kings than he, and in ſeveral Reſpects kept greater Feſtivals; the Number of People, while the Ten Tribes were united to the other two, being greater, and the Multitude of Sacrifices alſo greater; but in this *Joſiah* excelled them all, that being nothing ſo rich, he was notwithſtanding ſo liberal, as to provide all the Sacrifices for the Prieſts, the *Levites*, and the People, at this Feaſt.

Ver. 19. *In the eighteenth Year of the Reign of Joſiah was this Paſſover kept.*] In the ſame Year wherein he repaired the Houſe of God, and the Book of the Law was found and brought to him; which, it is likely, put him in mind of this Duty, *ch.* xxxiv. 8.

Ver. 20. *After all this, when Joſiah had prepared the Temple,*] Some time after the Temple was repaired, and made fit for the Service of God, and they expected great Happineſs to enſue ſuch pious Works, there was an unexpected Change: Which is here noted, to teach us not to be confident, nor raſhly enterprize any thing, remembring the Viciſſitude of all earthly Things.

Necho King of Egypt] Whom the *Targum* calls *Pharaoh the Lame*, and ſo *Kimchi*, who ſaith he was lame in his Feet, and thence called by the Name of *Claudus*, as the *Romans* would have expreſſed it; who, from the like Diſpoſition of their Bodies, gave Names to their Emperors; ſuch as *Craſſus*, *Barbaroſa*, and others, as *Beckius* obſerves. This Lameneſs proceeded from ſome Wound he had received, for *Necho* ſignifies *wounded*.

Came up to fight againſt Carchemiſh by Euphrates:] The City *Carcuſium* ſtood upon that River, and belonged to the *Aſſyrians*, with whoſe King *Necho* came to fight, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 29.

And Joſiah went out againſt him.] See what I have noted there; unto which I ſhall here add, that by this it ſeems probable *Joſiah* was in Friendſhip with the King of *Aſſyria*, to whoſe Aſſiſtance he ſeems to have voluntarily gone with his Forces, by giving a Diverſion to the *Egyptians*. Certain it is, the *Aſſyrian* Empire was not yet fallen, for in *Joſiah*'s Days the Prophet *Zephaniah* foretels the Deſtruction of *Nineveh*, *ch.* ii. 13, *&c.* Now *Joſiah* reigned in the Time of *Cyaxarus* King of the *Medes*, by whom *Nineveh* was deſtroyed, as *Herodotus* tells us. But it was then in a flouriſhing Condition, for *Phraortis*, the Predeceſſor of *Cyaxarus*, not contented with the Kingdom of the *Medes*, but invading the *Aſſyrians*, after he had ſubdued the *Perſians*, was defeated, and loſt a vaſt Army before *Nineveh:* Which *Hermannus Conringius* thinks might poſſibly move *Joſiah* to court the King of *Aſſyria*'s Favour, by oppoſing himſelf to the King of *Egypt*, when he came to invade him. But a moſt judicious Perſon in this Kind of Learning (whom I have oft conſulted) thinks this all wrong; and that tho' *Nineveh* was not yet deſtroyed, yet the Empire was, in the eighteenth Year of *Joſiah*; from which ſome Governor got ſome little Part, and kept *Nineveh* till it was deſtroyed by *Nabopollaſſar*, in the firſt Year of his Reign. Therefore I ſhould have ſaid *Joſiah* was a Friend of the King of *Babylon*, rather than of the King of *Aſſyria*. But I muſt leave thoſe that are better ſkilled than I am in theſe Matters to judge of them.

Ver. 21. *But he ſent Embaſſadors to him, ſaying, What have I to do with thee thou King of Judah? I come not againſt thee this Day, but againſt the Houſe wherewith I have War:*] He had no Controverſy with him, and therefore prays him not to meddle in this War.

For God commanded me to make haſte:] And therefore deſires him not to give him any Stop in his Expedition. Some think he only pretended this, becauſe he knew *Joſiah* had a great Reverence to God, and in Obedience to him,

might desist from his Purpose: And the *Targum*, with some of the *Jews*, think he calls his own Idol by the Name of God; tho' *Kimchi* thinks he speaks of the true God, who perhaps admonished him in a Dream, as he did *Abimelech*, or sent him such a Message by the Prophet *Jeremiah* (as *Grotius* supposes) many of whose Prophecies are directed to foreign Nations. Or, perhaps he meant, that he felt a strong Impulse unto this Undertaking, which he took to be from God.

Forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not.] Of which there was great Danger, if he opposed the divine Command.

Ver. 22. *Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his Face from him, but disguised himself that he might fight with him,*] And not be known to be the King of *Judah*.

And hearkened not unto the Words of Necho from the Mouth of God,] The *Targum* thinks that *Josiah* regarded not what *Necho* said, because he thought he spake only from his Idol, for he could not imagine that the God of *Israel* had spoken to him. But these Words import the contrary, and therefore *Josiah* should at least have enquired of God, whether it was his Mind that he should not oppose *Necho*.

And came to fight in the Valley of Megiddo.] A Place in the Tribe of *Manasseh*, *Josh.* xvii. 11. So that *Josiah* may seem to have come against him, because he passed thro' his Country without his Leave: But I rather think, as I said before, he was in the Interests of the King of *Assyria*. I observ'd upon 2 *Kings* xxiii. 29. that *Herodotus* tells the same Story, but mistakes the Name of *Megiddo*, and calls it *Magdolim*; which was a great City in *Egypt*, better known to him than the Cities in *Syria* or *Phœnicia*. He also adds, that after this Battle the King of *Egypt* took the great City in *Syria* called *Cadytus*; which *Herm. Conringius* thinks was the Name of *Jerusalem* among the old *Egyptians*: *Adversaria Chronolog.* Cap. xv. I think *Jacobus Capellus* hath well observed (in his *Hist. sacra & exotica*) that the *Egyptians* being a vain People, concealed from *Herodotus*, when he came to consult the Affairs of their Country, many Things that were true, and imposed upon his Belief many Things that were false. For Example, they did not tell him a Word of the Victory which *Nebuchadnezzar* got over *Pharaoh Necho* at *Euphrates*; but gloried in this Victory over the *Syrians*; *ad A. Mundi* 3425.

Ver. 23. *And the Archers shot at King Josiah; and the King said to his Servants, have me away, for I am sore wounded.*] His Disguise did not secure him; for still he appeared, I suppose, as a great Commander, at whom the Enemy would sooner aim than at common Men.

Ver. 24. *His Servants therefore took him out of that Chariot, and put him in the second Chariot that he had;*] As all great Captains have led Horses, that if one fail they may mount another (which was the Custom in Wars in ancient Time, as *Bochart* shews in his *Hieroz.* P. i. Cap. 2 & 9.) so when they fought in Chariots they had an empty one following them, into which they might go if the other proved unserviceable or inconvenient.

And they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the Sepulchres of his Fathers: And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.] After the Example of the Prophet *Jeremiah*: For as bad as they shewed themselves afterward to be, they had some Sense of the great Worth of this Prince.

Ver. 25. *And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah, and all the singing Men and singing Women spake of Josiah in their Lamentations to this Day,*] Whensoever they bewailed any Calamity, they mentioned that as the greatest that had befallen them.

And made them an Ordinance in Israel:] That they should never forget this fatal Stroke, after which they never saw good Days. This Statute was made by the supreme Authority, and was approved by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, who joined in this Lamentation; which warrants Christian Kings and Princes to appoint Days for the yearly Commemoration of great Calamities, or great Deliverances.

And behold they are written in the Lamentations.] *Josephus*, in his tenth Book of the *Antiquities of the Jews*, Chap. vi. imagines the Book of the *Lamentations of Jeremiah*, which now remains in the Bible, contains the mournful Ditties sung at *Josiah*'s Funeral, and in After-times; which Opinion S. *Hierom* follows; at least in those Words, *Lament.* iv. 20. *R. Solomon* thinks *Josiah* was bewailed; but it is manifest all this is a Mistake, for that Book was written after the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, which is lamented in it, and the Words now mentioned plainly relate to *Zedekiah*, not to *Josiah*; who was not *taken* but killed. Therefore the *Lamentations* here mentioned are lost, which were written immediately after *Josiah* was slain.

Ver. 26. *Now the rest of the Acts of Josiah, and his Goodness,* &c.] That is, his Piety, or (as we translate it in the Margin) his *Kindnesses*, that is, his great Love to his People, of which there are great Instances in the foregoing Part of this History.

According to that which was written in the Law of the LORD,] Which he made his Rule in all that he did.

Ver. 27. *And his Deeds first and last, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah.*] It seems the *Israelites*, who were left in the Land of *Samaria*, continued to keep Records of what was done in the Land of *Judah* itself.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Ver. 1. *THen the People of the Land took Jehoahaz the Son of Josiah, and made him King in his Father's stead in Jerusalem.*] Not by Right of Succession, but by a Faction of the People.

Ver. 2. *Jehoahaz was twenty and three Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned three Months in Jerusalem.*] See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 30, 31.

Ver. 3. *And the King of Egypt put him down at Jerusalem, and condemned the Land in an hundred Talents of Silver, and a Talent of Gold.*] He heard, it is possible, that he meditated Revenge for the Death of his Father, and therefore deposed him; and also set a great Fine upon

upon the People who joined with him. See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 33.

Ver. 4. *And the King of Egypt made Eliakim his Brother King over Judah and Jeruſalem, and turned his Name to Jehoiakim.*] As a Mark he was made King by him, and owed his Dignity to his Favour. So *Pharaoh* changed the Name of *Joſeph*; and *Nebuchadnezzar*, the Names of *Daniel* and his three Companions.

And Necho took Jehoahaz his Brother, and carried him to Egypt.] See 2 *Kings* xxii. 24.

Ver. 5. *Jehoiakim was twenty and five Years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven Years in Jeruſalem: And he did that which was evil in the Sight of the* LORD *his God.*] See 2 *Kings* xxiii. 36, 37.

Ver. 6. *Againſt him came up Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon,*] The firſt Words, *againſt him*, are emphatical; for when he came up before, he did not come up properly againſt *Jeruſalem*, but againſt *Pharaoh Necho*; and therefore it is ſaid, not that he came up againſt that City, but merely that he *came up into the Land*, *Jerem.* xxxv. 11. when he made *Jehoiakim* his Servant three Years. So that this Coming up had no other Effect but to make him tributary to *Nebuchadnezzar*.

And bound him in Fetters to carry him to Babylon.] See 2 *Kings* xxiv. 1, *&c.* The *Targum* expounds it, he put brazen Chains upon his Hands and Fetters upon his Legs. But he did not carry him to *Babylon*, for *Nebuchadnezzar* altered his Mind, and permitted him to reign at *Jeruſalem* as his Tributary; tho' he carried away, as it follows, ſome of the Veſſels of the Temple, and alſo certain choice Perſons, as we read in the firſt of *Daniel*.

Ver. 7. *Nebuchadnezzar alſo carried of the Veſſels of the Houſe of the* LORD *to Babylon, and put them in his Temple at Babylon.*] He carried away a great many in the next King's Reign (2 *Kings* xxiv. 13, 14.) but it ſeems he begun to do it in this. And they were ſo hardened, as to believe thoſe falſe Prophets, who aſſured them theſe Veſſels ſhould ſhortly be brought again from *Babylon*, and give no Credit to *Jeremiah*, who told them they propheſied a Lie: For theſe Veſſels ſhould be ſo far from being brought from *Babylon*, that all the remaining Veſſels ſhould be carried after them, and there be till the Day when God viſited them. See *Jerem.* xxvii. 16, 17, 21, 22.

Ver. 8. *Now the reſt of the Acts of Jehoiakim, and his Abominations which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they are written in the Book of the Kings of Iſrael and Judah.*] There was a Book, it is likely, that had this Title; but what was ſaid there *to be found of him*, is not here mentioned. The *Targum* ſaith, *the Iniquity that was found in him.* But what was that Iniquity? To this they anſwer in the *Talmud*, that he had the Name of an Idol in his Forehead: Or, as others ſay, there were found in his Body certain Marks and Impreſſions in Honour of Idols. So St. *Hierom*, He had made thoſe Marks in his Body, which God had forbidden in *Levit.* xix. 28. See our learned Dr. *Spencer*, L. ii. *De Leg. & Ritibus Hebr.* Cap. xiv. Sect. 2. But there are thoſe that think it is meant of the innocent Blood that he ſhed, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 4. But that was the Sin of *Manaſſeh*; therefore the plaineſt Meaning is, that he was found guilty of diſloyal Intentions againſt the King of *Babylon*, which he concealed a great while, but at laſt they were diſcovered, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 1.

And Jehoiachin his Son reigned in his ſtead.

Ver. 9. *Jehoiachin was eight Years old when he began to reign,*] In 2 *Kings* xxiv. 8. it is ſaid, that he was *eighteen Years old* when he began to reign. See my *Annotations* on that Place: Unto which may be added, that *Abarbinel* thinks there is no Difference between theſe two Places; but that the Word for *eight* is governed by another that is wanting, ſignifying *ten*. But the common Solution is, that when his Father had reigned one Year, he made his Son joint Sovereign with him, that the People might be ſettled in their Affection to him, before he left the Throne; which was ten Years after. So long he reigned with his Father, and eight Years alone, which made eighteen Years in all. See *Buxtorf* in his *Vindiciæ Hebr. Veritatis*, Pars ii. Cap. 2. p. 408. But there are thoſe who take the Meaning to be, that he was eight Years old, when *he* (that is, his Father) began to reign: Or, as our Primate *Uſher* thinks, it was the eighth Year, not of his Age, but of the Captivity of *Babylon*, to which ſome principal Perſons were obnoxious; *Chronologia Sacra*, pag. *ult.* But ſome great Men think here is an Error of the Copiſt, for he was *eighteen* Years old.

And he reigned three Months and ten Days in Jeruſalem, and he did that which was evil in the Sight of the LORD.] It ſeems *Nebuchadnezzar* repented of his making him King; being afraid, as *Kimchi* thinks, that by the evil Counſel of his Courtiers, he would be perſuaded to rebel, after the Example of *Jehoiakim*. *Jacobus Capellus* thinks the People ſet him up to be their King, and therefore he reſolved to dethrone him, ſending his Servants againſt him, and then coming himſelf, and taking *Jeruſalem*. See 2 *Kings* xxiv. 10, 11.

Ver. 10. *And when the Year was expired, King Nebuchadnezzar ſent and brought him to Babylon, with the goodly Veſſels of the Houſe of the* LORD, *and made Zedekiah his Brother King over Judah and Jeruſalem.*] See 2 *Kings* xxiv. 11, 12. For God had threatened none of *Jehoiakim*'s Seed ſhould ſit upon the Throne of *David*. They might be ſet upon his Throne, as the ſame *Capellus* obſerves, but not remain or continue poſſeſſed of it. *Sedere enim dicuntur, non tranſitoria, ſed quæ aliquamdiu pedem figunt*, ad A. M. 3399.

Ver. 11. *Zedekiah was one and twenty Years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven Years in Jeruſalem.*] See 2 *Kings* xxiv. 18.

Ver. 12. *And he did that which was evil in the Sight of the* LORD *his God, and humbled not himſelf before Jeremiah the Prophet, ſpeaking from the Mouth of the* LORD.] From the Mouth of the *WORD of the* LORD, ſaith the *Targum*: Which ſhews, that by the WORD here he meant a divine Perſon. It is a wonderful Thing, that having ſeen ſo many of the

People carried away captive, together with their King *Jehoiakim*, they ſhould not at all relent; but go on in thoſe Ways which had led others to Deſtruction. But ſo incorrigible were this People, that *Ezekiel* tells us, they who were carried away captive (among whom he was one) perſiſted in their Rebellion, and were not at all amended. His whole Book is full of Complaints of their Impenitence. And in the *thirteenth* Chapter he tells us, they ſtill entertained falſe Prophets, (unto whom they hearkened rather than to *Ezekiel*) who ſaw Viſions of Peace for *Jeruſalem*, when there was no Peace; as he there ſpeaks, *v.* 16. that is, made the People believe, *Jeruſalem* ſhould not be taken; and ſo hardened their Hearts in their obſtinate Wickedneſs.

Ver. 13. *And he alſo rebelled againſt King Nebuchadnezzar, who made him ſwear by God:*] That he would be true and faithful to him.

But he ſtiffened his Neck, and hardened his Heart from turning unto the LORD God of Iſrael.] His Wickedneſs was ſo great, that God gave him up to commit this further Crime of Perjury, to his utter Ruin, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 20.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, all the chief of the Prieſts and the People tranſgreſſed very much, after all the Abominations of the Heathen, and polluted the Houſe of the LORD, which he had hallowed in Jeruſalem.*] There was ſuch an univerſal Corruption and that to ſuch an abominable Height, that there was no Hope of their growing better, they being perfectly ripe for utter Deſtruction.

Ver. 15. *And the LORD God of their Fathers ſent to them by his Meſſengers, riſing up betimes, and ſending;*] To *riſe betimes* ſignifies in Scripture to do a Thing with Care, Diligence and Affection: For good Huſbands, eſpecially Fathers of Families (from whom this Expreſſion is borrowed) were wont to get up early to look after their Buſineſs, and to quicken and encourage their Servants to their Duty. Such was the Compaſſion and Care of God for his People, that he gave them ſeaſonable, timely and early Admonitions to their Duty, and Notice of their Danger, before it was too late.

Becauſe he had Compaſſion on his People, and on his Dwelling-place:] To this Compaſſion they owed a Succeſſion of Prophets in every King's Reign, as I have before noted; who moſt earneſtly called upon them to reform. Yet, if they did in a good King's Reign grow ſomething better, they immediately revolted as ſoon as he was dead, and a bad one came in his Place. Such a ſtrange Propenſion they had to Idolatry! Which is the more wonderful, when we conſider, that this Nation, which was ſo prone to Idolatry, when they had ſo many Prophets among them to admoniſh them againſt it, were not at all inclined to it, when they had no more any Prophets to inſtruct them, nor any Miracles wrought among them; that is, after their Return from the Captivity of *Babylon*, when Prophecy in a little Time ceaſed; and yet they were ſtedfaſt in the Service of God, according to the Law of *Moſes*. The beſt Account that I am able to give of this, is, that before the Captivity ſufficient Care was not taken for the building of Synagogues for the Teaching of the Law, if there were any at all; for we find no Mention of them in theſe Books; whereas they abounded in every Place after the Captivity; inſomuch that the *Jews* ſay, there were ſeveral hundreds in *Jeruſalem* alone, wherein the Law was read and taught; which was a moſt powerful Means to keep them conſtant to the Religion they profeſſed; for, as *Joſephus* reports, by this Means the People came to be ſo acquainted with their Laws, that if any Perſon aſked any of them concerning them, ῥᾷον ἂν εἴποι πάντα, ἢ τὸνομα τὸ ἑαυτοῦ, *He would more readily tell every Thing, than his own Name.*

Ver. 16. *But they mocked the Meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his Words, and miſuſed his Prophets,*] As the Corruption was univerſal, ſo they were incorrigible; not only rejecting, but deſpiſing, and ſetting at nought the Means of their Cure.

Until the Wrath of the LORD roſe againſt his People, till there was no Remedy.] Till the implacable Wrath of God came upon them; there being no Hope they would repent, and be healed, but they muſt die and periſh.

Ver. 17. *Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees, who ſlew their young Men with the Sword in the Houſe of their Sanctuary,*] Unto which, it is likely, they fled for Safety, after the Manner of all Nations, who took their holy Places to be inviolable; but they found no Protection there, the *Chaldees* being a rough Nation, and having no Regard to them.

And had no Compaſſion upon young Man, or Maiden, old Man, or him that ſtooped for Age: he gave them all into his Hand.] To kill them, or ſell them for Slaves, as he thought good.

Ver. 18. *And all the Veſſels of the Houſe of God, great and ſmall,*] Which are numbred in the next Book, *Ezra* i. 9, 10, 11.

And the Treaſures of the Houſe of the LORD, and the Treaſures of the King, and of his Princes; all theſe he brought to Babylon.] The former Treaſures, by a ſpecial Providence of God, were preſerved, and reſtored in the Reign of *Cyrus* to the Houſe of the LORD; but the other, it is likely, were look'd upon as Spoil, and ſpent by the King and his great Men.

Ver. 19. *And they burnt the Houſe of God, and brake down the Wall of Jeruſalem, and burnt all the Palaces thereof with Fire, and deſtroyed all the goodly Veſſels thereof.*] 2 *Kings* xxv. 9, 10. But it is a very abſurd Suppoſition of ſome, who think, that all the ſacred Books were now alſo burnt, and reſtored again by *Ezra* after the Captivity, out of his Memory. For who can believe, that among all the Prieſts and Prophets too, that were carried captive, none of them ſhould take Care to carry a Bible with them? *Jeremiah* alſo remaining in the Land, we may be confident was not without it. It is plain alſo, that *Daniel* had his Prophecy, and the Book of *Moſes*, in *Babylon*, *Dan.* ix. 2, 3. And *Joſephus* ſays, that *Cyrus* was ſhewn the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, wherein his Name was expreſly mentioned; which ſhews, they had Copies of theſe Books in their Captivity. But this extravagant Fable was brought upon the Stage by the Apocryphal *Eſdras*, *Chap.* xiv. and was not known till the Beginning of the

third Century, when that Author, half *Jew* half *Chriſtian*, lived.

Ver. 20. *And them that had eſcaped from the Sword, carried he away to Babylon; where they were Servants to him and his Sons, until the Reign of the Kingdom of Perſia.*] Which gave them Liberty to return to their Country. Such was the Law of War in ancient Times; all the People of a City or Country that were conquered, became Slaves to the Conqueror; and appertained to the publick or private Perſons, who had taken them, according to the Laws ſettled in every Nation for the Dividend of the Booty. Thus we find at the Sacking of *Troy*, all that remained alive, were made Slaves, even Queen *Hecuba*, and her Daughters. The *Greek* and *Roman* Hiſtory are full of ſuch Examples.

Ver. 21. *To fulfil the Word of the LORD by the Mouth of Jeremiah, until the Land had enjoyed her Sabbaths: for as long as ſhe lay deſolate, ſhe kept Sabbath,*] Becauſe the *Jews*, among other Precepts, had violated that of letting their Land reſt from ploughing and ſowing every ſeventh Year, God gave their Land a long Sabbath, or Reſt, for no leſs than ten times ſeven Years; which *Jeremiah* threatened, *ch.* xxv. 9, 12. & xxix. 10. If it be true, that they had neglected this Law for the Space of four hundred and thirty Years; but had ploughed their Ground, *&c.* in the ſeventh, as well as in all other Years; then the Judgment of God upon them was very remarkable, in making their Ground reſt and be free from Tillage, juſt as long as it ſhould have been, if they had obſerved his Law: For in the Space of four hundred and thirty Years, there ought to have been ſixty and five Years of Reſt and Intermiſſion. See *Gulielmus Vorſtius* upon *David Ganz* his *Tzemuch David*, p. 212.

To fulfil threeſcore and ten Years.] Theſe Years ended in the firſt or ſecond Year of *Cyrus*; but when they began is variouſly diſputed. *Hermannus Witſius* hath lately argued ſtrongly, that it was in the fourth Year of *Jehoiakim*: For then *Jeremiah* ſaid, *The whole Land ſhall be a Deſolation, and theſe Nations ſhall ſerve the King of Babylon ſeventy Years, ch.* xxv. 11. which is further explained, *v.* 17, 18. Which is the Opinion alſo of *Hermannus Conringius* in his *Adverſaria Chronologica*, Cap. xiv. and of *Johannes Vorſtius* in his *Exercitatio ſecunda de Captivitate Babylonica*. And thus our *Uſher*, *ad A. Mundi* 3394. Tho' other great Men date theſe LXX Years from the Captivity of *Zedekiah*. See *Scaliger de Emend. Temporum*, Lib. vi. p. 575.

Ver. 22. *Now in the firſt Year of Cyrus King of Perſia, (that the Word of the LORD, ſpoken by the Mouth of Jeremiah, might be accompliſhed,) the LORD ſtirred up the Spirit of Cyrus, King of Perſia, that he made a Proclamation throughout all his Kingdom, and put it alſo in Writing, ſaying,*

Ver. 23. *Thus ſaith Cyrus, King of Perſia, all the Kingdoms of the Earth hath the LORD God of Heaven given me, and he hath charged me to build him an Houſe in Jeruſalem, which is in Judah; who is there among you of all his People? the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.*] Theſe two Verſes, which conclude this Book, begin the next, where I will explain them; and only take Notice here, that thus the *Targum* tranſlates this Proclamation: Thus ſaith *Cyrus*, King of *Perſia*, all the Kingdoms of this Earth hath the WORD of the LORD God of Heaven delivered unto me; and he commanded me to build him a Sanctuary in *Jeruſalem*, *&c.* Which evidently ſhews, this Paraphraſt believed the WORD dwelt in the Sanctuary.

A COM-

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

BOOK

OF

EZRA.

IT is generally thought by all Sorts of Writers, that *Ezra* himſelf wrote this Book which bears his Name; and there is the leſs Doubt of it, if he wrote the foregoing Book; for he begins this Book, as that ended, which is an Argument they had the ſame Author; it being an ancient Way of Writing, as *Grotius* obſerves out of *Polybius*, who concludes one Book, and begins the next with the ſame Words. But the learned *Huetius* is of Opinion, that *Ezra* did not write the firſt ſix Chapters of this Book, but ſome other Perſon: For it is evident they were written in the Time of *Darius*, when the Author ſpeaks of himſelf as then at *Jeruſalem*, *ch.* v. 3, 4, 9. Whereas *Ezra* went up from *Babylon* in the Reign of *Artaxerxes*, *ch.* vii. 1. and then it is manifeſt wrote the *four* remaining Chapters, as appears from *ch.* vii. 27, 28. *ch.* ix. 5. *ch.* x. 1. Therefore when the *Talmudiſts* and other *Hebrew* Doctors ſay *Ezra* wrote this Book, they are to be underſtood (he thinks) to ſpeak of the latter Part of it.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. NOW *in the firſt Year of Cyrus King of Perſia*] This is that famous *Cyrus*, who an hundred and forty Years before the Temple was deſtroyed, and two hundred Years before he was born, was mentioned by Name in the Prophecy of *Iſaiah*, as deſigned by God for the reſtoring his People, *Iſa.* xliv. *ult.* xlv. 1, 4. Which Prophecy, it is probable, *Daniel* ſhewed to *Cyrus*, which made him ſet forth the following Edict; which was not put forth in the firſt Year of his Empire, for then the *Jews* were not his Subjects, but the firſt Year after his Conqueſt of *Babylon*, where the *Jews* then lived in Captivity. See *Scaliger*, in his *Iſagoge*, Lib. iii. p. 260. and *de Emend. Temporum*, Lib. vi. p. 576.

(*That*

(That the Word of the LORD by the Mouth of Jeremiah the Prophet might be fulfilled)] Who foretold that after ſeventy Years were accompliſhed, the King of *Babylon* and the *Chaldeans* ſhould be deſtroyed, and the People of *Judah* reſtored to their own Land, *chap.* xxv. 12. xxix. 10.

The LORD ſtirred up the Spirit of Cyrus King of Perſia, that he made a Proclamation throughout all his Kingdom, and put it alſo in Writing, ſaying,] God, who had ſo long ago deſigned him for this Work, ſuggeſted theſe Thoughts to him, and excited him to proſecute them; which he did, not only by cauſing his Will and Pleaſure to be proclaimed, but to be put in Writing, that none might miſtake his Meaning.

Ver. 2. *Thus ſaith Cyrus King of Perſia, The LORD God of Heaven*] It is an Obſervation of Mr. *Mede*, that as before the Captivity, when they ſpake of God they called him the *LORD of Hoſts*; ſo the conſtant Style of the holy Books after the Captivity, is the *God of Heaven:* As here, and *chap.* vi. 10. vii. 21. But it is a Queſtion whether *Cyrus*, *Darius*, and *Artaxerxes* penned theſe Writings themſelves, wherein they proclaimed the God of the *Jews* to be *the LORD God of Heaven:* Or, whether they were drawn up by ſome of the *Jews* that attended upon them. It ſeems likely to me, that God, who raiſed up the Spirit of *Cyrus* to be a peculiar Inſtrument of the freeing his People from Slavery, did enlighten his Mind to underſtand that there was but one only God whom the *Jews* worſhipped, and who ſpake in thoſe holy Books which were ſhewn him. And *Artaxerxes* might call the Law of *Moſes*, the *Law of the God of Heaven*, knowing the *Jews* worſhipped no other God, whoſe Law this was.

Hath given me all the Kingdoms of the Earth,] That is, all thoſe large Dominions which the *Aſſyrians* and *Babylonians* had enjoyed.

And he hath charged me to build him an Houſe at Jeruſalem, which is in Judah.] So he underſtood from *Iſaiah* xlv. 13. where God ſaith of *Cyrus*, *He ſhall build my City*, of which the Temple was the principal Part: And more plainly, *chap.* xliv. 28. *He ſhall ſay to Jeruſalem, Thou ſhalt be built; and to the Temple, thy Foundation ſhall be laid.* *Joſephus* hath thus paraphraſed upon theſe Words, Ἐπεί με ὁ Θεὸς τῆ οἰκουμένης ἀπέδειξε Βασιλέα, &c. *Becauſe the greateſt God hath conſtituted me the King of the World, I believe him to be he whom the People of Iſrael adore. For he foretold me King by his Prophets, and that I ſhould build his Temple at Jeruſalem, in the Land of Judea.*

Ver. 3. *Who is there among you all of his People,* &c.] Not of the *Jews* only, but of *Iſrael* alſo, who were under his Government, the *Aſſyrians* and *Medes* being his Subjects. And ſo *Joſephus* (as I obſerv'd before) ſays, that *Zerobabel* ſent the Edict of *Cyrus* into *Media*, to the reſt of the ten Tribes: To whom he not only makes a Promulgation of Liberty to go to their own Country, but deſires them to go, and prays God to be with them, and proſper them in building God's Houſe, whom he acknowledges to be the true and only God. This was a marvellous Encouragement to them.

Ver. 4. *And whoſoever remaineth in any Place where he ſojourneth,*] This ſeems to relate to ſuch as were deſirous to go up with their Brethren, but were forced to ſtay behind for Want of Neceſſaries to ſupport them in ſo long a Journey.

Let the Men of his Place help him with Silver, and with Gold, and with Goods, and with Beaſts,] He therefore requires his Officers to furniſh them with ſuch Things as they needed.

Beſides the Freewill-offering for the Houſe of God that is in Jeruſalem.] Which he ſuppoſed the richer Sort of *Jews* would readily make to aſſiſt their poor Brethren; tho' they themſelves being well ſettled in *Babylon*, did not think fit to ſtir till they ſaw how theſe would ſucceed.

Ver. 5. *Then roſe up the Chief of the Fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the Prieſts and the Levites, with all thoſe whoſe Spirit God had raiſed to go up,*] There were ſome of other Tribes beſides *Judah* and *Benjamin* that went up (1 *Chron.* ix. 3.) though theſe were the principal, who all needed a ſpecial Motion from God to quicken and encourage them to this Enterprize; the Difficulties being ſo great which they were to encounter in a long Journey, and their Country lying waſte when they came thither; this made thoſe, who had got Poſſeſſions in *Babylon*, to chuſe to ſtay there.

To build the Houſe of the LORD which is in Jeruſalem.] This was the Deſign, which People of great Piety chearfully undertook, that the publick Worſhip of the true God might be reſtored, whom they now worſhipped only in private.

Ver. 6. *And all they that were about them, ſtrengthned their Hands with Veſſels of Silver, with Gold, with Goods, and with Beaſts, and with precious Things,*] Such was the Authority of the King, and ſuch was the Influence of God upon their Hearts, that all their Neighbours encouraged them to this Work, and enabled them to undertake this Journey to *Jeruſalem.*

Beſides all that was willingly offered.] Their Brethren freely offer'd them their Aſſiſtance, tho' they did not think fit to go along with them.

Ver. 7. *Alſo Cyrus the King brought forth the Veſſels of the Houſe of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jeruſalem, and had put them in the Houſe of his Gods:*] Where by a ſingular Providence they had been preſerved till this Time, being look'd upon as ſacred Things, which *Nebuchadnezzar* would not turn to his own private Uſe, but dedicated to his Gods. Some think the *Ark* was among the ſacred Things which *Cyrus* cauſed to be reſtored; but it ſhould firſt be proved that it was carried away from *Jeruſalem* to *Babylon*, which no where appears to be true. The Argument they bring for it is, that in the ſecond Temple Sacrifices were offered as in the firſt, and all ſolemn Days obſerved, eſpecially the great Day of Expiation, when the Law ordained the Blood ſhould be ſprinkled before the Mercy-Seat, which could not be done when there was none; and there was none, if there was no Ark. But as the *Jews* univerſally acknowledge, this was one of the five Things wanting in the ſecond Temple; ſo, unleſs the divine

Glory had been there alſo, the Ark would have ſignified little. Therefore it is more likely, that by the Abſence of theſe, God would ſignify, he was withdrawing his Preſence from that Houſe of Stone, to dwell in the Temple of *Chriſt*'s Body; who offered himſelf to God, and thereby put an End to thoſe figurative Sacrifices.

Ver. 8. *Even thoſe did Cyrus, King of Perſia, bring forth by the Hand of Mithredath, the Treaſurer,*] This was a Name frequent among the *Perſians*, derived from their God *Mithra*; as *Cyrus* himſelf had his Name (*Heſychius* ſaith) from the *Sun*, which in their Language was called Kũ☉.

And numbred them unto Sheſhbazzar the Prince of Judah.] Which was another Name for *Zerobabel*, mentioned *c.* iii. 2, 8. and *c.* v. 14, 16. For it was common in the Time of the Captivity for the great Men of *Judah* to have two Names: One of their own Country, which was Domeſtick; another of the *Chaldæans*, which was uſed at Court, *Dan.* i. 7. *Nehemiah* had two Names; and this of *Sheſhbazzar* ſeems to have been a good Omen of their flouriſhing Condition; being compounded of two Words, ſignifying *fine Linen* and *Gold*. On the contrary, *Zerobabel* was a Name importing the Miſery of the People of *Iſrael* at that Time; for it is as much as an *Exile*, or *Stranger* in *Babylon*, where he was born. Thus pious Men, even in the midſt of the Honours they had at Court, (for *Joſephus* ſaith, *Zerobabel* was one of the Guard of the King's Body) were admoniſhed not to forget their Brethren, but ſympathize with them in their Miſeries.

Ver. 9. *And this is the Number of them: thirty Chargers of Gold, a thouſand Chargers of Silver, nine and twenty Knives,*] See Dr. *Lightfoot*, of the *Temple*, p. 233, 234.

Ver. 10. *Thirty Baſons of Gold, Silver Baſons of a ſecond Sort four hundred and ten, and other Veſſels a thouſand.*

Ver. 11. *All the Veſſels of Gold and of Silver, were five thouſand and four hundred.*] Here ſeems to be ſome Difficulty; for all the Veſſels that are ſpecially named, make no more in Number than two thouſand four hundred and ninety nine: To which many think this a ſufficient Anſwer, that it is ſaid in 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 18. *Nebuchadnezzar* carried away all the Veſſels, both great and ſmall. Now in the Account that is here given, the larger Veſſels only, which were of greater Bigneſs and Price, are mention'd; but the groſs Sum comprehends all, both great and ſmall, and amounts to the Number of five thouſand and four hundred: But *Tremellius* ſolves this, by tranſlating the laſt Words of the former Verſe otherwiſe than we do; not *of other Veſſels a thouſand*, but *other Veſſels by thouſands, viz.* almoſt three thouſand, wanting one hundred; which our Mr. *Mede* judges a true Tranſlation, in his *Daniel*'s *Weeks*, Book iii. p. 700.

All theſe did Sheſhbazzar bring up with them of the Captivity, that were brought up from Babylon unto Jeruſalem.] Which Reſtoration of the *Jews* to their own Land ſeems to be a greater Miracle than the firſt Conqueſt of it: For *Joſhua* did that by Force of Arms; but theſe Exiles recovered their Country without any Force at all; and were ſettled in it, notwithſtanding many great Impediments to hinder it.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *NOW theſe are the Children of the Province that went up out of the Captivity,*] Some by the *Province* underſtand *Babylon*; in which theſe People were moſt of them born, and had all lived a long Time; but I think it more likely to be meant of *Judea*, which was made a Province when it was conquered, and *Gedaliah* conſtituted the Governor of it; and in this Book is called the *Province of Judea*, *ch.* v. 8.

Of thoſe which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon,] Their Parents and Anceſtors had been carried away by him, and they in them.

And came again unto Jeruſalem and Judah, every one unto his City;] *Jerem.* xxxii. 15. *Nehem.* xi. 3. Their Land and their Cities had been laid ſo deſolate, and had been ſo long neglected, and were infeſted alſo by ſuch bad Neighbours, that it was a great Piece of Generoſity in theſe Men to return thither: And their Names are recorded to the eternal Honour of them, and of their Poſterity; they being the firſt Planters of this Country, after it had been laid waſte.

Ver. 2. *Which came with Zerubbabel: Jeſhua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilſhan, Mizpar, Bigvai, Rehum, Baanah.*] Theſe were their Heads, who undertook to conduct them; among whom *Zerubbabel* was the Prince, or Leader in Chief; as *Jeſhua* was High-Prieſt, who is mentioned next to him. *Nehemiah*, who follows after him, is not the ſame, whoſe Book comes after this; for he did not go now, but afterward; or, if he did, he returned to *Babylon* again. See our famous *Reynolds* in his Cenſure of the Apocryphal Books, *Prælect.* cxi. and cxviii. Nor is it likely, that this *Mordecai* was the ſame with him that was *Eſther*'s Couſin, but ſome other Perſon; there being another of that Name mentioned in the Book of the *Chronicles*. See the ſame *Reynolds*, *Prælect.* cxlvii.

The Number of the Men of the People of Iſrael.] They who were called the *Children of the Province* before, are now called the *People of Iſrael*; for from him they were derived, though moſt of them were of the Tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 3. *The Children of Paroſh, two thouſand an hundred ſeventy and two.*] He begins firſt to reckon up the Families that went up; of which this was one of the largeſt, deſcended from *Paroſh*, who was their Anceſtor.

Ver. 4. *The Children of Shephatiah, three hundred ſeventy and two.*] This was another Family, deſcended from this Man. The ſame is to be ſaid of the reſt.

Ver. 5. *The Children of Aaron, ſeven hundred ſeventy and five.*] So many gave in their Names in *Babylon*, that they intended to return into

Judæa: But it appears by *Nehem.* vii. 10. that there came no more thither than ſix hundred fifty and two; therefore it is ſuppoſed, that the reſt altered their Minds, or died by the Way. The ſame muſt be ſaid of ſeveral other Differences between this Account, and that in *Nehemiah.*

Ver. 6. *The Children of Pahath-moab, of the Children of Jeſhua and Joab, two thouſand eight hundred and twelve.*] Here ſeems to be two Families joined together, one from *Pahath-moab*, the other from *Jeſhua-joab*, (as the other may be tranſlated) which both together make the greateſt Body of thoſe that went up. And ſix more added themſelves; for in *Nehem.* vii. 11. they are ſaid to have been two thouſand eight hundred and eighteen.

Ver. 7. *The Children of Elam, a thouſand two hundred fifty and four.*

Ver. 8. *The Children of Zattu, nine hundred forty and five.*

Ver. 9. *The Children of Zaccai, ſeven hundred and threeſcore.*

Ver. 10. *The Children of Bani, ſix hundred forty and two.*

Ver. 11. *The Children of Bebai, ſix hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 12. *The Children of Azgad, a thouſand two hundred twenty and two.*

Ver. 13. *The Children of Adonikam, ſix hundred ſixty and ſix.*

Ver. 14. *The Children of Bigvai, two thouſand fifty and ſix.*

Ver. 15. *The Children of Adin, four hundred fifty and four.*

Ver. 16. *The Children of Ater of Hezekiah, ninety and eight.*

Ver. 17. *The Children of Bezai, three hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 18. *The Children of Jorah, an hundred and twelve.*

Ver. 19. *The Children of Haſhum, two hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 20. *The Children of Gibbar ninety and five.*] Or, as it is in *Nehemiah* vii. 25. the Children of *Gibeon*; theſe being the Citizens of that City. For this is not the Name of a Man, but of a Place; and ſo are ſeveral that follow: Which hath made ſome think, that the foregoing are not the Names of Men, but of Cities or Countries, the People of which are called the Children of ſuch Places; which is frequent in the Scripture Language, where we read of the *Children of Sion*, the *Children of Egypt*, the *Children of the Eaſt*, &c.

Ver. 21. *The Children of Beth-lehem, an hundred twenty and three.*] Theſe were ſuch as belonged to that City; unto which they went up, *ver.* 1.

Ver. 22. *The Children of Netophah, fifty and ſix.*] This was a Town near to *Bethlehem.*

Ver. 23. *The Men of Anathoth, an hundred twenty and eight.*] A famous Place in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, where the Prophet *Jeremiah* was born. But there are thoſe who think it not improbable, that theſe were Cities in the Country of *Babylon*; which the *Jews* had built, and called by the Names of thoſe Cities in their own Country, from whence they were baniſhed; of which they were deſirous to preſerve a Remembrance. Thus the *Spaniards* at this Day have Cities in *America*, called *Corduba*, *Granada*, *Carthagena*, &c. that they may not ſuffer the Memory of their antient Country to periſh, when they were removed to a far diſtant Land. But I ſee no Ground for this.

Ver. 24. *The Children of Azmaveth, forty and two.*] Or, of *Beth-Azmaveth*, as it is called *Nehemiah* vii. 28.

Ver. 25. *The Children of Kirjath-arim, Chephirah, and Beeroth, ſeven hundred and forty and three.*

Ver. 26. *The Children of Ramah and Gaba, ſix hundred twenty and one.*] Theſe ſeem to have been Cities in the Tribe of *Benjamin*; and ſo, it's likely, were the foregoing, and ſome of thoſe that follow.

Ver. 27. *The Men of Michmas, an hundred twenty and two.*

Ver. 28. *The Men of Bethel and Ai, two hundred twenty and three.*

Ver. 29. *The Children of Nebo, fifty and two.*

Ver. 30. *The Children of Magbiſh, an hundred fifty and ſix.*

Ver. 31. *The Children of the other Elam, a thouſand two hundred fifty and four.*] There is another *Elam* mentioned *ver.* 7. which argues the former to be the Name of a Town; from which the very ſame Number of Perſons went up, that there did from this.

Ver. 32. *The Children of Harim, three hundred and twenty.*

Ver. 33. *The Children of Lod, Hadid, and Ono, ſeven hundred twenty and five*] Theſe were three Towns in the Tribe of *Benjamin*; which make it probable *Harim* was ſo likewiſe.

Ver. 34. *The Children of Jericho, three hundred forty and five.*

Ver. 35. *The Children of Senaah, three thouſand and ſix hundred and thirty.*] It is uncertain whether this be the Name of a Perſon, or of a Place; but the greateſt Number of Perſons went from hence, that did from any of the forementioned.

Ver. 36. *The Prieſts:*] Having numbred the People that went from *Judah* and *Benjamin*, he proceeds now to the Tribe of *Levi*; and firſt mentions the Prieſts.

The Children of Jedaiah of the Houſe of Jeſhua, nine hundred ſeventy and three.] He is mentioned in 1 *Chron.* xxiv. 7. as a principal Perſon among the Prieſts. See Dr. *Lightfoot*, p. 916.

Ver. 37. *The Children of Immer, a thouſand fifty and two.*] He is mentioned alſo in 1 *Chron.* xxiv. 14. as Head of one of the twenty four Courſes of Prieſts.

Ver. 38. *The Children of Paſhur, a thouſand two hundred forty and ſeven.*] He is mentioned alſo, 1 *Chron.* ix. 12.

Ver. 39. *The Children of Harim, a thouſand and ſeventeen.*] See 1 *Chron.* xxiv. 8. where he is mentioned as Head of another Courſe of the Prieſts.

Ver. 40. *The Levites: the Children of Jeſhua and Kadmiel, of the Children of Hodaviah, ſeventy and four.*] See *Nehem.* vii. 43.

Ver. 41. *The Singers: the Children of Aſaph, an hundred twenty and eight.*

Ver. 42. *The Children of the Porters: the Children of Shallum, the Children of Ater, the Chil-*

dren of Talmon, the Children of Akkub, the Children of Hatita, the Children of Shobai, in all, an hundred thirty and nine.

Ver. 43. *The Nethinims:*] These are generally taken to be of the Race of the *Gibeonites*; who being given to the Service of the Temple, were called *Nethinims*, which imports as much as *given*. But this is a Mistake, the *Nethinims* being those whom *David* gave to help the *Levites*, as I have observed before.

The Children of Ziha, the Children of Hasupha, the Children of Tabbaoth,] It is not said, how many came from each Family: But it appears, there were several Families of them, and their whole Number is mentioned in *ver.* 58.

Ver. 44. *The Children of Keros, the Children of Siaha, the Children of Padon.*

Ver. 45. *The Children of Lebanah, the Children of Hagabah, the Children of Akkub.*] The Number of these Families, and those that follow, is not set down particularly; but they are all comprehended in that Sum mentioned *ver.* 58.

Ver. 46. *The Children of Hagab, the Children of Shalmai, the Children of Hanan,*

Ver. 47. *The Children of Giddel, the Children of Gahar, the Children of Reaiah,*

Ver. 48. *The Children of Rezin, the Children of Nekoda, the Children of Gazzam,*

Ver. 49. *The Children of Uzzah, the Children of Paseah, the Children of Besai,*

Ver. 50. *The Children of Asnah, the Children of Mehunim, the Children of Nephushim,*

Ver. 51. *The Children of Bakbuk, the Children of Hakupha, the Children of Harhur,*

Ver. 52. *The Children of Bazluth, the Children of Mehida, the Children of Harsha,*

Ver. 53. *The Children of Barkos, the Children of Sisera, the Children of Thamah,*

Ver. 54. *The Children of Neziah, the Children of Hatipha.*

Ver. 55. *The Children of Solomons Servants:*] These were a distinct People among the *Jews*; but it is uncertain who they were. Some take them to have been originally descended from Slaves, whom *Solomon* took in War; and who afterwards became Proselytes. But there was no War in his Days; therefore others think, they were such of other Nations as came to serve *Solomon* in servile Work, during the building of the Temple; who being proselyted, he deputed them to the perpetual Conservation and Reparation of it; as *Joshua* had done the *Gibeonites*, to be Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water there: Or, they were some of the Reliques of the *Canaanites*, who delivered up themselves to *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* ix. 20, 21. Whosoever they were, it appears from *ver.* 55. of this Chapter, that they had the same Employment with the *Nethinims* about the Temple, or something like it; for they are numbred together with them.

The Children of Sotai, the Children of Sophereth, the Children of Peruda,] These, and they that follow in the two next Verses, are the Families of the fore-named Persons.

Ver. 56. *The Children of Jaalah, the Children of Darkon, the Children of Giddel.*

Ver. 57. *The Children of Shephatiah, the Children of Hattil, the Children of Pochereth of Zebaim, the Children of Ami.*

Ver. 58. *All the Nethinims, and the Children of Solomons Servants, were three hundred ninety and two.*] This makes it probable, that the *Nethinims* and the Children of *Solomon*'s Servants (as I said before) were employed in the same or the like Employment; being both mentioned together: To whose Honour it must be observed, that, tho' they were not of the Children of *Israel*, and were despised by them, (there being Decrees made by the *Sanhedrin*, as the *Jews* tell us, that they should not marry with the *Gibeonites*, who they fancy are here meant) yet they were more forward to return to *Jerusalem*, and build the House of the LORD, (where they were to serve in lower Ministries) than the *Levites* themselves. For there were greater Numbers of them returned than of the *Levites* and *Singers*, as appears by comparing this Verse with *ver.* 40, 41.

Ver. 59. *And these were they which went up from Tel-melah, Tel-harsa, Cherub, Addan and Immer: But they could not shew their Fathers House, and their Seed, whether they were of Israel.*] These are Names of some Cities in *Chaldæa*, or *Mesopotamia*, from whence many went along with them to *Judæa:* And, as some think, they were *Jews* or Proselytes, who were carried captive by *Salmanasser* into *Assyria*. Now these could not shew the Families from whence they were derived, and so could not obtain any certain Possession in *Judæa*; as the rest did, who knew to what Family and City they belonged.

Ver. 60. *The Children of Delaiah, the Children of Tobiah, the Children of Nekoda, six hundred fifty and two.*] These were Persons who could not make out their Pedigree; and yet were desirous to live among the People of God, and see his Worship restored.

Ver. 61. *And of the Children of the Priests: the Children of Habaiah, the Children of Koz, the Children of Barzillai, (which took a Wife of the Daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their Name.)*] This Person, whosoever he was, thought it so great an Honour to be descended from such a noble Family as that of *Barzillai*, that he chose to be called by that Name, which he preferred before his own in the Family of the Priests: By which vain Ambition he lost his Title to the Priesthood, because he could not make out his Pedigree from the Priests, but from *Barzillai*.

Ver. 62. *These sought their Register among those who were reckoned by Genealogy, but they were not found:*] The Words may be more plainly translated out of the *Hebrew*, in this Manner, *these being numbred among the Priests*, (or, reckoned in the Priestly Genealogy) *sought the Register, the Record of it in Writing, but could not find it.* The *Jews* were so careful to keep the Priesthood pure, that they preserved an exact Account of the Parents, the Kindred, and the Quality of every Priest; because there were some Women the Priests might not marry, whose Children were accounted impure; as Mr. *Selden* hath shewn at large, Lib. ii. *De Success. ad Pontificatum*, Cap. ii. p. 213. and Cap. iii. p. 215. But when the City and Temple were burnt, and the People carried away in a tumultuous confused Manner, into *Babylon*;

lon; many Tables of Genealogy periſhed, and could not be recovered.

Therefore were they, as polluted, put from the Prieſthood.] Not permitted to perform the Office of Prieſts; becauſe it did not appear that they were legally deſcended from Prieſts.

Ver. 63. *And the Tirſhatha*] Some think, (particularly *Jacobus Capellus*) that by the *Tirſhatha* is here meant *Zerubbabel:* It being a general Name, they ſuppoſe, for all chief Governors. So *Nehemiah* is called, *c.* viii. 9. and x. 1. whom others therefore will have to be here meant; who was a kind of *Judge*, (as the *Perſian* Word ſignifies) and gave the Sentence which here follows, when he came to *Judæa:* Which was a good while after this firſt Company arrived there. Others interpret it, the *King*'s *Commiſſioner*; for *Zerubbabel* was no more. See *J. Rainolds*, in his Cenſure of the Apocryphal Books, *Prælect.* cxviii.

Said unto them, that they ſhould not eat of the moſt holy Things,] That is, they ſhould not partake of the Sacrifices offered for Sin, nor of the right Shoulder of Peace-offerings, nor of the Shew-bread; which were all moſt holy, and the Portion of the Prieſts alone. This ſhews, that *Tirſhatha*, whoſoever he was, had great Power and Authority; who could lay ſuch a Reſtraint upon thoſe that had been held for Prieſts.

Till there ſtood up a Prieſt with Urim and with Thummim.] Till the LORD himſelf ſhould ſhew, (when he vouchſafed ſuch an High-Prieſt, as was in the firſt Temple) whether they were of the Line of *Aaron*, or no. He doth not quite reject and exclude them, but left them their Claim; yet would not admit them to enjoy that which was the ſole Right of the Prieſts: Which he could not determine whether it belonged to them; but the Oracle being ceaſed, waited till God, who knew all Things, ſhould declare it. Thus careful they were to diſtinguiſh Families, that Strangers might not come to inherit among God's People; and eſpecially that the Prieſthood might not be invaded, by any who were unqualified for it. See *Buxtorf*, in his *Hiſtoria Urim & Thummim*, p. 323, 327.

It is evident from this Place, that the *Urim* and *Thummim* were either loſt, or burnt with the Temple; and whether they were after this reſtored, that is, whether any Prieſt with this Authority was raiſed up after the Captivity was ended, we are no where informed. If there was, it was only (as Dr. *Jackſon* well ſpeaks, *Book* i. on the *Creed*, *Chap.* xi.) to give this People a Farewel of God's extraordinary ſpeaking to them, either by Prieſts or by Prophets, till *Chriſt* came. *Joſephus* confeſſes, that Revelation by *Urim* and *Thummim* did ceaſe two hundred Years before his Time: But more probably this, as other Kinds of Prophecy, and many extraordinary Tokens of God's Power and Preſence, (ſometimes moſt frequent in this Nation) did ceaſe with that Generation which returned from Captivity, or immediately after the finiſhing the ſecond Temple: As if, during all that Time (to uſe the Words of that great Man befote-mentioned) God had apponited a *Faſt* or *Vigil*, as an Introduction to the Fulneſs of Time; wherein (as *Joel* propheſied, *v.* 28.) God would *pour out his Spirit upon all Fleſh*; upon the *Gentile*, as well as the *Jew*, *Malach.* i. 11. For this Cauſe God impoſed this long Faſt upon the *Jews*, that he might humble them, and teach them, that he was not their God alone, but of the *Gentiles* alſo. The *Jews* generally acknowledge there was no *Urim* and *Thummim* under the ſecond Temple; and even they that ſay there was, (becauſe it was neceſſary the High-Prieſt ſhould have his Garments complete) yet ſay, there was no Anſwer from God given by it; which is as much as to ſay, there was none at all. See *Buxtorf*, *Hiſt. Urim & Thummim*, Cap. v.

Ver. 64. *The whole Congregation together was forty and two thouſandthree hundred and threeſcore;*] This was but a ſmall Number in Compariſon with that vaſt Multitude which came out of *Egypt*, yet more than double to that Number which was carried away Captive by *Nebuchadnezzar*. But here occurs a ſmall Difficulty (like that in the End of the foregoing Chapter) for if we put together the ſeveral Sums beforementioned, they amount to no more than twenty nine thouſand eight hundred and eighteen; ſo there wants above twelve thouſand to make up this Number of forty thouſand three hundred and threeſcore. But where ſhall we find them, ſay the *Jews* in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. xxix? To which they there anſwer, that they were of the reſt of the Tribes of *Iſrael*, who came up with thoſe of *Judah* and *Benjamin*. Or, they might be *Levites*, or other *Iſraelites*, who could not make out their Deſcent. Which is a very ſolid Anſwer, for there is no doubt but many of their Brethren of the Ten Tribes incorporated themſelves with the Two Tribes in Captivity, and took the Advantage of returning with them: Which may be the Meaning of thoſe Words in the firſt Chapter, *ver.* 5. *Then roſe up the Chief of the Fathers of Judah and Benjamin, with all them whoſe Spirit God had raiſed to go up:* That is, ſaith *Diodate*, all thoſe of other Tribes, according to 1 *Chron.* ix. 3.

Ver. 65. *Beſides their Servants and their Maids, of whom there were ſeven thouſand three hundred thirty and ſeven:*] Tho' all that returned were not *Jews*, but ſome of the ten Tribes joined with them; yet they did not amount, Slaves and all, to fifty thouſand. Now what is this Number to what they were in *Jehoſhaphat*'s Time, when *Judah* had in it two hundred thouſand fighting Men?

And there were among them two hundred ſinging Men and ſinging Women.] Whether theſe were now become Servants is not certain; but it ſeems to be manifeſt from 1 *Chron.* xxv. 5, 6. that Women, as well as Men, ſung in the Houſe of the LORD.

Ver. 66. *Their Horſes were ſeven hundred thirty and ſix: Their Mules two hundred forty and five.*] Their Poverty appears, as by the ſmall Number of Servants that attended them, ſo by the little Parcel of Cattle which they had to carry them.

Ver. 67. *Their Camels four hundred thirty and five: Their Aſſes ſix thouſand ſeven hundred and twenty.*] Moſt of the People therefore travelled

on Foot, for these would but suffice to carry their Baggage (as we speak) or little more.

Ver. 68. *And some of the Chief of the Fathers, when they came to the House of the* LORD *which is at Jerusalem,*] That is, to the Place in which the Temple stood, unto which it seems their pious Affections carried them, as soon as they came to *Jerusalem*.

Offered freely for the House of God, to set it up in his Place:] Made a new Offering besides that which they brought out of *Babylon* from their Brethren there, mentioned *Chap.* i. 4, 6. By this it appears, that the *Jews* were not made such poor Slaves in *Babylon* as wrought for their Lords and Masters, but had Liberty to trade and get Riches for themselves; some of them being advanced to considerable Offices in the King's Court. Otherwise they could not have been able to offer such Sums as are mentioned in the next Verse. And the like Contribution, tho' not so large, was made for the Support of the second Company that went up from *Babylon*, as *Josephus* tells us, *Lib.* xi. *Cap.* 4. where he saith, the *Jews* in *Babylon* gave their Brethren who were going to their own Country, a hundred Pound of Gold, and five thousand of Silver. But most of these rich Men continued still in *Babylon*, being well settled there, and in a thriving Condition: Insomuch that *R. Eliezer* was wont to say (as he is quoted by a converted *Jew*) *The Bran only returned to Judæa, the fine Flour still remained in Babylon.* See *Jerem.* xxix. 4, 5, 28. But this is a Conceit advanced to elude the Prophecies which belong to their Return from *Babylon*, and apply them to their present Capitivity from the *Romans*.

Ver. 69. *They gave after their Ability unto the Treasure of the Work,*] which was presently erected, according to the ancient Pattern in *David*'s Time, 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 20.

Threescore and one thousand Drams of Gold, and five thousand Pound of Silver, and one hundred Priests Garments.] Garments, as well as Gold and Silver, were wont to be laid up in Treasures, as appears by our Saviour's Words, *Lay up for yourselves Treasures, where neither Moth nor Rust do corrupt*, Matth. vi. 20. Moths do not corrupt Silver and Gold, but only Garments. See *Job* xxvii. 16.

Ver. 70. *So the Priests and the Levites, and some of the People, and the Singers, and the Porters, and the Nethinims, dwelt in their Cities,*] They are here set down in that Order wherein they are reckoned from Verse 36. and the good Order is observed that was among them, every one going to the City where his Ancestors dwelt; and so did all *Israel*, as well as *Judah* and *Benjamin*, *ch.* vi. 16, 17. Thus the Foundation of this poor Commonwealth was laid in a marvellous Concord, there being no Strife nor Contention among them that came up, tho' of different Orders and Qualities; but they had one Heart and Soul like the first *Christians*, without which Unity no People can be preserved. And that it may be cherished, they must avoid those Things that destroy it, which are (as *Joh. Wolphius* here observes) principally φιλαυτία and πολυπραγμοσύνη, Self-love, and meddling in other Mens Matters.

And all Israel in their Cities.] When the Ten Tribes were carried Captives by *Salmanasser* into *Assyria*, they were not carried away intirely, but some of every Tribe left, who, with *Judah* and *Benjamin*, were afterwards carried to *Babylon* by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and now restored by *Cyrus*. By this our Primate *Usher* explains what we read afterward, *ch.* vi. 17, 18. that they offered twelve He-goats, according to the Number of the Children of *Israel*; *ad A. Mundi* 3468. And indeed there were some Reliques of the Ten Tribes till their last Destruction, *Acts* xxvi. 7.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AND when the seventh Month was come, and the Children of Israel were in the Cities, the People gathered themselves together, as one Man, to Jerusalem.*] We are no where told in what Month they began their Journey from *Babylon*. But from *ch.* vii. 9. we understand it was a Journey of four Months from thence to *Jerusalem*; so that we may safely conclude they came out in the Spring Time in the first or second Month, and having spent a short Time in settling themselves in their several Cities, the seventh *approached*, or *drew nigh* (so it must be understood, and should be rendered) in which was the first Feast that fell out after they came into *Judæa*; which they assembled themselves unanimously to celebrate at *Jerusalem*.

Ver. 2. *Then stood up Jeshua the Son of Jozadak, and his Brethren the Priests,*] He was the High-Priest, called *Joshua* in *Haggai* i. 1.

And Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel, and his Brethren,] He is called there the Governor of *Judah*, being appointed by the King of *Persia* to that Office. And he is there put before *Joshua*, as here he is put after: The Viceroy and the High-Priest being *Pares dignitate aut suppares*, as *Bochartus* speaks. See below *ver.* 8. and *ch.* iv. 3. and v. 2.

And builded the Altar of the God of Israel to offer Burnt-offerings thereon,] Which were the most ancient Offerings of all others.

As it is written in the Law of Moses the Man of God.] Where, in the very Beginning of the Book of *Leviticus*, there is an Order for the Burnt-Sacrifices before any other.

Ver. 3. *And they set the Altar*] Before they began to lay the Foundation of the Temple; for they would not have Sacrifices wanting while it was building.

Upon his Bases,] That is, in the Place, some think, where it anciently stood. Which was done, *Maimonides* saith, by the Authority of the Prophets, who were then among them. Here the Reader must remember what I have observed upon 1 *Chron.* ix. 11, 21, 23. that till the Temple could be built, they erected a Tabernacle wherein the Service of God was performed, as it was before *Solomon*'s Temple was built. But I noted there, *ver.* 18. that it did not stand on Mount *Moriah*, but on Mount *Sion*; and therefore the Altar was also there, and not in the Place where it anciently stood till the Temple was finished.

(For

(For Fear was upon them, becauſe of the People of thoſe Countries)] The Particle *ki*, which we tranſlate *for*, ſignifies *altho'*; and ſo it had been better rendered here, Altho' they were in great Fear of their evil Neighbours, yet notwithſtanding they would not deſiſt from reſtoring the Worſhip of God; but if we take it as we tranſlate it, the Meaning is plain that they were the more zealous to reſtore the Worſhip of God, that they might upon all Occaſions flee to him for Succour againſt their Enemies, of whom they were in Dread.

And they offered Burnt-offerings thereon unto the LORD, even Burnt-offerings, Morning and Evening;] Which is called in the Law of *Moſes* the *continual Burnt-offering*, *Exod.* xxix. 38, 39, 40, 41, 42. *Numb.* xxviii. 3, 6.

Ver. 4. *They kept alſo the Feaſt of Tabernacles, as it is written*,] *Exod.* xxiii. 16. The ſeventh Month was ſo remarkable for many Solemnities appointed to be held in it, that I cannot think they kept only the Feaſt of Tabernacles; for on the very firſt Day of the Month there was to be an holy Convocation, *Numb.* xxix. 1, &c. on which they began to offer Sacrifice, as it is ſaid here, *ver.* 6. And on the tenth Day was another holy Convocation, which was the moſt ſolemn in all the Year, being the great Day of Atonement, *Numb.* xxix. 7. With theſe, I ſuppoſe, they began; and eſpecially on the *tenth* Day begged Pardon of God for their Sins, which had caſt them out of their Land; and then proceeded on the *fifteenth* Day to thank God for their Reſtoration, by keeping the Feaſt of Tabernacles.

And offered the daily Burnt-offerings by Number, according to the Cuſtom, as the Duty of every Day required.] On every Day of the Feaſt, which laſted ſeven Days, there were ſpecial Sacrifices appointed by the Law, and in great Numbers; as may be ſeen, *Numb.* xxix. 13, 17, &c. which put this poor People to great Expences; but their Piety now was ſuch, that they valued nothing ſo much as the Service of God.

Ver. 5. *And afterward offered the continual Burnt-offerings, both of the new Moons, and of all the ſet Feaſts of the LORD that were conſecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a Freewill-offering unto the LORD.*

Ver. 6. *From the firſt Day of the ſeventh Month began they to offer Burnt-offerings unto the LORD; but the Foundation of the Temple of the LORD was not yet laid.*] The Meaning of theſe two Verſes is, that holy Rites of Sacrificing were reſtored, and ſo were kept and continued ever after in their ſeveral Seaſons, on the new Moons, and other feſtival Solemnities: And they began with the Morning and Evening Burnt-offering, which was never to be omitted, but in every Solemnity was to have the Precedence, and be offered in the firſt Place. See *Numb.* xxviii. 3, 4, &c.

Ver. 7. *They gave Money alſo unto the Maſons, and to the Carpenters*;] To prepare Materials for the Building.

And Meat, and Drink, and Oil unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre,] Who wanted theſe Things more than Money, as appears by the Hiſtory of *Solomon*'s Building, 1 *Kings* v. 10.

To bring Cedar Trees from Lebanon to the Sea of Joppa:] As they had done in the Days of *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* v. 9.

According to the Grant that they had of Cyrus King of Perſia.] Who commanded, I ſuppoſe, thoſe of *Tyre* and *Zidon* to aſſiſt them.

Ver. 8. *Now in the ſecond Year of their coming unto the Houſe of God at Jeruſalem*,] That is, to the Place where the Houſe of God formerly ſtood.

In the ſecond Month,] All the Time before this, in the latter End of the laſt Year, was ſpent, it is probable, in removing the Rubbiſh, and preparing the Ground for laying the Foundation, as much as the Winter would permit; which was not a Seaſon to begin the Work; but after the Paſſover, I preſume, they entered upon it.

Began Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel, and Jeſhua the Son of Jozadak, and the Remnant of their Brethren the Prieſts and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the Captivity unto Jeruſalem;] Here *Zerubbabel* is put before *Jeſhua*, as (*ver.* 1.) *Jeſhua* was put before him: Whereby we learn they were of equal Dignity, in the Account of the *Jews*; for *Zerubbabel* was not a King, but a Governor of the Province of *Judea*, under the King of *Perſia*, as *Nehemiah* was, *chap.* v. 14, 15. under whom there were *Princes* and *Rulers*, that is, the Heads of Families, *ch.* ix. 2. and below them, there were *Captains of Thouſands*, &c. and other Subaltern *Officers*, *ch.* x. 8, 14. and after all, in the fourth Place, the *great Congregation:* Which *Bertram* makes Account was the Government of the *Jews*, after their Return from the Captivity. See him, *de Republica Judaica*, Cap. xiii. where he undertakes to make out the four Orders from *Nehem.* v. 7, &c.

And appointed the Levites from twenty Years old and upward, to ſet forward the Work of the Houſe of the LORD.] For ſince the Time of *David*, they were thought fit at twenty Years of Age to attend the Service of God in his Houſe.

Ver. 9. *Then ſtood Jeſhua with his Sons, and his Brethren*;] Not *Jeſhua* the High-Prieſt beforementioned, but another *Jeſhua*, who was a *Levite*, mentioned *chap.* ii. 40.

Kadmiel and his Sons, the Sons of Judah together,] Who is called there *Hodaviah.*

To ſet forward the Workmen in the Houſe of God:] They being made Overſeers of the Work.

The Sons of Henadad, with their Sons, and their Brethren the Levites.] Theſe were afterwards added to the fore-named, as their Aſſiſtants.

Ver. 10. *And when the Builders laid the Foundation of the Temple of the LORD, they ſet the Prieſts in their Apparel with Trumpets, and the Levites the Sons of Aſaph with Cymbals, to praiſe the LORD*,] While the Sacrifices, I ſuppoſe, at the ſame Time were offered, they ſung Praiſe to God with ſuch Inſtruments as they had; which were only Cymbals, for it is like they had not yet got *Harps* and *Lutes*. The Apocryphal *Eſdras* ſaith, they laid the Foundation in the new Moon; but *Calviſius* thinks it more probable to have been laid the Day after, the new Moon being a Feſtival.

After the Ordinance of David King of Iſrael.] 1 *Chron.* xvi. 7. xxv. 1.

Ver. 11. *And they ſung together by Courſe,*] That is, anſwered one to another; for from hence was derived the Manner of praying and praiſing God in the Chriſtian Service alternatively, as Mr. *Mede* obſerves, *Book* i. *Diſcourſe* xvi. where he notes how the Seraphims cried one to another, ſaying, *Holy, holy, holy, LORD God of Hoſts*, &c. *Iſaiah* vi. 3.

In praiſing and giving thanks unto the LORD; becauſe he is good, for his Mercy endureth for ever towards Iſrael.] Thus many of the *Pſalms* of *David* begin, cvii. cxxviii. and cxxxvi. which laſt *Pſalm*, it is probable, was now ſung entirely, in every Verſe of which theſe Words are repeated, *His Mercy endureth for ever.*

And all the People ſhouted with a great Shout when they praiſed the LORD, becauſe the Foundation of the Houſe of the LORD was laid.] That is, every one expreſſed their Thankfulneſs and Joy, in ſuch Manner as they were able; the *Prieſts* and *Levites* with Singing and Muſick, and the People with Shouting, which is a natural Expreſſion of Joy, and as acceptable as the moſt artificial Compoſures.

Ver. 12. *But many of the Prieſts and Levites, and Chief of the Fathers, who were ancient Men, that had ſeen the firſt Houſe,*] As many of them might have done, it not being above threeſcore (or as ſome compute, ſixty one) Years ſince it was burnt: And ſome of them lived long after this, which was the firſt Year of *Cyrus*; for ſome prolonged their Days (as *Huetius* obſerves) till the ſecond Year of *Darius Hyſtaſpis*, which was eighteen Years after the firſt of *Cyrus*.

When the Foundation of this Houſe was laid before their Eyes, wept with a loud Voice, and many ſhouted aloud for Joy.] The younger Sort ſhouted, but many of the ancient People diſturbed their Acclamations with Howlings; for though the Temple was intended to be built as large as the former, upon the ſame Foundation; yet there were not ſuch goodly Stones to lay for the Foundation, as there was for *Solomon*'s (1 *Kings* vii. 9, 10.) nor could they hope to build it ſo magnificently as he had done, nor was there any Appearance of the Divine Glory, or of a Prieſt with *Urim* and *Thummim*, and ſuch like Things; which indeed were ſad, but ought not to have made them weep ſo loud, and interrupt the publick Joy: Thankfulneſs for ſmall Beginnings would better have become them, than Complaints that their Condition was no better.

Ver. 13. *So that the People could not diſcern the Noiſe of the Shout of Joy, from the Noiſe of the Weeping of the People:*] There was a great Confuſion among them by theſe contrary Paſſions, which was very lamentable when God had been ſo very good to them all.

For the People ſhouted with a loud Shout, and the Noiſe was heard afar off.] Notwithſtanding which, the young People continued to ſhout as loud as they could, and made the Noiſe of their Joy be heard farther off than the others Weeping was.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *NOW when the Adverſaries of Judah and Benjamin*] Theſe were the *Samaritans*, who were grieved at their Return, *ver.* 10.

Heard that the Children of the Captivity builded the Temple unto the LORD God of Iſrael,] They being Neighbours were ſoon informed, not only of their Return from Captivity, but of their building the Temple.

Ver. 2. *Then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the Chief of the Fathers, and ſaid unto them, Let us build with you;*] This People, no doubt, were deſirous to partake of the Privileges which were granted to the *Jews* by the King of *Perſia*; and ſo not only offered their Aſſiſtance towards the Building of the Temple, but would have been one People with them. So the following Words import.

For we ſeek your God as ye do, and we do ſacrifice unto him,] They pretend to be of the ſame Religion with them, which is the greateſt Bond of Union: But in Truth they were not; for tho' they worſhipped God, yet they joined other feigned Gods with him, and therefore could not be admitted into Communion with them at the Temple.

Since the Days of Eſar-haddon King of Aſſur, which brought us up hither.] The ſame with him mentioned 2 *Kings* xix. 39. who brought a ſecond Colony, after that brought by *Salmanaſſer* when he firſt conquered them, to people the Country better; and ſent a Prieſt alſo to inſtruct them, from whom they pretended to have received God's true Religion.

Ver. 3. *But Zerubbabel, and Jeſhua, and the reſt of the Chief of the Fathers, ſaid unto them, You have nothing to do with us to build an Houſe unto our God,*] They knew them very well what they were, *viz.* a mixed People, not purely of the Seed of *Iſrael*, and of a medley Religion, not worſhipping God purely; and therefore they would have nothing to do with them: And indeed they ſoon diſcovered their Hypocriſy by writing againſt the Work, which they would have hindred by making Diviſions, if they had been among them.

But we our ſelves together will build unto the LORD God of Iſrael, as King Cyrus the King of Perſia hath commanded us.] They reſolve to admit no other People to join with them, but to purſue the Grant which King *Cyrus* had made to them alone, and to none other. Theſe were the two Reaſons why they rejected them, becauſe they were not of the ſame People, and the King of *Perſia* had granted this Licence to build the Temple only to the *Jews*.

Ver. 4. *Then the People of the Land*] That is, the fore-named *Samaritans*.

Weakened the Hands of the People of Judah,] Diſcouraged them in their Undertakings by falſe Reports and Slanders, and perhaps by Threatnings.

And troubled them in Building,] Laid all the Impediments they could in their Way, by hindering Materials or Proviſions from coming to them, or by enticing away their Workmen, or ſuch like Means.

Ver. 5. *And hired Counſellors againſt them, to fruſtrate their Purpoſe,*] They bribed ſome of the Council of the King of *Perſia* to obſtruct the Work; a frequent Miſchief in Courts, as *Grotius* notes: Or, perhaps, they were ſome of the Officers of the King of *Perſia* in *Samaria*, *Syria*, and *Judea*, whom they corrupted to croſs this Deſign.

All the Days of Cyrus King of Perſia,] Who being engaged in War with the *Lydians* and *Scythians*, could not attend ſuch Affairs as this; but it went on ſlowly; which his Son *Cambyſes* regarded not at all, being no Friend of the *Jews*, nor of Religion.

Even until the Reign of Darius King of Perſia.] Till *Darius* the Son of *Hyſtaſpis*, who killing the *Magi* (who after *Cambyſes* had poſſeſſed themſelves of the Kingdom) was made King; and marrying *Artoſſa* the Daughter of *Cyrus*, and loving her very much, confirmed the Decree of *Cyrus*, and followed his Steps that he might ſtand the ſafer himſelf. It is a great Controverſy indeed between learned Men, whether this *Darius*, or *Darius Nothus* be here meant; and there are ſtrong Arguments on both Sides, which it is an immenſe Labour to examine, with the Objections againſt them. It hath been lately done in Brief by a judicious Writer, who after all is conſtrained to conclude with a NON LIQUET; but yet he thinks the moſt weighty Reaſons incline to *Darius Hyſtaſpis:* See *Hermannus Witſius*, *Miſcellanea Sacra*, Lib. i. Cap. xx.

Ver. 6. *And in the Reign of Ahaſuerus,*] Who this was, is very uncertain; there being many who think, that after *Cyrus* this was *Nomen Gentilitium* (as *they* call it) the Name of all their Kings (as *Pharaoh* was of all the Kings of *Egypt*) who were called *Xerxes*, or *Artaxerxes* (from *Ahaſuerus*, as *Grotius* thinks) beſides the Name they had before they came to the Crown. Some therefore ſay this was *Cambyſes*, (ſo Primate *Uſher*, *ad A. M.* 3476.) others *Darius Hyſtaſpis*, others *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, or *Longimanus*; whoſe Diſputes are very long about this Matter, but leave one no more ſatisfied than before he began to read them.

In the Beginning of his Reign, wrote they unto him an Accuſation againſt the Inhabitants of Judah and Jeruſalem.] Importing that they intended to ſet up for themſelves, and not to depend upon the King of *Perſia*.

Ver. 7. *And in the Days of Artaxerxes*] Who is before called *Ahaſuerus*, which is ſuppoſed to be his *Chaldee* Name, as *Artaxerxes* was his *Perſian:* But Dr. *Alix*, who had examin'd theſe Things, looks upon it as abſurd to ſuppoſe *Ahaſuerus* to have been the Name of all the *Perſian* Kings, and takes this *Artaxerxes* to have been the Son of *Xerxes*, viz. *Artaxerxes Longimanus*.

Wrote Biſhlam, Mithridath, Tabeel, and the reſt of their Companions, unto Artaxerxes King of Perſia;] Theſe Men firſt drew up the Letter, which they intended to ſend to the King, being Governors, I ſuppoſe, under him on this Side of *Euphrates*; ſuch as the *Greeks* call *Tetrarchs*.

And the Writing of the Letter was written in the Syrian Tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian Tongue.] The Meaning may be, that they ſent a brief Addreſs to the King in the *Syrian* Tongue, and expounded their Buſineſs more largely to ſome of his Counſellors in the ſame Tongue. Or, by the firſt we may underſtand the Letter or Characters, and by the other the Words: So that the Meaning is, it was wrote both in *Syrian* Characters, and in *Syrian* Words. For ſometimes a Letter or other Writing is ſent in the Character of one Language, and in Words of another; as *Chaldee* and *Syrian* Words are wrote in the *Hebrew* Characters, and we oft-times write *Hebrew* Words in the *Engliſh* Characters. But this Letter was wrote, and was to be read in the ſame Language.

Ver. 8. *Rehum the Chancellor, and Shimſhai the Scribe, wrote a Letter againſt Jeruſalem to Artaxerxes the King,*] Theſe two were principal Perſons in theſe Countries, who either joined with the other three before-mentioned in the ſame Letter, or wrote another Letter of the ſame Import.

In this Sort:] Containing the ſame Complaint againſt the *Jews*.

Ver. 9. *Then wrote Rehum the Chancellor, and Shimſhai the Scribe, and the reſt of their Companions; the Dinaites, the Apharſathkites, the Tarpelites, the Apharſites, the Archevites, the Babylonians, the Suſanchites, the Dehavites, and the Elamites,*] Theſe nine Nations came out of *Aſſyria*, *Perſia*, *Media*, *Suſiana*, and other Provinces of that vaſt Empire; who with one Conſent joined in this Letter or Petition. For, perhaps the King being loth to do any thing haſtily upon the Motion of that Letter mentioned *ver.* 8. ſent to have the Opinion of all theſe Nations, or the principal Perſons among them; and of all other on this Side the River *Euphrates*, as it here follows.

Ver. 10. *And the reſt of the Nations, whom the great and noble Aſnapper brought over, and ſet in the Cities of Samaria, and the reſt that are on this Side the River,*] Some take *Aſnapper* to be another Name for *Salmanaſſer*, or for *Eſarhaddon*, who ſent theſe Colonies hither. But it is more reaſonable to think he was ſome great Commander, who was intruſted by one or both of thoſe Kings to conduct them, and *bring them over* (the River *Euphrates*) and ſee them ſettled in theſe Countries.

And at ſuch a Time.] Which was expreſſed, no doubt, in the Letter; but here it is only noted in general, that the Year and the Day were mentioned, when it was ſubſcribed.

Ver. 11. *This is the Copy of the Letter that they ſent unto him, even unto Artaxerxes the King: Thy Servants the Men on this Side the River, and at ſuch a Time.*] This was the Title of their Letter: The Letter itſelf followeth.

Ver. 12. *Be it known unto the King, that the Jews which came up from thee to us, are come unto Jeruſalem, building the rebellious and the bad City, and have ſet up the Walls thereof, and joined the Foundations.*] This was a mere Calumny; for they attempted no ſuch Thing as to build the Walls of *Jeruſalem*. But they ſpeak in ambiguous Words (as *Huetius* obſerves) concerning the building of this City; which in one Senſe was true. For they built Houſes, without which it could not be inhabited; but they did

did not go about to encompaſs it with Walls, to defend the City againſt the Incurſions of their Enemies; which was not begun till a great while after. They are fallacious Words therefore, whereby they impoſed upon the King's Belief, when they ſay, *they ſet up the Walls thereof:* For they only ſet up the Walls of their Houſes, not of their City. And there is a Demonſtration they did no more; for when it is ſaid there was an Order from the King, that this City ſhould not be built, and accordingly the Work was ſtopped, it is thus expreſſed, *ver.* 24. *then ceaſed the Work of the Houſe of God, which is at Jeruſalem.* It is not ſaid, the Work of building the Walls of the City ceaſed, (for they were about no ſuch Thing) but *the Work of the Houſe of God*, which was all they did. Thus wicked Men compaſs their Ends by Lies and Fallacies with which they prepoſſeſs Mens Minds againſt the Truth. As for their calling it a *rebellious and bad City*, there was ſome Colour for it; their latter Kings having rebelled againſt the King of *Babylon*. And beſides, the Laws and Cuſtoms of the *Jews* were ſuch, as would not permit them to conform to the Manner of other Nations; which made their Neighbours have an ill Opinion of them, as an unſociable People.

Ver. 13. *Be it known now unto the King, that if this City be builded, and the Walls ſet up again, then will they not pay Toll, Tribute and Cuſtom,*] They pretend, the *Jews* would be no longer in Subjection, if their City was built; but ſet up for themſelves, as a free People. By the firſt of theſe Words *Grotius* underſtands that which every Head paid to the King, which we call Poll-Money; by the ſecond, the Exciſe (as we now ſpeak) that was upon Commodities and Merchandize; and by the laſt, the Rent which their Land paid. But a late learned Man thinks, the firſt Word rather ſignifies that Part which every Man paid out of his Eſtate, according as it was valued; the ſecond, that which was paid for every Head; and the third, that which was paid upon the High-Ways, by every Traveller who brought in Wares, or carried them out. *Herman. Witſius* in his *Miſcell.* Pars ii. Exerc. xi. N. 20.

And ſo thou ſhalt endamage the Revene of the Kings.] They pretend to ſtudy nothing but the Profit of the King; and that neither he nor his Succeſſors might loſe any of the Duties owing to the Crown.

Ver. 14. *Now becauſe we have Maintenance from the Kings Palace,*] In the *Hebrew* it is, *we are ſalted with the Salt of the Palace*; i. e. *received their Salary* from the King, as *Junius* tranſlates it. For it ſeems, they received their Stipend in *Salt*, (from whence it was called a *Salary*) which the Son of *Sirach* mentions among the Things neceſſary to human Life, *Eccluſ.* xxxix. 31. And *Homer* calls it *a divine Thing*, becauſe, as *Plutarch* expounds him, it ſeaſons all Food, and gives a Reliſh to it. See Dr. *Cudworth*, of the *Lord's Supper*, p. 68.

And it was not meet for us to ſee the Kings Diſhonour:] It did not become them who received Maintenance from the King, to ſee him wronged any way.

Therefore have we ſent and certified the King,] Which they would have him think was the ſole Cauſe of their writing, to inform him in the Truth.

Ver. 15. *That Search may be made in the Book of the Records of thy Fathers:*] In the Chronicles of the Kings that had reigned before him; whom they call his *Fathers*, becauſe they were his Predeceſſors in that Kingdom, wherein he now reigned. This Search ſhews, this Letter was written a long Time after the Edict of *Cyrus*.

So ſhalt thou find in the Book of the Records, and know, that this City is a rebellious City, and hurtful unto Kings and Provinces, and that they have moved Sedition within the ſame of old Time: for which Cauſe was this City deſtroyed.] They mix ſome Truth with Abundance of Falſhood; for this City could not be rebellious in old Time, being ſubject to none; till in latter Times it was conquered by *Nebuchadnezzar*; againſt whom they rebelled.

Ver. 16. *We certify the King, that if this City be builded again, and the Walls thereof ſet up, by this Means thou ſhalt have no Portion on this Side the River.*] This was a moſt groundleſs Suggeſtion, that they ſhould either be able to conquer all the neighbouring Countries, as far as *Euphrates*, or draw them all into a Rebellion with them againſt the King.

Ver. 17. *Then ſent the King an Anſwer unto Rehum the Chancellor, and to Shimſhai the Scribe, and to the reſt of their Companions that dwell in Samaria, and unto the reſt beyond the River, Peace, and at ſuch a Time.*] This was a Matter of ſuch Concern, that the King diſpatched a ſpeedy Anſwer to be communicated to all the People mentioned, *ver.* 9, 10.

Ver. 18. *The Letter which ye ſent unto us, hath been plainly read before me.*] It was read, in all Likelihood, before the King in Council.

Ver. 19. *And I commanded, and Search hath been made,*] In the publick Records. See *chap.* v. 17. vi. 1, 2. *Eſther* ii. 23. vi. 1.

And it is found, that this City of old Time hath made Inſurrection againſt Kings, and that Rebellion and Sedition have been made therein.] One Inſtance or two of it in latter Times ſerved to faſten this odious Character upon them; as if they had been always guilty of theſe Crimes.

Ver. 20. *There have been mighty Kings alſo over Jeruſalem, which have ruled over all Countries beyond the River;*] Such indeed were *David* and *Solomon*; who, as their Records ſhewed, ruled over all Countries on this Side *Euphrates*.

And Toll, Tribute, and Cuſtom was paid unto them.] As now they were to the King of *Perſia*; which ſeemed to juſtify what theſe People ſuggeſted in their Letter, *ver.* 16. only they wanted ſuch mighty Kings as they then had, and were never likely to have ſuch again.

Ver. 21. *Give ye now Commandment to cauſe theſe Men to ceaſe, and that this City be not builded,*] He gave no Order about the Temple, but only about the City; which he was made to believe they were fortifying.

Until another Commandment ſhall be given from me.] He kept his Ears open, like a good King, to further Information; which if he ſhould have

different from theirs, he might give other Orders. For this was not a Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians* that could not be revoked; but only an Edict, depending wholly upon the Will and Pleaſure of the King, which he might have Reaſon to alter hereafter.

Ver. 22. *Take heed now, that ye fail not to do this: why ſhould Damage grow to the hurt of the Kings?*] By their Negligence, if they permitted them to proceed to fortify *Jeruſalem*. It is very obſervable, that in neither of their Letters, nor in the King's Anſwer, there is not one Word of the Command which *Cyrus* gave; nor any thing ſaid of the building of the Temple; which was the great Thing in which they were employed; and the building of which could be no Damage to the King. But tho' we do not know by what Trick the Decree of *Cyrus* was now ſmothered, yet their Silence about it proves, (as the forenamed Dr. *Alix* ſuggeſts to me) that this Complaint was moved neither in the Time of *Darius* I. who lived in the Court of *Cyrus*, and married his Daughter, nor of *Xerxes* his Son, as *Joſephus* thinks, (taking *Xerxes* for *Artaxerxes*) but in the Beginning of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*; who began to reign ſeventy one Years after the firſt of *Cyrus*, in which the Edict was publiſhed.

Ver. 23. *Now when the Copy of King Artaxerxes Letter was read before Rehum, and Shimſhai the Scribe, and their Companions, they went up in haſte to Jeruſalem unto the Jews,*] So they of the Captivity are now called, though there were many *Iſraelites* among them; becauſe they chiefly conſiſted of the Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*. But it muſt be noted, that *all Iſrael* (as this Author ſpeaks, *ch.* ii. *ult.*) are included under the Name of *Jews*. For Liberty was granted to them all by the Edict of *Cyrus*, (which cannot be noted too often) in Virtue of which they might return when they pleaſed. But the holy Writers mention only thoſe who returned in a Body; after which the Prophets admoniſh thoſe who remained in Captivity to return to their own Land; as we ſee in the Book of *Zechariah*.

And made them to ceaſe by Force and Power.] They threatened, I ſuppoſe, to force them to deſiſt, if they did not preſently obey the King's Order: Which was only that the City ſhould not be built; but the Temple being a Part of it, they would have it underſtood, that it was comprehended in this Order.

Ver. 24. *Then ceaſed the Work of the Houſe of God, which is at Jeruſalem.*] It did not quite ceaſe; for when the *Jews* underſtood that this Edict did not prohibit the building of the Temple, but only of the City, they went on with their Work again without aſking any Leave; ſince they knew *Artaxerxes* did not forbid it. But it went on ſo ſlowly, that in a Manner it ceaſed, till the Beginning of the Reign of *Darius*, as it here follows.

So it ceaſed unto the ſecond Year of the Reign of Darius King of Perſia.] They that take *Darius Nothus* to be here meant, are preſſed with very great Difficulties. For from the firſt Year of *Cyrus*, who gave Order for the building of the Temple, till the ſixth Year of *Darius Nothus*, in which they ſuppoſe it was finiſhed; there were at leaſt an hundred and thirteen Years, as *Scaliger* and *Calviſius* make Account; but as others think, an hundred and ſeventeen; and, according to *Cocceius*, an hundred forty and two. Now all this Time *Zerubbabel* was in the Government of *Judæa*, and *Jeſhua* in the High-Prieſthood; but ſo long an Authority in Church or State was never heard of in any Age; and they muſt have lived ſome time before and after, and conſequently they muſt be of a vaſt Age: And therefore ſo long a Space was not between the Beginning and the Concluſion of this Work. Beſides, *Haggai* ſuppoſes (*ch.* ii. 4.) that ſome remembred the Glory of the firſt Houſe, and compared it with the Glory of the ſecond: Which if this was in the ſixth Year of *Darius Nothus*, they muſt be at leaſt an hundred and fourſcore Year old; which is not likely. Several Solutions are given to this, which do not ſatisfy thoſe who believe *Darius Hyſtaſpis* is here meant; whoſe ſecond Year was the eighteenth after the firſt of *Cyrus*, as *Huetius* reckons. And this is the moſt ancient Opinion. But it is built only upon the Authority of *Joſephus*, who was followed by many after the ſecond Century; but before, they took this *Darius* to be *Darius Ochus*, as Dr. *Alix* aſſures me, who thinks the long Life of *Zerubbabel* and *Jeſhua* is no Objection againſt it; but is to be look'd upon as an extraordinary Effect of the divine Goodneſs, for the Re-eſtabliſhment of the Commonwealth, and of the Worſhip of God: As the Life of *Jehoiada* was prolonged for the ſame Reaſon, 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 15.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. THEN *the Prophets, Haggai the Prophet, and Zechariah the Son of Iddo,*] The Grand-Child of *Iddo*; for his Father's Name was *Berachiah*.

Propheſied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jeruſalem, in the Name of the God of Iſrael, even unto them.] Or rather *againſt them*, as the *Hebrew* Words may be interpreted: For they reproved them becauſe they did not build the Temple. They both propheſied in the ſecond Year of *Darius*, as appears by the Beginning of their Prophecies; one in the ſixth Month, the other in the eighth. This *ſecond Year* of *Darius*, as Dr. *Alix* obſerves to me, was a Sabbatic Year, from which there were *ſeven Weeks*, or *forty nine* Years, as well for the rebuilding of the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, which was in the *twentieth* of *Artaxerxes*, as for ſettling a right Policy in Church and State, which was finiſhed by *Nehemiah*, the 32d Year of *Artaxerxes*, which was alſo a Sabbatic Year. And from this ſecond of *Darius*, whom God gave Order by theſe Precepts to ſet upon this Work, he thinks, is the true Beginning of the *ſixty two Weeks*, (ſpoken of, *Daniel* ix.) till the Appearing of the *Meſſiah*.

Ver. 2. *Then roſe up Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel, and Jeſhua the Son of Jozadak, and began to build the Houſe of God which is at Jeruſalem:*] It had been begun a good while ago, but went on very ſlowly, till theſe great Men, excited by the Prophets, ſet the Work forward.

And with them were the Prophets of God helping them.] Calling upon them to labour ſtre-

nuouſly in the Work; for God was with them, to protect, defend, and proſper them, *Haggai* i. 13, 14. ii. 4.

Ver. 3. *At the ſame Time came to them Tatnai, Governor on this Side the River, and Shethar-boznai, and their Companions,*] Theſe were Men in Authority under the King of *Perſia*, who managed the publick Affairs in theſe Countries; but ſeem to have been of a better Spirit than *Rehum*, and the reſt mentioned in the foregoing Chapter; who, it is likely, were either dead, or put out of their Places by this new King.

And ſaid thus unto them, Who hath commanded you to build this Houſe, and to make up this Wall?] They fairly queſtion them by what Authority they built the Temple, and the Wall about it; for they do not mean the Wall of the City, which was not building.

Ver. 4. *Then ſaid we unto them after this Manner, What are the Names of the Men that make this Building?*] Many take theſe to be ſtill the Words of *Tatnai*, and his Companions. But it is more natural to take them for the Anſwer of the *Jews*; who not only told them by what Authority they built the Temple, but alſo gave them the Names of thoſe, who were the great Undertakers of the Work; after which it is likely they enquired, *v.* 10. But then the Word *What*, is not the Note of an Interrogation, but is to be tranſlated, *We ſaid unto them after this Manner, What were the Names*, &c. From which Place *Huetius* argues, that he who wrote this Chapter, was now preſent when this Queſtion was aſked, and Anſwer made to it; and therefore *Ezra* was not the Writer; for this was in the ſecond Year of *Darius*, and he did not come to *Jeruſalem* till the ſeventh Year of *Artaxerxes*, called *Longimanus*, *ch.* vii. 1, 8.

Ver. 5. *But the Eye of their God was upon the Elders of the Jews, that they could not cauſe them to ceaſe, till the Matter came to Darius;*] By the Favour and good Providence of God, the King's Miniſters in thoſe Parts became their Friends, ſo far, as not to prohibit them to go on with their Work; but referred the Matter to the Conſideration of *Darius* himſelf; to whom they make a very fair and honeſt Report of the Caſe.

And then they returned Anſwer by Letter concerning this Matter.] The Matter being laid before *Darius*, they received Anſwer from him by Letter, what ſhould be done in it.

Ver. 6. *The Copy of the Letter that Tatnai, Governor on this Side the River, and Shethar-boznai, and his Companions the Apharſachites, which were on this Side the River, ſent unto Darius the King.*] The *Apharſachites* were one of the Nations mentioned before in the former Letter to *Artaxerxes*, *ch.* iv. 9. of which perhaps theſe two great Men were.

Ver. 7. *They ſent a Letter unto him, wherein was written thus; Unto Darius the King, all Peace.*] They ſeem to write with greater Affection than the former did, wiſhing the King all Proſperity and Happineſs, which the other did not, but only called themſelves his Servants, *ch.* iv. 11.

Ver. 8. *Be it known unto the King, that we went into the Province of Judæa, to the Houſe of the great God,*] So the *Jews* ſpake, to diſtinguiſh their God from all others, who were the Gods only of ſmall Countries, every one of which had their particular Gods.

Which is builded with great Stones,] The *Talmudiſts*, *Jarchi* and *Kimchi*, and others tranſlate it *Marble Stones*, and the Seventy *choice Stones*.

And Timber is laid in the Walls, and this Work goeth faſt on, and proſpereth in their Hands.] It was advanced ſo far, and ſuch Diligence was uſed, that if a Stop were not put to it, it would be ſpeedily finiſhed.

Ver. 9. *Then aſked we thoſe Elders, and ſaid unto them, Who commanded you to build this Houſe, and to make up theſe Walls?*

Ver. 10. *And we aſked their Names alſo to certify thee, that we might write the Names of the Men that were the chief of them.*] They made a very diligent Enquiry, that they might give the King a perfect Account of the Matter, and he might the better judge of it.

Ver. 11. *And thus they returned us Anſwer, ſaying, We are the Servants of the God of Heaven and Earth, and build the Houſe that was builded theſe many Years ago, which a great King of Iſrael builded and ſet up.*] They own their Religion which was of very ancient Standing; their God having been worſhipped many Ages ago in this Houſe, which was built by *Solomon*.

Ver. 12. *But after that our Fathers had provoked the God of Heaven unto Wrath, he gave them into the Hand of Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon the Chaldæan; who deſtroyed this Houſe, and carried the People away into Babylon.*] They give them a ſhort Account how it came to be deſtroyed for their Sins, and how they were puniſhed on that Account.

Ver. 13. *But in the firſt Year of Cyrus, the King of Babylon, the ſame King Cyrus made a Decree to build this Houſe of God.*

Ver. 14. *And the Veſſels alſo of Gold and Silver of the Houſe of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took out of the Temple that was in Jeruſalem, and brought them into the Temple of Babylon, thoſe did Cyrus the King take out of the Temple of Babylon, and they were delivered unto one whoſe Name was Sheſhbazzar, whom he had made Governor.*

Ver. 15. *And ſaid unto him, Take theſe Veſſels, go, carry them into the Temple that is in Jeruſalem, and let the Houſe of God be builded in his Place.*

Ver. 16. *Then came the ſame Sheſhbazzar, and laid the Foundation of the Houſe of God which is in Jeruſalem. And ſince that Time even until now, hath it been in building, and yet it is not finiſhed.*] Theſe laſt Words ſhew, it had gone on very ſlowly and negligently ever ſince the firſt of *Cyrus*, they being in a poor Condition, and hindered in the Work by the *Samaritans*; after which the People grew ſluggiſh, being ſet upon building their own Houſes, which they carried on with greater Earneſtneſs, than the Houſe of God, as *Haggai* reproves them. However, in theſe laſt Verſes, the *Jews* gave *Tatnai* a faithful Account of the whole Matter; and he very worthily repreſented it to the King, as they informed him, without any Addition or Diminution of his own. For he did not accuſe them of building the Walls of *Jeruſalem*; which ſhews, he and his Companions were not their Enemies; but impartially wrote what they affirmed to be true.

Ver.

Ver. 17. *Now therefore, if it ſeem good to the King, let there be ſearch made in the Kings Treaſure Houſe, which is there at Babylon,*] Where the Records of the Kingdom were kept very carefully, as Treaſures uſe to be.

Whether it be ſo that a Decree was made of Cyrus the King, to build this Houſe of God at Jeruſalem, and let the King ſend his Pleaſure to us concerning this Matter.] It is likely the Elders deſired the Records might be ſearched and examined, whether they ſaid true or no; and accordingly the Governors reported their Deſires to the King, as a ſpeedy Way to be ſatisfied about this Matter. For theſe do not ſeem to be like the *Samaritans* in the foregoing Chapter, who endeavoured to obſtruct the Work, but were only deſirous to be informed of the Truth of what the *Jews* pretended, that ſo the Building of the Temple might either be permitted or prohibited, according as the King found the Grant of *Cyrus* to be.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *THen Darius the King made a Decree, and ſearch was made in the Houſe of the Rolls, where the Treaſures were laid up in Babylon.*] In the Houſe where the Records of the Kingdom were kept; but by what follows, it appears that in *Babylon* they found nothing.

Ver. 2. *And there was found at Achmetha, in the Palace that is in the Province of the Medes, a Roll, and therein was a Record thus written:*] They ſearched therefore at *Achmetha*, which was afterward called *Ecbatana*, where the Kings of *Perſia* ſometimes kept their Court; and there was found a Volume concerning the Affairs of *Judæa*, wherein was the following Record. This argued a great Goodneſs in *Darius*, that he did not preſently decree againſt them, becauſe nothing that they alledged was found in *Babylon*; but cauſed a ſearch to be made in another Place, where he knew Records were preſerved.

Ver. 3. *In the firſt Year of Cyrus the King,*] This perhaps was the Inſcription of the following Memorial.

The ſame Cyrus the King made a Decree concerning the Houſe of God at Jeruſalem, Let the Houſe be builded, the Place where they offered Sacrifices, and let the Foundations thereof be ſtrongly laid, the height thereof threeſcore Cubits, and the breadth thereof threeſcore Cubits:] Or, rather, *the length thereof*, as theſe laſt Words may be tranſlated. They had Liberty to make it of theſe Dimenſions if they pleaſed, but no bigger: And theſe exceeded the Proportions of *Solomon*'s Temple, if we ſuppoſe it to have been thirty Cubits in height, except the Porch, which was an hundred and twenty. But I have ſhewn elſewhere, that it is probable all the Temple of *Solomon* was in length an hundred and twenty Cubits, and this Houſe was but half ſo high. This *Joſephus* ſaith, who ſaw this ſecond Temple, Lib. xv. *Archæolog.* Cap. 14. Ἐνδεῖ δ' αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸ μέγεθος εἰς ὕψος ἑξήκοντα πήχεις, &c. *It wanted* (ſpeaking of this Temple) *to make it great, ſixty Cubits in height; for ſo much higher was the firſt Temple which Solomon built.*

Ver. 4. *With three Rows of great Stones, and a Row of new Timber; and let the Expences be given out of the Kings Houſe.*] He ordered it to be built at his own Charge, for ſo he ſaith God commanded him, *ch.* i. 2. *God hath charged me to build him an Houſe at Jeruſalem.* Yet we do not find that the *Jews* made uſe of his Bounty, as *Pellicanus* obſerves, becauſe they would not provoke too much the Envy of the *Samaritans*, who were angry at his Kindneſs to them. And therefore they carried on the Work at their own Coſt, till *Darius* now commanded they ſhould have what they deſired out of his Revenue, to finiſh what they had begun.

Ver. 5. *And alſo let the golden and ſilver Veſſels of the Houſe of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took forth out of the Temple which is at Jeruſalem, and brought unto Babylon, be reſtored, and brought again to the Temple which is at Jeruſalem, every one to his Place, and place them in the Houſe of God.*] Thus far the Decree of *Cyrus* is recited, which juſtified the Truth of all the Allegations of the *Jews*, in the foregoing Chapter. Now follows the Decree of *Darius* thereupon.

Ver. 6. *Now therefore, Tatnai, Governor beyond the River, Shethar-boznai, and your Companions the Apharſachites, which are beyond the River,*] It is moſt likely that he ſet down in his Letter to theſe Men, the forementioned Decree of *Cyrus*, as it was found in the Records, and then gave the following Command.

Be ye far from thence:] Come not near *Jeruſalem* to give them any Hindrance or Diſturbance.

Ver. 7. *Let the Work of this Houſe of God alone,*] Obſtruct not the Work, but rather further it.

Let the Governor of the Jews, and the Elders of the Jews, build this Houſe of God in his place.] In the Place where it ſtood before. *Zerubbabel* is conſtantly called the Governor of the *Jews*, never their King, *Haggai* i. 1, 14. and ii. 2, 21. and ſo ſome of his Succeſſors, *Malachi* i. 9. For in *Babylon*, as *Joſephus* relates, he was σωματοφύλαξ a Keeper of the King's Body, and τῶν αἰχμαλώτων Ἰουδαίων ἡγεμών, the Captain of the Captive *Jews*; who in one Word was called Αἰχμαλωτάρχα. Therefore he was appointed by *Cyrus*, and afterwards by *Darius*, to govern the Province of *Judæa* in the King's Name, and at his Charge to ſee the Temple built at *Jeruſalem*. But learned Men give no Credit to what *Joſephus* ſays of his great Office in *Babylon*.

Ver. 8. *Moreover, I make a Decree, what ye ſhall do to the Elders of theſe Jews,*] Whoſe Names they had given in to him, *ch.* 5. 10.

For the building of this Houſe of God:] As he had ordered they ſhould not be hindred, ſo he made a further Order, that they ſhould give them Aſſiſtance in what they were about.

That of the Kings Goods, even of the Tribute beyond the River, forthwith Expences be given unto theſe Men, that they be not hindred.] That the Work might not ſtop for want of Money to go forward, which he ordered to be paid them without Delay.

Ver. 9. *And that which they have need of, both young Bullocks, and Rams, and Lambs, for the Burnt-offerings of the God Heaven,*] So he had learn'd to call the God of *Iſrael*, after the Example of *Cyrus*, who acknowledges God had made him ſo great, as he had *Darius*.

Wheat, Salt, Wine, and Oil,] For Meat-offerings to attend upon the Burnt-offerings.

According to the Appointment of the Prieſts which are at Jeruſalem,] This was a great Honour done to God's Miniſters, who might have whatſoever they deſired for his Service.

Let it be given them Day by Day without fail:] That the Morning and Evening Burnt-ſacrifices might never fail to be offered every Day.

Ver. 10. *That they may offer Sacrifices of ſweet Savours unto the God of Heaven, and pray for the Life of the King, and of his Sons.*] From this Place principally Mr. *Mede* proves at large that Sacrifices were a Rite of Supplication unto God; ſuch ones namely whereby the Supplicant came not with a naked Petition, but preſented ſomething unto his God, whereby to find Favour in his Sight, and obtain his Petition: Whence we find *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, where they pitched their Tents, to have built an Altar alſo (which was a Place for Sacrifice) and there *called upon the Name of the LORD*. And by this Place it appears, that the Sacrifices and Oblations preſented by *Gentiles* were not refuſed by the *Jews*, when they deſired their Prayers to God for them. The *Hebrew* Doctors indeed ſay, that all ſuch Sacrifices were *Euchariſtical*, not *Hilaſtical*, that is, Sacrifices of Thankſgiving or Acknowledgment to God (being Burnt-offerings,) not Sacrifices of Expiation, or Sin-offerings. So *Maimonides* in his Treatiſe of Sacrifices, *All the Euchariſtical Sacrifices of the Gentiles were Burnt-offerings*. There is a memorable Paſſage in *Joſephus* (Lib. ii. *De Bello Judaico*, Cap. 31.) concerning *Eleazar* the Prieſt, who being admoniſhed to admit the Sacrifices and Oblations of the *Gentiles*, acknowledged that their Anceſtors adorned the Temple with Gifts offered by the *Gentiles*, always accepting τῶν ἔξωθεν ἐθνῶν δορεὰν καὶ θυσίας, the Gifts and Sacrifices of external Nations.

The King and his Sons.] Here it muſt be noted, that *Darius* the Firſt had no Sons, but *Darius* the Second had, *viz. Artaxerxes Mnemon*, and *Cyrus* the younger, who were great Men, and reigned in ſome Manner with him. *Artaxerxes Mnemon* (as Dr. *Alix* makes account) was *thirty five* Years old in the *ſecond* Year of *Darius*; and *Cyrus* (who was ſlain in a Battle againſt his Brother) was a little younger.

Ver. 11. *Alſo I have made a Decree, that whoſoever ſhall alter this Word, let Timber be pulled down from his Houſe, and being ſet up, let him be hanged thereon,*] To make the Decree more valid and better obſerved, he added this Penalty; that if any acted contrary to it, a Beam ſhould be taken out of his own Houſe, and being ſet up, he ſhould be hanged thereon. But *Lud. de Dieu* obſerves, that there is no Conſtruction in theſe Words, which we render, *being ſet up*; therefore he would have them tranſlated after the LXX. *and ſtanding, let him be beat upon it*; whipp'd, as we ſay, at a Poſt, as the Manner was among the *Perſians* and other Nations. Only among the *Jews* they that were beaten did not ſtand, but lay down, *Deut.* xxv. 2. But if a greater Puniſhment be here meant, then he makes the firſt Words refer to the Wood, and the latter to the Man, in this Manner, *and from above, let it fall upon him.* That is, the Stake being lifted up, ſhall be ſtruck into his Body, and come out at his Fundament; which was a cruel Puniſhment among the Eaſtern People, and ſtill continued there.

And let his Houſe be made a Dunghil for this.] The pulling down of a Beam from his Houſe, ſuppoſes the pulling down of the Houſe, which he orders ſhould not be built again, but the Place where it ſtood be made a Dunghil. Thus the *Romans* pulled down the Houſes of very wicked Men for their greater Diſgrace, of *Sp. Caſſius*, for Inſtance, and of *Ovidius Pollio*.

Ver. 12. *And the God who hath cauſed his Name to dwell there, deſtroy all Kings and People that ſhall put to their Hand, to alter and to deſtroy this Houſe of God, which is at Jeruſalem:*] He was touched with ſuch a Senſe of the Greatneſs of the God of the *Jews*, that he prays, he who had all Power in Heaven and Earth, would not only puniſh all thoſe Kings over whom he had no Power, (not being his Subjects) who went about to obſtruct this Work, but deſtroy both them and their People.

I Darius have made a Decree, let it be done with ſpeed.] He concludes as he began, that forthwith this Decree ſhould be executed, *ver.* 8.

Ver. 13. *Then Tatnai, Governor on this Side the River, Shethar-boznai, and their Companions, according to that which Darius the King had ſent, ſo they did ſpeedily.*] They were as punctual in executing his Decrees as he deſired, and that without any Delay.

Ver. 14. *And the Elders of the Jews builded, and they proſpered thro' the propheſying of Haggai the Prophet, and Zechariah the Son of Iddo;*] Who directed and encouraged them in their Work; repreſenting to them, it is likely, the wonderful Goodneſs of God, who had inclined the Heart of the King of *Perſia* to be ſo highly favourable to them.

And they builded and finiſhed it, according to the Commandment of the God of Iſrael, and according to the Commandment of Cyrus, and Darius, and Artaxerxes King of Perſia.] If this *Darius* was he called *Hyſtaſpis*, then it was *Artaxerxes Longimanus* his Succeſſor that is here meant; who tho' he found the Temple built, yet ſent *Ezra* to beautify it, and to ſee Things done there according to their Law, *ch.* vii. 12, 21, 27. But ſome think him to be *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, who reigned with his Father many Years, and lived till he was ninety four Years old. *Plut.*

Ver. 15. *And this Houſe was finiſhed on the third Day of the Month Adar, which was in the ſixth Year of the Reign of Darius the King.*] Now they did in four Years more than they had done in many Years before. For, partly by their own Poverty, and partly by the Corruption of the Courtiers of *Perſia*, who hindred neceſ-

neceſſary *Supplies*; and partly by the Envy of the *Samaritans*, who retarded them by their falſe Accuſations, and by their Intereſt in the Governors of *Syria*; and partly by the Sluggiſhneſs of the *Jews*, and their Inclination to mind their own private Intereſt more than the publick Good, the Work went on ſo ſlowly, that not only the Prophets reprehended them for it, but God puniſh'd them ſeverely by Scarcity of Proviſion, as we read in the Prophet *Haggai*. But now, by the Favour of this King, and by the Zeal of God's Prophets, it went on a-pace, and was ſpeedily finiſhed.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of Iſrael, the Prieſts, and the Levites, and the reſt of the Children of the Captivity, kept the Dedication of this Houſe of God with Joy,*] By the *Children of Iſrael* are to be underſtood not only the two Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin* (who were the Chief) but all thoſe of other Tribes, many of which from the Time of *Cyrus* to the ſecond of *Darius*, were come to their own Country, tho' we have not a particular Account of their Names; this appears from the next Verſe. All theſe, together with the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, agreed to dedicate this Houſe with feſtival Joy: Thus the Temple at firſt was dedicated, 1 *Kings* viii. 2. 2 *Chron.* vii. 4, &c. That is, after it was built, being deſigned only for ſacred Uſes, now they ſhewed by an Example how it ſhould be uſed, which is the proper and ſimple Senſe of the Word *dedicate*, as *Selden* explains it, Lib. iii. *de Synedr.* Cap. xiii. Sect. 5. But the *Hebrew* Doctors obſerve, that by theſe Sacrifices now offered, there was no new Sanctity given to the Place, but the old only reſtored.

Ver. 17. *And offered at the Dedication of this Houſe of God, an hundred Bullocks, two hundred Rams, four hundred Lambs;*] An *Hecatomb* was the nobleſt Sacrifice among the Heathen, of which we find often mention in their Books; and with that the *Jews* began the Dedication of the Temple; to which they made many additional Offerings, ſome of which were *Peace-offerings*, on which they feaſted, as the hundred Bullocks, I ſuppoſe, were whole *Burnt-offerings*.

And for a Sin-offering for all Iſrael, twelve He-goats, according to the Number of the Tribes of Iſrael.] For it appears by many Places before-recited, that tho' the ten Tribes were carried captive by *Salmanaſſer*, yet many of them remained in their Country, and were carried away by *Nebuchadnezzar*, together with *Judah* and *Benjamin*, with whom they returned out of *Babylon*; as many others of the ten Tribes did, who were carried away at the taking of *Samaria*. See Chapter the Second of this Book, *v.* 70. and 2 *Chron.* xxxi. 5, 10, 11. xxxiv. 7, 9. xxxv. 3, 17. *Ezra* viii. 35. *Acts* xxvi. 7.

Ver. 18. *And they ſet the Prieſts in their Diviſions, and the Levites in their Courſes, for the Service of God, which is at Jeruſalem; as it is written in the Book of Moſes.*] Where Directions are given for their Service, *Numb.* iii. 6. viii. 9, 10.

Ver. 19. *And the Children of the Captivity kept the Paſſover, upon the fourteenth Day of the firſt Month.*] As was enjoined, *Exodus* xii. 6. The *Jews* had the free Exerciſe of their Religion in *Babylon* (as I ſhall obſerve more largely afterward) where they circumciſed their Children, and alſo made Proſelytes; but the Children of the Captivity ſignified thoſe who were come back from it, and eat the Paſſover, which they could not have done if they had not been circumciſed.

Ver. 20. *For the Prieſts and the Levites were purified together, all of them were pure, and killed the Paſſover for all the Children of the Captivity, and for their Brethren the Prieſts, and for themſelves.*] They had time to purify themſelves between the Day wherein the Temple was perfected, and the Day wherein this Feaſt was to be kept, there being above a Month between.

Ver. 21. *And the Children of Iſrael, which were come again out of Captivity, and all ſuch as had ſeparated themſelves unto them, from the Filthineſs of the Heathen of the Land, to ſeek the LORD God of Iſrael, did eat,*] That is, all Proſelytes, who had entirely made themſelves ſubject to the Law of *Moſes*; for others might not eat of it, but they might, *Exodus* xii. 48, 49. Now, as *Pellicanus* obſerves, there were many Proſelytes who quite forſook their heatheniſh Religion, and were brought to the Knowledge and Worſhip of the true God, by the Favour of *Cyrus* and *Darius* Kings of *Perſia:* They had kept the Paſſover before this, being in the Place which God choſe, and having an Altar where they might ſacrifice; but it was not a quiet and ſettled Time, and they had much Occaſion to be among the Heathen; and ſo, it is likely, could not eaſily purify themſelves to eat of it, as they did now.

Ver. 22. *And kept the Feaſt of unleavened Bread ſeven Days with Joy: for the LORD had made them joyful, and turned the Heart of the King of Aſſyria unto them, to ſtrengthen their Hands in the Work of the Houſe of God, the God of Iſrael.*] God filled their Hearts with Joy, by turning the Heart of the King, who now reigned over all the Kingdoms, which were formerly under the Power of the *Aſſyrians*, who had grievouſly oppreſſed them, as the *Perſians* who came in their ſtead now highly favoured them; who having conquered *Babylon*, were called the Kings of *Aſſyria:* For we find in theſe Books, the King of *Perſia*, after that Conqueſt, is called by the Name of the King of *Babylon*. See *Nehemiah* xiii. 6. as the ſame King of *Perſia* is here called the King of *Aſſyria*. For the Kings formerly called by theſe Names, were poſſeſſed of vaſt Dominions over many large Provinces, which the *Perſian* Kings enjoying, they retained the ancient Names of the former Kings. For, as *Joh. Voſſius* obſerves, in his *Diſſertatio de* IV *Monarchiis*, Sect. ix. the Kingdom of *Babylon* was not extinguiſhed by little and little, but all at once: *Cyrus* poſſeſſed himſelf of it intirely, *ſimul & ſemel*; and adding a vaſt Dominion to the ſmall one he had before, was called the King of thoſe Dominions which he conquered.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *NOW after these Things, in the Reign of Artaxerxes King of Persia,*] The same *Artaxerxes*, I suppose, mentioned in the foregoing Chapter, *ver.* 14. But *R. Solomon*, and *Aben Ezra*, fancy he was *Darius* before-named.

Ezra the Son of Seraiah, the Son of Azariah, the Son of Hilkiah,] He was descended from *Seraiah*, but not immediately begotten by him; for *Seraiah* perished when *Jerusalem* was taken by the *Chaldeans*, 2 *Kings* xxv. 18, 21. at which Time *Ezra*, it is likely, was not in being; but he was his Grandson, or great Grandson, and his Descent is mentioned from him, because he was an eminent Person, who flourished before the Destruction of the Temple, whereas his Father or Grandfather lived obscurely in their Captivity. See 1 *Chron.* vi. 15.

Ver. 2. *The Son of Shallum, the Son of Zadok, the Son of Ahitub,*

Ver. 3. *The Son of Amariah, the Son of Azariah, the Son of Meraioth,*] In this Genealogy there are six Generations omitted, between *Azariah* and *Meraioth* (as before there were some between *Seraiah* and *Ezra*) which are to be supplied out of 1 *Chron.* vi. 7, &c. Which *Kimchi*, as I there observed, thinks was done for Brevity Sake: For *Ezra* being Author of that Book which was written first, and then of this, might think it needless to repeat all that he had there said at large.

Ver. 4. *The Son of Zerahiah, the Son of Uzzi, the Son of Bukki,*

Ver. 5. *The Son of Abishua, the Son of Phinehas, the Son of Eleazar, the Son of Aaron the chief Priest:*] See 1 *Chron.* vi. 4, 5.

Ver. 6. *This Ezra went up from Babylon,*] Not only by the King's Leave, and his Commission, but with great Authority, as appears from the End of this Verse, and from *v.* 25.

And he was a ready Scribe in the Law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given:] He calls himself a Scribe (as *Buxtorf* notes in his *Tiberias*) not from writing and describing, but from declaring and explicating those Things that are contained in the Scripture. For as *Sepher* signifies a Book, so *Sopher* signifies one skilful and learned in that Book, an Interpreter and Teacher out of it. And there being no Book comparable to the Book of the Law, therefore *Sopher* became a Name of great Dignity, and signified one that taught God's Law, and expounded it to his People. Thus in the *New Testament* Γραμματεῖς, *the Scribes*, were those that instructed the People. For when our Saviour is said to have taught them as one having Authority, and *not as the Scribes*, it plainly shews that they were Teachers, tho' not with such Authority. See *Jerem.* viii. 8. where the Word *Scribe* is thus used.

And he calls himself a *ready Scribe*, because he was expert in the Law, and understood it throughly, both in all Things belonging to the Priesthood, and to the Civil Power; in which he was so well versed, that he could give a ready Account of any Part of it. And it is thought by some, he gathered together the most perfect Copies of the Law, and put out an accurate Edition of it, with all the prophetical Books, and such Poems as had any sacred Authority among them, adding the History of following Times. But *Josephus* saith nothing of it, and therefore it is look'd upon by others as a *Jewish* Chimæra, who attribute many other Things to him without Ground.

And the King granted him all his Request,] Some think to rebuild *Jerusalem*, of which there is no mention any where; therefore he only granted him Power, as he desired, to do such Things as are mentioned below, *ver.* 14, 15, &c.

According to the Hand of the LORD his God upon him.] For God was so favourable to him, as to incline the King to give a gracious Answer to his Petition. And indeed, these Kings of *Persia* were so exceeding kind to the *Jews*, that in a grateful Remembrance of the Favour they shewed them, in permitting them to build the Temple again, and assisting them in it, they caused a Figure of the City and Palace of *Shushan* (where the Kings of *Persia* resided) to be made in Brass, in the East-gate of the Temple, which looked towards *Persia*; as we read in the *Talmud*, in the Treatise called *Middoth*.

Ver. 7. *And there went up some of the Children of Israel,*] Of the ten Tribes, or such *Jews* as remained still in *Babylon*, after Leave given them by *Cyrus* to return into their own Country.

And of the Priests, and the Levites, and the Singers, and the Porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh Year of Artaxerxes the King.] This was the second Company that went up to *Jerusalem*, consisting of such-like Persons as went up first with *Zerubbabel*, *Jeshua*, and others, *ch.* ii. 2, 70. For hearing the Temple was rebuilt, and the Worship of God restored, we may very well think many went along with *Ezra*, who had not such a strong Motive to go in the first of *Cyrus*.

Ver. 8. *And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth Month, which was in the seventh Year of the King.*

Ver. 9. *For upon the first Day of the first Month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first Day of the fifth Month came he to Jerusalem,*] On the first Day of the first Month they went from *Babylon* to the River *Ahava*, where they spent three Days in taking a View of the People that accompanied him, *chap.* viii. 15. After eight Days more, Part of which they had spent in Fasting and Prayer, they went forward, *ch.* viii. 21, 22, 31.

According to the good Hand of his God upon him.] He had great Reason to acknowledge the Favour of God to them in conducting them safe to *Jerusalem*; for it was a long Way thither, and a difficult Journey, and they had many Impediments (going with Wives and Children, Flocks, and Herds) and were not without Enemies to way-lay them, whom he boasted he did not fear, but relied on the Divine Protection, as he told the King, *c.* viii. 22.

Ver. 10. *For Ezra had prepared his Heart to seek the Law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel Statutes and Judgments.*] He

was intent upon this Buſineſs, on which he had ſet his Heart, as we ſpeak, bending his Thoughts and Studies this Way; for ſo the *Hebrew* Word *Cun* (which we tranſlate *prepare*) ſignifies, to eſtabliſh, confirm, and make things fixed and immoveable: And firſt, he ſet himſelf to *ſeek the Law of the* LORD, that is, to enquire into it, and ſearch after the Will of God therein contained, that he might underſtand it himſelf; and then, like a good Man, he ſet his Heart *to do* what God commanded, and put in Practice what he knew to be his Duty; whereby he was the better qualified *to teach* others what he knew and did himſelf, which was the next Thing which he diligently attended. This was the right Method of doing good, in which *Nehemiah* tells us he proceeded, *chap.* viii. Beginning. Some think Statutes and Judgments are the ſame Thing, comprehending all the Precepts of *Moſes*, but others take them to have a diſtinct Meaning; the firſt ſignifying the ceremonial Law about the Divine Worſhip; and the ſecond, the moral Precepts concerning common Honeſty and civil Life.

Ver. 11. *Now this is the Copy of the Letter that the King Artaxerxes gave unto Ezra the Prieſt, the Scribe, even a Scribe of the Words of the Commandments of the* LORD, *and of his Statutes to Iſrael.*] Here *Ezra* declares that he was no ordinary Doctor of the Law, but of eminent Rank among them, who had ſtudied the Law thoroughly, and was able in every Caſe to determine what was to be done. Or, (as ſome underſtand the latter Part of this Verſe) he was perfectly ſkilled in the Words or Language wherein the Law was written, (which in the Captivity many perhaps had forgotten) and in the Senſe of every Law. But this, I think, is not to be ſuppoſed, that they had forgotten their own Language.

Ver. 12. *Artaxerxes King of Kings,*] For he had ſeveral Kings who were ſubject to him.

Unto Ezra the Prieſt, a Scribe of the Law of the God of Heaven,] So *Ezra*, I ſuppoſe, was wont to be ſtyled by the *Jews*, who never ſpake of him, but as a Man of greater Dignity and Honour than others.

Perfect Peace, and at ſuch a Time.] On ſuch a Year and Day, as was mentioned in the Date of the Letter.

Ver. 13. *I make a Decree, that all they of the People of Iſrael, and of his Prieſts, and Levites in my Realm, which are minded of their own free Will to go up to Jeruſalem, go with thee.*] None might leave his Country without the King's Permiſſion, which he here gives to all the *Jewiſh* Nation who were ſo diſpoſed.

Ver. 14. *Foraſmuch as thou art ſent of the King, and of his ſeven Counſellors,*] By whoſe Advice this Decree being made, it gave it the greater Authority; for theſe were the principal Men of the Kingdom, as appears from the firſt of *Eſther*, *ver.* 14.

To enquire concerning Judah and Jeruſalem, according to the Law of thy God,] By this Commiſſion he gave him Authority to make Inquiſition in *Judea*, whether every Thing there was done conformably to the Law of *Moſes*: That is, he granted to the *Jewiſh* Nation an αὐτονομία, a Liberty to live by their own Laws, and to judge all Cauſes according to them; and in the Concluſion, granted them alſo an αὐτοδικία, a Power to ſentence Men according to their own Law, *ver.* 25, 26.

Which is in thine Hand:] He entruſted *Ezra* with this great Power of being ſupreme Inquiſitor and Judge, becauſe he was ſo very well ſkilled in the Law (which is meant by having *it in his Hand*) which he had in ſuch Readineſs, and was ſo very converſant in it, that he was able preſently to determine and judge whether it were obſerved.

Ver. 15. *And to carry the Silver and the Gold, which the King and his Counſellors have freely offered unto the God of Iſrael, whoſe Habitation is in Jeruſalem.*] This is an Argument that they had an high Opinion of the God of *Iſrael*, and deſired his Favour, tho' they did not worſhip him alone, but imagined other Gods had ſome Power, tho' not ſo great as he.

Ver. 16. *And all the Silver and Gold that thou canſt find in the Province of Babylon, with the Freewill-offering of the People, and of the Prieſts offering willingly for the Houſe of their God, which is in Jeruſalem:*] He gave them Leave to carry away all the Money they could procure (ſo the Word we tranſlate *find* is uſed in other Places) in his own Country of *Babylon*, as well as what the *Jews*, who had a Mind to ſtay ſtill there, ſhould offer for the Service of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 17. *That thou mayeſt buy ſpeedily with this Money, Bullocks, Rams, Lambs, with their Meat-offerings, and their Drink-offerings, and offer them upon the Altar of the Houſe of your God, which is in Jeruſalem.*] That they might pray for the Proſperity of the King and of his Sons, as *Darius* ordered, *ch.* vi. 9, 10.

Ver. 18. *And whatſoever ſhall ſeem good to thee, and to thy Brethren, to do with the reſt of the Silver and Gold, that do after the Will of your God.*] He authorizes *Ezra* to take other Prieſts to his Aſſiſtance, in diſpoſing of the Money that was not laid out in Sacrifices; only he would have it employed to ſome ſacred Uſe.

Ver. 19. *The Veſſels alſo that are given thee, for the Service of the Houſe of thy God, thoſe deliver thou before the God of Jeruſalem.*] He ſpeaks of him, as if he thought him a particular God, but afterwards ſpeaks of him as the *God of Heaven*, as he had done before, *ver.* 12. which is a Sign he took him to be the moſt High God, who had a ſpecial Affection for *Jeruſalem*, becauſe he was there worſhipped.

Ver. 20. *And whatſoever more ſhall be needful for the Houſe of thy God, which thou ſhalt have Occaſion to beſtow,*] Either for the Reparation (if any was wanting) or for the Adorning of the Houſe. See *ver.* 27.

Beſtow it out of the Kings Treaſure-houſe.] Out of his Exchequer, as we now ſpeak.

Ver. 21. *And I, even I Artaxerxes the King, do make a Decree to all the Treaſurers which are beyond the River,*] All the Receivers, and other Officers employed about the King's Revenue.

That whatſoever Ezra the Prieſt, the Scribe of the Law of the God of Heaven, ſhall require of you,

you, it be done ſpeedily;] This was a wonderful large Conceſſion, that he ſhould have whatſoever he deſired; and that they ſhould not make him attend upon them, and wait long for it, but furniſh him immediately.

Ver. 22. *Unto an hundred Talents of Silver, and to an hundred Meaſures of Wheat, and to an hundred Baths of Wine, and to an hundred Baths of Oil, and Salt without preſcribing how much.*] He limits all the other Expences, except *Salt*; without which no Sacrifice could be offered; and therefore ſince he would not have any Sacrifice hindred, he did not preſcribe any Meaſure of that; but left them to take as much as they found neceſſary.

Ver. 23. *Whatſoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, let it be diligently done, for the Houſe of the God of Heaven:*] Here *Jacobus Capellus* cries out in a Kind of Rapture, *O verba literis aureis regum Palatiis inſcribenda, atque adeò ſtylo adamantino fidelium omnium animis inſculpenda!* O Words to be written upon the Palaces of Kings in golden Letters, and engraven on the Minds of all the Faithful with a Style of Adamant! For they expreſs an exceeding great Senſe of God, and of his ſupreme Authority; and the Regard that is due from the greateſt Kings and Potentates to his moſt ſacred Commands. *Hiſt. ſacra & exotica, ad A. M.* 3543. The like is not eaſy to be found any where.

For why ſhould there be Wrath againſt the Realm of the King and his Sons?] As he was afraid there would be, if the Worſhip and Service of God was here neglected, thro' his Default: An Argument he was poſſeſſed with a greater Dread of God's juſt Diſpleaſure, than the Kings of *Judah* themſelves were generally before the Captivity: The Mention of the King and *of his Sons*, ſhews, that this agrees to *Artaxerxes Mnemon* exactly; but not to *Xerxes*, (who was in *Greece* in the ſeventh Year of his Reign) nor to *Longimanus:* But *Artaxerxes Mnemon* had then *Ochus* the Huſband of *Eſther*, who was a great Man, and ſome more: This Remark I owe to the moſt learned Dr. *Alix.*

Ver. 24. *Alſo we certify you, that touching any of the Prieſts and Levites, Singers, Porters, Nethinims, or Miniſters of this Houſe of God, it ſhall not be lawful to impoſe Toll, Tribute, or Cuſtom upon them.*] The King's Revenue aroſe out of theſe three Impoſts, as appears by *ch.* iv. 13. from all which Burdens, which were very great, the King freed every one of God's Miniſters, that they might the more chearfully attend his Service: And this was confirmed by ſome ſucceeding Princes, as *Bertram* obſerves, *de Republica Jud.* p. 171. which the firſt Chriſtian Kings piouſly imitated, as *J. Wolphius* notes, *That they who watched and prayed for the publick Good, might be free from all other Cares.*

Ver. 25. *And thou, Ezra, after the Wiſdom of thy God, that is in thine Hand,*] According as the Law of God directed, in which he was very expert, *ver.* 14.

Set Magiſtrates and Judges, which may judge all the People that are beyond the River,] Such as *Moſes* ordered, *Deut.* xvi. 18. Here ſeems to be the Original of the *Sanhedrin*, which continued but weakly till the Time of the *Maccabees.*

All ſuch as know the Laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know them not.] Men well acquainted with the Laws of God, who were able to inſtruct others that were ignorant. No *Jewiſh* King could have given more pious Inſtructions: And the ſame *Jacobus Capellus* in the Place above-named, thinks, that in this large Power granted to *Ezra*, there was comprehended ſufficient Authority to build the Walls of *Jeruſalem:* But as the King did not expreſly mention it, ſo the Malignity of the *Jews* Enemies hindred it; and *Ezra* being now grown old, was unable to cope with them. But this is not a good Reaſon, for he lived thirteen Years after this, able to ſtand and read the Law from ſix to twelve of the Clock.

Ver. 26. *And whoſoever will not do the Law of thy God, and the Law of the King,*] By the *Law of the King* is meant this Decree, which was now made in Favour of the *Jews*; giving them Authority to execute their own Laws again. As for the Imperial Laws, *Ezra* had nothing to do with them, nor were the *Jews* to be governed by them, but by their own Laws; unleſs any Matters could not be determined by the Divine Laws; in that Caſe they were to be judged by the King's Law. So *Joh. Vorſtius* underſtands theſe Words disjunctively (in his *Diſſert. de Synedriis Hebr.* Sect. 36.) that they ſhould act according to the Direction of the divine Law; or, if any thing fell out that could not be defined by that, then according to the Preſcription of the Laws of the King.

Let Judgment be executed ſpeedily upon him, whether it be unto Death,] The *Romans* never allowed the *Jews* the Power of Life and Death, which the *Perſians* did. So it is commonly thought; but the contrary is plain from the Acts of the Apoſtles, which ſhew, they enjoyed that Power, by their ſtoning St. *Stephen.*

Or to Baniſhment, or to Confiſcation of Goods, or to Impriſonment.] That Word which we tranſlate *Baniſhment*, ſignifies in the *Chaldee* (as we note in the Margin of our Bibles) *rooting out*; and therefore is by ſome interpreted diſinheriting, or excommunicating from their Society; ſo that he ſhould be an *Out-law*, as we ſpeak, the higheſt Degree of which was called *Shammathah.* And thus our Mr. *Thorndike* obſerves, that this *rooting out* is the ſame with that which in *ch.* x. 8. is called being *divided* or *ſeparated* from the Congregation of the Captivity; being indeed a Kind of Temporal Out-lawry, unto which is joined Confiſcation of Goods: And thus the greater Excommunication among Chriſtians, is every where a Temporal Puniſhment; *viz.* in reſpect of ſome Temporal Puniſhment attending it in Chriſtian States; which in Chriſtianity is accidental, by an Act of thoſe States; but in Judaiſm was eſſential, ſo long as thoſe Temporal Advantages, which were eſſential Conditions of the Law, were not forfeited: And this without doubt is the ſame Puniſhment that is called *Putting out of the Synagogue.* See *Rights of the Church in a Chriſtian State*, p. 28. and *Review*, p. 58. with *Grotius de Imper. Sum. Poteſt. Cap.* ix. I only add, that from ſuch Sentence it was in vain for them to appeal to any of the King's Courts; for by this Decree all Mat-

ters were to be tried and finally judged by their own Law.

Ver. 27. *Bleſſed be the LORD God of our Fathers, which hath put ſuch a Thing as this in the Kings Heart, to beautify the Houſe of the LORD which is in Jeruſalem:*] To be ſo liberal in his Gifts and Privileges, as is before expreſſed, *ver.* 15, 16, *&c.*

Ver. 28. *And hath extended Mercy unto me,*] Theſe Words plainly ſhew, *Ezra* wrote this Part of this Book, if not the whole.

Before the King and his Counſellors, and before all the Kings mighty Princes:] By whoſe Advice and Conſent the large Immunities before-mentioned were granted to the *Jewiſh* Nation.

And I was ſtrengthened as the Hand of the LORD my God was upon me, and I gathered together out of Iſrael, chief Men to go up with me.] Whoſe Names follow in the next Chapter. The marvellous Kindneſs of the King in this Grant to *Ezra*, gave a great Authority to him; and moved ſeveral of the greateſt Perſons among the *Jews* ſtill in *Babylon*, to reſolve to accompany him to *Jeruſalem*.

Theſe two laſt Verſes are evidently the Words of *Ezra*, acknowledging the divine Goodneſs to him, in giving him ſuch Favour with the King; whoſe Words before are in the *Syriack* or *Chaldee* Language; but theſe are in the *Hebrew*.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *THeſe are now the chief of their Fathers, and this is the Genealogy of them that went up with me from Babylon, in the Reign of Artaxerxes the King.*] Whoſe Names he ſets down to preſerve their Memory to future Generations.

Ver. 2. *Of the Sons of Phinehas; Gerſhom: Of the Sons of Ithamar; Daniel:*] By the Sons, he means the Families of theſe two Perſons; two of which he particularly names, *Gerſhom*, and *Daniel:* Not *Daniel* the Prophet, but ſome eminent Perſon of *Ithamar*'s Family.

Of the Sons of David; Hattuſh.] His Family was ſo noble, becauſe *Chriſt* was to ſpring from thence, that ſpecial Notice was taken of it.

Ver. 3. *Of the Sons of Shechaniah, of the Sons of Pharoſh; Zechariah:*] This *Shechaniah* is ſaid to be the Son of *Pharoſh*, to diſtinguiſh him from another *Shechaniah*, mentioned *ver.* 5.

And with him] That is, with *Zechariah*.

Were reckoned by Genealogy of the Males an hundred and fifty.] It is not ſaid, how many there were of the other Families; and we are not to think that none but Males went up out of this Family, and the reſt that follow; for Mention is made of their little ones, *ver.* 21. who had Women, no doubt, to look after them.

Ver. 4. *Of the Sons of Pahath-moab; Elihoenai the Son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred Males.*

Ver. 5. *Of the Sons of Shechaniah; the Son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred Males.*] This was a Perſon of great Note, of whoſe Family there went up almoſt twice as many as did of any other Family.

Ver. 6. *Of the Sons alſo of Adin; Ebed the Son of Jonathan, and with him fifty Males.*

Ver. 7. *And of the Sons of Elam; Jeſhaiah the Son of Athaliah, and with him ſeventy Males.*] Concerning thoſe, and the Families that follow to *ver.* 15. there is little to be noted; but that out of them many went up with *Zerubbabel* in the Reign of *Cyrus*, (which appears by the Account given in the ſecond Chapter) as now more went up with *Ezra* out of the very ſame Families.

Ver. 8. *And of the Sons of Shephatiah; Zebadiah the Son of Michael, and with him fourſcore Males.*

Ver. 9. *Of the Sons of Joab; Obadiah the Son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen Males.*

Ver. 10. *And of the Sons of Shelomith; the Son of Joſiphiah, and with him an hundred and threeſcore Males.*

Ver. 11. *And of the Sons of Bebai; Zechariah the Son of Bebai, and with him twenty and eight Males.*

Ver. 12. *And of the Sons of Azgad; Johanan the Son of Hakkatan, and with him an hundred and ten Males.*

Ver. 13. *And of the laſt Sons of Adonikam, whoſe Names are theſe, Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them threeſcore Males.*] They are called *the laſt Sons*, with reſpect to the firſt of them that went up with *Zerubbabel*. Or, theſe were the laſt that followed *Ezra:* Which ſome look upon as a Blot on *Adonikam*, that his Family was the laſt that accompanied *Ezra*.

Ver. 14. *Of the Sons alſo of Bigvai; Uthai, and Zabbud, and with them ſeventy Males.*

Ver. 15. *And I gathered them together to the River that runneth to Ahava;*] This ſeems to be the Name of a River, as well as of a Town, which ſtood on the Bank of *Euphrates*, there where this Stream emptied itſelf into it. Some take it for *Adiabene*, a City ſo called from *Adiava*, *v.* 31.

And there abode we in Tents three Days:] It is likely, that in the whole Journey they lodged, not in Cities and Towns, but in Tents which they carried along with them; and could pitch where and when it was moſt commodious for them.

And I viewed the People,] Took an Account of their Number, and of what Tribe they were.

And the Prieſts, and found there were none of the Sons of Levi.] That is, none who were not Prieſts: Of whom there were ſome, *ver.* 2.

Ver. 16. *Then ſent I for Eliezer, for Ariel, for Shemaiah, and for Elnathan, and for Jarib, and for Elnathan, and for Nathan, and for Zechariah, and for Meſhullam, chief Men;*] Men of Authority among the Company; and the Heads perhaps of ſeveral Families.

Alſo for Joiarib, and for Elnathan, Men of Underſtanding.] Theſe eleven Perſons he ſent for to come to him, that he might employ them in a Meſſage to a Place, where he knew there were a great many *Levites*; as it follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 17. *And I ſent them with Commandment unto Iddo the Chief,*] Among the *Levites*, who dwelt at the Place next mentioned, and there had the free Exerciſe of their Religion, as this

and many other Paſſages in this Book plainly enough prove. And it is very probable, they had their Synagogues (as they had afterward in their Diſperſion) or other Places, where they met for religious Worſhip. For we find the People reſorting to *Ezekiel* in their Captivity, and him preaching to them the Word of God, in many Places of his Book; particularly *ch.* xxxiii. 30, 31, *&c.* And *Ezra* in all likelihood was an Inſtructor among them, as *Joarib* and *Elnathan* alſo were, and *Iddo*, to whom theſe were ſent. By which means many Proſelytes were made, who left their own Country, and came with them to *Jeruſalem*, when they returned, *ch.* vi. 21.

At the Place Caſiphia,] Several are of Opinion, and particularly *Stephanus Morinus* lately, that this Place was in the Country of the *Caſpii*, a People who gave Denomination to the *Caſpian Sea*; where ſome of the *Iſraelites* were planted, who were carried captive by *Salmanaſſer*, and ſtill preſerved their Language and Religion. But I look upon this as unlikely, the *Caſpian Sea* and the Country about it being too far off for *Ezra* to ſend thither theſe Meſſengers; who rather went to a Place in the Province of *Babylon*, to which they went, and did a great deal of Buſineſs, and returned in the Space of twelve Days. The Truth is (as Dr. *Alix* obſerves) the *Levites* were not among the *Ten Tribes*, but in *Chaldæa*. And perhaps ſome of them were tranſported into *Parthia*; where there was a City called *Caſpi*, known to the old Geographers.

And I told them what they ſhould ſay unto Iddo, and to his Brethren the Nethinims, at the Place Caſiphia,] Who, it ſeems, were better diſpoſed than many of the *Levites*, to whom they miniſtred. But *R. Solomon* and others tranſlate the Words quite otherways; *He told them what they ſhould ſay to Iddo and his Brethren*, (or, *to Achio*) *who were conſtituted in the Place Caſiphia.* For it is plain they were not *Nethinims*, *Iddo* being called *Haroſh*, a Prince, or Chief, that is, among the *Levites:* By whoſe Authority *Ezra* expected ſome *Levites*, whom he wanted to accompany him to *Jeruſalem*, ſhould be ſent to him; as they were. Now this cannot be ſaid of the *Nethinims*; for none of them were Chiefs, or Preſidents of the *Levites*, but their Miniſters or Servants, as appears from *ver.* 20. and other Places. Therefore the Word *Nethinim* muſt here ſignify Men *appointed* to live among the *Jews* of that Place; or, who had their Reſidence there.

That they ſhould bring unto us Miniſters for the Houſe of our God.] That is, *Levites* to attend upon the Prieſts, as the *Nethinims* did upon the *Levites*.

Ver. 18. *And by the good Hand of our God upon us,*] God inclined their Hearts to comply with his Deſire.

They brought us a Man of Underſtanding of the Sons of Mahli, the Son of Levi, the Son of Iſrael, and Sherebiah, with his Sons and his Brethren, eighteen;] They brought a Man of Underſtanding, *viz. Sherebiah*, (ſo the Words, I think, ſhould be tranſlated) with his Sons and Brethren, eighteen in Number.

Ver. 19. *And Haſhabiah, and with him Jeſhaiah of the Sons of Merari, his Brethren and their Sons, twenty;*] Theſe were eminent Perſons alſo, tho' not equal to *Sherebiah*, who is noted as a Man of great Knowledge.

Ver. 20. *Alſo of the Nethinims, whom David and the Princes had appointed for the Service of the Levites, two hundred and twenty Nethinims:*] Every one knows, that the *Gibeonites* were addicted by *Joſhua* to be Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, for the Service of God's Houſe; but a great many of them being deſtroyed by *Saul*, there were not enow remaining to ſerve in thoſe Miniſtries. And therefore *David* (as *Bertram* thinks, in his Book *De Repub. Jud. p.* 277.) appointed ſome other Perſons to the ſame Employment; and afterwards *Solomon* appointed more; who are called therefore *Solomon's Servants*. All which, both *Gibeonites* and thoſe who were added to them by *David* and *Solomon*, were known by the Name of *Nethinims*, as much as to ſay, *Dedititii*, or *Aſcriptitii*, Men *given*, as the *Hebrew* Word denotes: For as the *Levites* were *given* to the Prieſts (*Numb.* viii. 16, 19.) ſo were theſe *given* to the *Levites*. And this is ſaid to have been done *by David and the Princes*, becauſe *David* adviſed with the Conſiſtory about it, who are called *the Princes*, 2 *Chron.* xxx. 2. xxvi. 10, 11. See Mr. *Thorndike*, *Rights of the Church*, *p.* 231. But I have obſerved elſewhere, that theſe *Nethinims* were diſtinct from the *Gibeonites*, and of a higher Rank in the Service of God. See 1 *Chron.* ix. *ver.* 2.

All of them were expreſſed by Name.] I ſuppoſe *Iddo* ſent the Names of every one of them, tho' they are not all here mentioned.

Ver. 21. *Then I proclaimed a Faſt there, at the River Ahava, that we might afflict ourſelves before our God, to ſeek of him a right Way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our Subſtance.*] He being the Leader of this Colony, had Authority from the King to command whatſoever he pleaſed for the Good of it. And nothing was more neceſſary, than humbly and ſorrowfully to acknowledge their Offences againſt God, and beg his gracious Pardon; and that he would proſper them in their Journey, and direct them in the beſt Way to bring themſelves and all they had ſafe to *Jeruſalem:* Which was the End of this Faſt.

Ver. 22. *For I was aſhamed to require of the King a Band of Soldiers and Horſemen, to help us againſt the Enemy in the Way: Becauſe we had ſpoken unto the King, ſaying, The Hand of our God is upon all them for good, that ſeek him; but his Power and his Wrath is againſt all them that forſake him.*] He might have obtained from the King any thing that he deſired; but he had ſo openly declared, that he depended ſolely upon God for ſafe Conduct, that he was aſhamed to aſk a Guard of the King to ſecure them in their Paſſage, from thoſe Enemies that he knew would way-lay them, *ver.* 31. For the King not being much inſtructed in divine Matters, might imagine, that all were vain Boaſts which the *Jews* had made of the Favour of God to them, and of the Prophecies concerning their Reſtauration: Which made *Ezra* and others ſo confident,

ſident, as only to deſire Leave to return to their own Country; and as for a ſafe Paſſage, they took no Care, but to commit themſelves to God, who would defend his own People that truſted in him. To aſk therefore Protection and Defence from the King, would look as if they diſtruſted the Power and Favour of their God, concerning whom they had ſpoken ſo magnificently. But it was highly neceſſary they ſhould beſeech that of God, which they would not aſk of the King; which they did by Faſting and Prayer.

Ver. 23. *So we faſted, and beſought our God for this, and he was intreated of us.*] Gave them ſome Aſſurance, that their Petitions ſhould be granted. Some think, this Faſt laſted eight Days, beginning after the three Days mentioned above, *ver.* 15. For they began to go out of *Babylon* on the firſt Day of the Month, *ch.* vii. 9. and they ſtaid at *Ahava* three Days to take a View of their Company; and went from thence on the twelfth, (*ver.* 31). And therefore they muſt either keep this Faſt eight Days, or elſe they were ſeven Days in coming from *Babylon*, and other Places, to *Ahava*; where a general Rendezvous, as we ſpeak, was appointed. And this I take to be moſt probable, that they came out of *Babylon* on the firſt Day, and expected at *Ahava* till all their Company was got together, which was about the ſeventh Day; and they all reſted three Days to make a compleat Muſter of the whole Number, and faſted one Day; and ſo began to take their Journey from *Ahava* on the twelfth.

Ver. 24. *Then I ſeparated twelve of the chief of the Prieſts, Sherebiah, Haſhabiah, and ten of their Brethren with them,*] With whom he might intruſt the Gifts, that had been offered for the Temple: Theſe ten Men perhaps were principal *Levites*, who were added to the two Prieſts to take this Charge upon them. See *ver.* 29.

Ver. 25. *And weighed unto them the Silver, and the Gold, and the Veſſels, even the Offering of the Houſe of our God, which the King, and his Counſellors, and his Lords, and all Iſrael there preſent, had offered.*] That they might have no Excuſe, if they were any way embezzelled.

Ver. 26. *I even weighed into their Hand ſix hundred and fifty Talents of Silver, and ſilver Veſſels an hundred Talents, and of Gold an hundred Talents:*] Or, *an hundred ſilver Veſſels, according to their Talents*; that is, every one a Talent.

Ver. 27. *Alſo twenty Baſons of Gold, of a thouſand Drams, and two Veſſels of fine Copper, precious as Gold.*] They were not worth their Weight in Gold; but they were of great Value, being ſcarce and rare; as that Metal, called *Aurichalcum* was; which might be the Reaſon, why there were no more than two of them.

Ver. 28. *And I ſaid unto them, Ye are holy unto the LORD, the Veſſels are holy alſo,*] They being Men conſecrated to God's Service, were bound above all others to be faithful in the Diſcharge of their Duty, eſpecially being intruſted with holy Things; which were therefore to be carefully delivered at *Jeruſalem*, juſt as they were committed to their Truſt.

And the Silver, and the Gold are a Free-will-offering unto the LORD God of your Fathers.] Which made them ſtill more ſacred.

Ver. 29. *Watch ye, and keep them, until ye weigh them before the Chief of the Prieſts and the Levites, and Chief of the Fathers of Iſrael at Jeruſalem, in the Chambers of the Houſe of the LORD.*] Where they were depoſited, after they had given an Account of them there, to the Perſons here mentioned; who received them by the ſame Weight, that they were delivered unto theſe that brought them.

Ver. 30. *So took the Prieſts and the Levites, the Weight of the Silver and the Gold, and the Veſſels, to bring them to Jeruſalem unto the Houſe of our God.*] This ſhews, that ſome of theſe twelve Men (mentioned *ver.* 26.) if not ten of them, were *Levites*, and not all Prieſts.

Ver. 31. *Then we departed from the River of Ahava,*] Which run by that City into *Euphrates*.

On the twelfth Day of the firſt Month, to go unto Jeruſalem;] To purſue their intended Journey.

And the Hand of our God was upon us,] To protect and ſtrengthen them in ſo dangerous and long a Journey.

And he delivered us from the Hand of the Enemy, and of ſuch as lay in wait by the Way.] There were not only many Enemies who hated them, and were deſirous to cut them off, but many Robbers who watched for a Booty, whom God either diverted ſome other way, or diſheartned from attempting any thing againſt them; or, perhaps, directed them (as they prayed, *ver.* 21.) into ſome uncommon Ways, in which People were not wont to travel, whereby they eſcaped their Enemies.

Ver. 32. *And we came to Jeruſalem, and abode there three Days.*] Before they did any thing: For it was neceſſary to reſt and refreſh themſelves a while, after ſo tedious a Journey, in which they ſpent above a Quarter of a Year. See *ch.* vii. 9. Their Friends alſo, it is likely, came to viſit them in theſe three Days Time, and welcome them to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 33. *Now on the fourth Day was the Silver and the Gold, and the Veſſels weighed in the Houſe of our God, by the Hand of Meremoth the Son of Uriah the Prieſt, and with him was Eleazar the Son of Phinehas, and with them was Jozabad the Son of Jeſhua, and Noadiah the Son of Binnui, Levites:*] The Names of *Eleazar* and *Phinehas* continued thro' many Generations among the Prieſts, becauſe they were two very eminent Perſons in *Aaron*'s Family. And as there were ſome *Levites* charged with this Treaſure to bring it to *Jeruſalem*, ſo there were ſome of them who ſaw them diſcharge themſelves of their Truſt.

Ver. 34. *By Number, and by Weight of every one: and all the Weight was written at that Time.*] There was a publick Record made of it; and the Perſons forementioned, who brought the Money and the Veſſels, were diſcharged by a publick Inſtrument, ſigned by them that received it: Or, perhaps, the Meaning may be, that there was an Inventory taken of the Goods belonging to the Temple, which the Prieſts were charged withal, as the Stewards of a Family are wont to be, with the Goods belonging to it.

Ver. 35. *Alſo the Children of thoſe that had been carried away which were come out of the Captivity,*] That is, this Company who came up from *Babylon* with *Ezra*.

Offered Burnt-offerings unto the God of Iſrael,] To expreſs their Gratitude to God for their Reſtoration.

Twelve Bullocks for all Iſrael,] One for every Tribe.

Ninety and ſix Rams, ſeventy and ſeven Lambs, twelve He-goats for a Sin-offering:] For all *Iſrael*, whether ſtill remaining in *Babylon*, or returned to *Jeruſalem*.

All this was a Burnt-offering unto the LORD.] All the reſt (except the He-goats) were a Burnt-offering; whereby they acknowledged the *LORD* for their God.

Ver 36. *And they delivered the King's Commiſſions unto the King's Lieutenants, and to the Governors on this Side the River:*] That they might know the King's Pleaſure, and what Privileges he had granted them, which are recited in the foregoing Chapter.

And they furthered the People, and the Houſe of God.] Yielded Obedience to the King's Orders.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *NOW when theſe Things were done,*] When he had ſhewn his Commiſſion, and it appeared that he had Power to reform all Abuſes, and ſee the Laws of *Moſes* obſerved by all the *Jews*, *ch.* vii. 14.

The Princes came to me, ſaying, The People of Iſrael, and the Prieſts, and the Levites have not ſeparated themſelves from the People of the Lands,] Some of the great Men came to him with a grievous Complaint, that unlawful Marriages were practiſed among them with thoſe wicked Nations whom God had forbidden them to mingle withal: Which was the more to be lamented, becauſe not only the People, but the Prieſts themſelves and the *Levites* were guilty of this Sin.

Doing according to their Abominations,] This is commonly an Expreſſion, ſignifying worſhipping of Idols, which are called *Abominations* in Scripture; but here ſignifies only Imitation of the Heathen in promiſcuous Marriages with any Nation whatſoever, which would ſoon lead them co commit Idolatry. For theſe Words in the *Hebrew* run thus, have *not ſeparated themſelves from the People of the Land, according to their Abominations*, (the Word *doing* is not there) which Mr. *Mede* rightly interprets, *according to the ſeveral Kinds of Idolaters in the Land round about them.*

Even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebuſites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites.] By this is appears, that as Marriages with the ſeven Nations of *Canaan* were expreſsly forbidden, *Deut.* vii. 2, 3. ſo *Ezra* thought that Law extended to all other Nations, who were not proſelyted to the *Jews* Religion. And this is the common Opinion of the *Hebrew* Doctors, as Mr. *Selden* ſhews, *Lib.* v. *de Jure Nat. & Gent.* Cap. xii. For even before the Law of *Moſes*, it ſeems to be thought unlawful, after they had received the Covenant of Circumciſion, for the Seed of *Abraham* to marry with other Nations that were uncircumciſed, *Gen.* xxxiv. 14.

Ver. 2. *For they have taken of their Daughters for themſelves, and for their Sons: So that the holy Seed have mingled themſelves with the People of thoſe Lands:*] They are called an *Holy Seed*, becauſe of the Covenant of God with them, which made them a peculiar People, ſeparated from all other Nations.

Yea, the Hand of the Princes and Rulers hath been chief in this Treſpaſs.] The Caſe was the more dangerous, becauſe the great Men of the Nation were the principal Offenders (*ch.* x. 18, 23.) whoſe Example the People followed without Fear of Puniſhment. It is likely, thoſe Princes who informed *Ezra* of this enormous Practice, had endeavoured to reform them, but could not, becauſe they were oppoſed by as great Men as themſelves. But we muſt not caſt away all Hope, tho' we cannot preſently reform Mens Lives; the Time may come when it may be done.

Ver. 3. *And when I heard this Thing, I rent my Garment and my Mantle,*] Both his inner and upper Garment; which was a Token not only of very great Grief and Sorrow, but expreſſed his Senſe of the divine Diſpleaſure. For the *Jews* rent their Clothes when they apprehended God to be highly offended. See *Grotius* upon *Matth.* xxvi. 65. The *Talmudiſts* ſay, the High Prieſt rent his Garments otherwiſe than other Men, not above from the Shoulders to the Bottom, but below at his Feet, and the Skirts of his Garments, upward.

And pluck'd off the Hair of my Head, and of my Beard,] This was ſtill a higher Sign of exceeding great Grief; for in ordinary Sorrow they only neglected their Hair, and let it hang down ſcattered in a careleſs Manner; but this was uſed in bitter Lamentations, even among the Heathens. So *Bochart* obſerves out of many Authors, particularly *Homer*, in ſeveral Places. For Example, ſpeaking of *Ulyſſes* and his Companions, bewailing the Death of *Elpenor*, he ſaith, *Odyſſ.* X.

Ἑζόμενοι ᾗ ἐνθαῦτα γόῳ, τίλλοντό τε χαίτας.

Thy ſitting down there howled, and plucked off their Hairs. See *Hieroz. Lib.* ii. *Cap.* 45. To ſhave the Head or the Beard was another Thing; which the Law forbad the *Jews* in their mourning for the Dead, becauſe it was a Cuſtom of their idolatrous Neighbours, whoſe Manners he would not have them imitate.

And ſat down aſtonied.] With Amazement that they ſhould be ſo ungrateful to God, who had delivered them from Captivity, and with an Apprehenſion of their Danger, there being ſo open a Breach of the Divine Law, which had formerly proved their Ruin.

Ver. 4. *Then were aſſembled unto me every one that trembled at the Words of the God of Iſrael,*] Which it is likely he read to them, and told them the Importance of them.

Becauſe of the Tranſgreſſion of thoſe that had been carried away:] Into *Babylon*, but now were returned to their own Land, little or nothing amended, either by their Baniſhment, or their Reſto-

Reſtoration. He ſpeaks not of thoſe who were lately come back with him, but of thoſe who came back with *Zerubbabel*, and of their Children.

And I ſat aſtonied until the Evening Sacrifice.] When the People uſed to meet together to worſhip God.

Ver. 5. *And at the Evening Sacrifice I aroſe up from my Heavineſs,*] Wherein he had ſat ever ſince he heard of their foul Tranſgreſſion.

And having rent my Garment and my Mantle,] He mentions that again, becauſe he ſtill continued, and appeared in a mournful Condition.

I fell upon my Knees, and ſpread out my Hands unto the LORD my God,] But put himſelf now into the Poſture of an humbly Supplicant to the divine Majeſty.

Ver. 6. *And ſaid, O my God, I am aſhamed, and bluſh to lift up my Face to thee, my God: for our Iniquities are increaſed over our Head, and our Treſpaſs is grown up unto the Heavens.*] The Sum of his Confeſſion and Deprecation is this, which it may be uſeful to repreſent at once: That he was confounded when he thought of the Greatneſs of their Sins, which were ready to overwhelm them, and of the Boldneſs and Inſolence of them beyond all Meaſure; and that, tho' they had ſeen the divine Vengeance upon their Forefathers (from whom they derived this impious Diſpoſition) in ſo terrible a Manner, that they had not yet worn off the Marks of his Diſpleaſure (*ver.* 6, 7.) He had begun indeed to ſhew Favour unto them (*ver.* 8.) but this ſo much the more aggravated their Wickedneſs, in that not very many Years after he had been ſo gracious as to deliver a ſmall handful of them, and given them a footing again in their own Land, and in the Holy Place, and thereby had made them joyful, and given them Life, as it were, from the Dead, by reſtoring them to their Liberty, they returned to their old Provocations, and forgot both that they had been Bondmen, and that God had been ſo kind to them in that Bondage, as to make thoſe whom they ſerved to pity them, and give them Leave to go to their own Land, and build the Houſe of their God, *ver.* 8, 9. What ſhall any one ſay for ſuch a wretched People as this (*ver.* 10.) who had no Regard to their Prophets, nor to *Moſes* himſelf, who had charged them to have nothing to do with the People of *Canaan*, whom he intended to deſtroy, becauſe they had defiled that Land, but to ſeparate themſelves from them, and ſeek to root them out, which was the Way to plant themſelves firmly there for ever, *ver.* 11, 12. Can we expect leſs than utter Deſtruction of this ſmall Remnant, when after all the Puniſhments he hath inflicted upon us for our Sins, and his ceaſing to puniſh us, and reſcuing us in this Manner from our Captivity, we return to thoſe Sins which are ſo odious to him, becauſe ſo expreſly againſt his Commandments, *ver.* 13, 14. If he deal ſo with us, we muſt acknowledge the Juſtice of his Proceedings. For when we remain a Monument of his Mercy, who are reſcued (as is apparent) from our Bondage, we are notwithſtanding here before him in our Offences, ſo guilty, that we have nothing to plead for our ſelves; we are not able to ſay one Word to excuſe our deteſtable Ingratitude.

There cannot be a more pathetical Supplication than this, taken all together; ſeveral Phraſes of which it may be fit to explain.

For our Iniquities are increaſed over our Head,] A Metaphor taken from deep waters, wherein Men are drowned and ready to periſh.

And our Treſpaſs is grown up unto the Heavens.] This ſignifies, as I have expreſſed it in my Paraphraſe, the high Preſumption and Inſolence of their Wickedneſs.

Ver. 7. *Since the Days of our Fathers, have we been in a great Treſpaſs unto this Day,* &c.] And therefore were puniſhed unto this Day, as the Verſe concludes: For many of their Brethren were ſtill in *Babylon*, or other Countries, and they who returned were in danger to be undone for their continued Sins.

Vir. 8. *And to give us a Nail in his holy Place.*] By *Nails* or *Pins* Tents were faſtened to the Ground; therefore this ſignifies (as it is explained in the Margin) *a ſettled Abode*, after long Baniſhment.

Ver. 9. *To give us a reviving,*] For *Ezekiel* compares them when they were in *Babylon*, to the dry Bones of dead Men lying in their Graves, *ch.* xxxvii. 1, &c.

And to give us a Wall in Judah and in Jeruſalem.] From hence ſome infer, that the Wall of *Jeruſalem*, before *Nehemiah* came, was built as well as the Temple. But the *Hebrew* Word *Gedar* ſhould be otherwiſe tranſlated; for it doth not properly ſignify a *Wall*, but an *Hedge* or *Fence*, ſuch as were made for the Folds of Sheep. Whereby *Ezra* expreſſes (as *Huetius* well notes) the ſingular Care of God of them; who being the *Shepherd of Iſrael*, had gathered together his ſcattered Sheep, and brought them back into their ancient Folds, wherein he preſerved them ſafe, even when they had no Wall to defend them, under the powerful Protection of the King of *Perſia*.

Ver. 10, 11, 12. Theſe Verſes need no Explication more than I have given in the Paraphraſe upon them.

Ver. 13. *Our God hath puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve.*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *haſt with-held beneath our Iniquities:* That is, forborn to puniſh. For, as when God will no longer forbear, he is ſaid *to ariſe*, and take Vengeance: So here (as *Lud. de Dieu* obſerves) on the contrary, he is ſaid to *withhold himſelf below*; that is, not to ariſe, but wait patiently for their Amendment.

Ver. 14. *So that there ſhould be no remnant nor eſcaping?*] Not one of ſuch a wicked Nation left remaining, but all utterly extirpated.

Ver. 15. *O LORD God of Iſrael, thou art righteous,* &c.] Either the Word *righteous* here ſignifies *very merciful*, which was the Reaſon they were not deſtroyed as they deſerved: Or, the next Words muſt be tranſlated, not, *for we remain*, but *though we remain eſcaped:* That is, God's Juſtice will not let us eſcape, tho' for the preſent he forbear to puniſh us.

Behold, we are before thee in our Treſpaſſes: for we cannot ſtand before thee, becauſe of this.] As this cannot be denied, ſo it cannot be defended or excuſed: But we muſt yield up our-

ſelves

ſelves to bear the Puniſhment, unto which thou wilt condemn us.

Thus he concludes this admirable Repreſentation of their Condition; which is as much as if he had ſaid, Unleſs we reform, I know not how to beg for Mercy, but we muſt be undone, and that moſt juſtly. For he gives them no Hope, intending to put them into a great Terror and Affrightment, and ſee how that would work upon their Hearts. And we find in the next Chapter (*ver.* 2.) it had this Effect; that one ſtood up and ſpake in the Name of all the reſt, that they would renew their Covenant with God, and put away theſe Abominations (which was effectual Repentance) and then they hope God would be merciful unto them.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confeſſed, weeping and caſting himſelf down before the Houſe of God, there aſſembled unto him out of Iſrael, a very great Congregation of Men, and Women, and Children: for the People wept very ſore.*] This Prayer being made at the Time of the Evening Sacrifice, (as we read before, *ch.* ix. 5.) when many aſſembled to worſhip God; and being uttered with great Paſſion, and the higheſt Expreſſions of Grief and Sorrow, it moved thoſe very much, who were preſent; eſpecially to ſee ſuch a Perſon as *Ezra*, a Prieſt of God, and a great Ruler under the King of *Perſia*, ſo dejected, full of Fear, Confuſion, and Aſtoniſhment: The Report of which was preſently carried thro' all *Jeruſalem*, and perhaps to neighbouring Places; which brought together a great Number of People of all Sorts, Men, Women, and Children; who all made great Lamentation, looking upon themſelves as under the high Diſpleaſure of the Almighty.

Ver. 2. *And Shechaniah the Son of Jehiel, one of the Sons of Elam, anſwered and ſaid unto Ezra,*] He ſeems to have been a good Man, not being numbered among thoſe that had treſpaſſed, tho' ſeveral of his Family were; even his own Father, *Jehiel*, and ſeveral of his Uncles, the Sons of his Grand-father *Elam*, ch. v. 26.

We have treſpaſſed againſt our God, and have taken ſtrange Wives of the People of the Land: yet now there is Hope in Iſrael concerning this Thing.] *Ezra* ſeemed to have given up all for gone, the more to awaken and affright them out of their Sins; and therefore this Perſon ſtands up to keep them from Deſpair, and to propound a Remedy, which he hoped would prove effectual: This he ſpake in the Name of the reſt; with the principal of which, perhaps, he had conſulted.

Ver. 3. *Now therefore let us make a Covenant with our God, to put away all the Wives, and ſuch as are born of them, according to the Counſel of my Lord, and of thoſe that tremble at the Commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the Law.*] That which was done contrary to the Law of God, was looked upon as null, and therefore theſe were accounted no Marriages, and their Children were no better than thoſe we call Baſtards, and were not to be a Part of the Family, but to be put away with their Mothers. St. *Paul* indeed allows the *Corinthians* to keep their Pagan Wives or Huſbands, becauſe they had them before they were Chriſtians; and there was no Law of God or Man againſt their Marriages, as there was here a very ſtrict Law of God forbidding them. It may ſeem hard indeed that the Children ſhould be put away as well as their Mothers; but they were unlawfully born, and muſt follow the Condition of their Mothers, and being educated in Superſtition, might corrupt other Children: And therefore it was unlawful hereafter to marry with the Children of theſe Women, for they were reputed unclean, though their Fathers were *Iſraelites*. Thus *Maimonides* reports the Senſe of the Law to be, *A Son begot of a Gentile by an Iſraelite, is not to be accounted a Son.* If a Son indeed were begot by a *Gentile* of an *Iſraelitiſh* Woman, the Child was accounted an *Iſraelite*, for *Partus ſequitur Ventrem.* But a Child was of the ſame Condition with his Mother, and no Regard was had to the Father at all. So that if a Child was begot by an *Iſraelite*, of a Woman that was a Slave, the Child was a Slave; but if on the contrary, a Woman of *Iſrael* had a Child by one that was a Slave, the Child was as free as any other *Iſraelite*. See *Selden* in the Place above-mentioned, *pag.* 616.

But it is likely, when they put away theſe Wives and Children, they made ſome Proviſion for them; for all was to be done according to the Counſel of *Ezra*, and other good Men, who feared God, and trembled to think his Commandment was broke, and therefore judged they ſhould be put away; but they preſcribed the Manner of it, how it ſhould be done; which, it is probable, was not without ſome Conſideration of them.

Ver. 4. *Ariſe:*] For he lay proſtrate upon the Ground, *ver.* 1.

For this Matter belongeth unto thee;] Who had the greateſt Skill in the Law, and a full Power from the King of *Perſia*, to ſee every thing done according unto it, *ch.* vii. 14. Now the Renewing of the Covenant, for the Obſervation of the Law, was to be done by the Authority of the Sovereign, as we ſee by the Examples of *Aſa*, *Hezekiah*, and *Joſiah*; and therefore it is a great Miſtake (as Mr. *Thorndike* obſerves) to imagine the People could renew it, or any Part of it, without the Conſent of the Sovereign. From whence we may conclude, that *Ezra* having ſuch a Commiſſion, as is mentioned *ch.* vii. was eſtabliſhed by the Sovereign Power, with an Authority to execute the Law againſt all Tranſgreſſors.

We alſo will be with thee: be of good Courage and do it.] He promiſes his Aſſiſtance, and the Aſſiſtance of the principal Perſons; which might give him Confidence of Succeſs.

Ver. 5. *Then aroſe Ezra, and made the Chief Prieſts, the Levites, and all Iſrael*] All that were then preſent.

To ſwear that they ſhould do according to this Word: and they ſware.] He admoniſhed them of their Duty in the Name of God, and then perſuaded them to take a ſolemn Oath (as they did) to put away their ſtrange Wives and Children. For the Commiſſion given to *Ezra* ſuppoſing a full Leave to the People to live according

cording to the Law, enabled him to govern them by it, yea, to ſwear them to obſerve it; for he might do whatſoever he found neceſſary to keep them in Obedience.

Ver. 6. *Then Ezra roſe up from before the Houſe of God,*] This ſeems to ſignify, that he made them ſwear before he would riſe up; that they ſeeing his great Humiliation before God, in the moſt doleful Condition, might be moved to a more forward Compliance.

And went into the Chamber of Johanan the Son of Eliaſhib:] That he might there conſult with the Princes and Elders, (*ver.* 8.) how to put this Counſel in Execution. This *Eliaſhib* was the High-Prieſt who ſucceeded *Joiakim*, who ſucceeded *Jeſhua*; who living a long time, his Son *Joiakim* enjoyed the Prieſthood but a few Years: And *Eliaſhib* laſted not long, but ſeems to have been dead (as Dr. *Alix* thinks) a little after the twentieth Year of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*. See *Nehem.* xii. 10.

And when he came thither, he did eat no Bread, nor drink Water:] The Word *when* is not in the *Hebrew*; therefore it had better be tranſlated, *till* he came thither he had eaten nothing.

For he mourned becauſe of the Tranſgreſſion of them that had been carried away.] And in Time of Mourning and Sorrow they were wont to faſt.

Ver. 7. *And they made Proclamation throughout Judah and Jeruſalem, unto all the Children of the Captivity, that they ſhould gather themſelves together unto Jeruſalem;*] This Proclamation was iſſued forth by the Counſel of the Princes and Elders mentioned in the next Verſe.

Ver. 8. *And that whoſoever would not come within three Days,*] This was a ſhort Time; but they were reſolv'd to be ſpeedy in the Buſineſs, leſt they that propounded it, ſhould cool, or any Thing occur to hinder it.

According to the Counſel of the Princes and the Elders,] It was a great Power which the King of *Perſia* intruſted *Ezra* withal; which he managed very diſcreetly; for he would not make the following Decree by his own ſole Authority, without the Advice of the *Sanhedrim*; which is generally thought to be meant by the *Princes and Elders, viz.* the High-Court of *Jeruſalem*; for they that are here called *Princes*, are, *ver.* 14. called *Judges*.

All his Subſtance ſhould be forfeited,] In the *Hebrew, devoted:* Which ſignifies, that his Goods were to be ſo forfeited, as to become ſacred to God; and ſo incapable to be reſtored to the former Owner, being put into the Treaſury of God's Houſe.

And himſelf ſeparated from the Congregation of thoſe that had been carried away.] Excluded from their Society, and all the Benefits of their Religion. See *chap.* vii. 26. This was a Puniſhment inflicted by all Nations on thoſe who would not conform themſelves to the Laws; as *Grotius* obſerves, *de Imperio Sum. Poteſt. circa ſacra*, Cap. ix. p. 242. *Edit. Hagæ*; and *Selden, de Synedr.* Lib. i. Cap. vii. p. 146, 147, 150.

Ver. 9. *Then all the Men of Judah and Benjamin gathered themſelves together unto Jeruſalem, within three Days:*] And all they of other Tribes complied alſo with this Proclamation, as appears from *ver.* 25. but theſe are alone mentioned, becauſe they were the chief, and the others were mixed with them.

It was the ninth Month, and the twentieth Day of the Month,] About a Quarter of a Year after *Ezra* and his Company came to *Jeruſalem*.

And all the People ſat in the Street of the Houſe of God] Some take this to be the Street which led to the Temple; but it was rather the Court of the People, where they worſhipped; which lying open, and not being yet girt about with a Wall, (as we may gueſs from *Nehem.* ii. 8.) is called a *Street*.

Trembling, becauſe of this Matter,] The Offence they had committed againſt God, and the Conſequence thereof.

And for the great Rain.] Which they took as a Token of God's Anger againſt them, becauſe of their Sin.

Ver. 10. *And Ezra the Prieſt ſtood up, and ſaid unto them, Ye have tranſgreſſed, and have taken ſtrange Wives to increaſe the Treſpaſs of Iſrael.*] When they ſhould have been bewailing their former Sins, which caſt them out of their Land, they added new Tranſgreſſions, when they were reſtored to it.

Ver. 11. *Now therefore make Confeſſion unto the LORD God of your Fathers, and do his Pleaſure:*] Confeſſion of Sin alone, without Obedience to God's Will and entire Submiſſion to him, is inſufficient to Reconciliation with him.

And ſeparate yourſelves from the People of the Land, and from the ſtrange Wives.] There being no Mention here made of their *Children*, but only of their *Wives*, it hath made ſome think, that they kept their Children, and by Circumciſion dedicated them to God, teaching them to renounce the Infidelity of their Mothers: For tho' *Shecaniah* propounded the putting away the Children alſo, (*ver.* 3.) yet it may be thought, that *Ezra*, to whom the Matter was referred, mitigated the Severity of it; becauſe we do not read any thing of them, but only of the Wives, when he came to order what ſhould be done.

Ver. 12. *Then all the Congregation anſwered, and ſaid with a loud Voice, As thou haſt ſaid, ſo muſt we do.*] They ſaw no other Remedy, and therefore ſubmitted to what he required, as the Pleaſure of God.

Ver. 13. *But the People are many, and it is a Time of much Rain, and we are not able to ſtand without, neither is this a Work of one Day or two: for we are many that have tranſgreſſed in this Thing.*] They give very good Reaſons why for the preſent they ſhould be diſmiſſed, and more Time taken to make Inquiſition after all the Offenders, and examine them. And to ſhew they really deſired the Thing ſhould be done, they propound a Method in the next Verſe, for the Management of it.

Ver. 14. *Let now our Rulers of all the Congregation ſtand, and let all them which have taken ſtrange Wives in our Cities, come at appointed Times, and with them the Elders of every City, and the Judges thereof, until the fierce Wrath of our God for this Matter be turned from us.*] They would have the great Council at *Jeruſalem* ſettled, (for that's meant by *let the Rulers of all the Congregation ſtand*) and be ready to take

Cognizance of this Matter; ſet Days being appointed for the Offenders in every City to be brought before them, by the Elders and Judges of thoſe Cities (that is, ſome Delegates from the Senate of that Place) who ſhould teſtify that they had ſeen the Divorces made from their ſtrange Wives; for they were beſt able to know the Circumſtances of every Perſon, and all their Actions. And this they would have to continue, as long as there remained any thing to be done in this Buſineſs; that the Anger of God might be turned away from them. So *de Dieu* truly renders, I think, the laſt Words of this Verſe.

How *Elders* and *Judges* differ, is a Diſpute among learned Men. Sometimes they ſignify the ſame; but when they are mentioned together, it is reaſonable to think their Powers were diſtinct. And *Campegius Vitringa* ſeems to me to have given a good Account of them; that by *Elders* are meant the ſupreme Senate in every City, who judged in all Civil Cauſes; and by *Judges* (as diſtinct from the other) are meant Judges of an inferior Bench, by whom all Money Matters were tried. For though the Senate might judge in all Cauſes, yet it is reaſonable to think they referred ſmall Matters to a lower Court. This he gathers out of the Scriptures, and ſhews it is conformable to the Traditions of the *Talmudiſts*. *De Synagoga Vetere*, Lib. ii. Cap. ix. p. 58. And ſee *L' Empereur* upon *Bertram De Repub. Jud.* p. 395.

Ver. 15. *Only Jonathan the Son of Aſahel, and Jahaziah the Son of Tilvah, were employed about this Matter:*] Theſe were two Prieſts, who were choſen to ſee all Things done according to the foregoing Reſolution: That is, to appoint the Time when the Men of each City ſhould come to bring in their Names, and to acquaint the great Council that theſe were Elders and Judges of the Cities, who had ſeen their Orders executed.

And Meſhullam, and Shabbethai the Levite helped them.] They were both of them *Levites*, as I take it, who were to aſſiſt the fore-named Prieſts in ſo great a Work.

Ver. 16. *And the Children of the Captivity did ſo:*] They who came up out of *Babylon* to their own Country, are conſtantly called *the Children of the Captivity*; to put them in mind of their Servitude, and of their Freedom from it.

And Ezra the Prieſt, with certain Chief of the Fathers, after the Houſe of their Fathers, and all of them by their Names, were ſeparated,] Sequeſtred themſelves from all other Buſineſs, to attend wholly to the Iſſue of this.

And ſat down on the firſt Day of the tenth Month to examine the Matter.] I cannot imagine what it was that they were ſet a-part to examine, unleſs it was, whether the Perſons beforenamed, did their Duty: For it is likely they brought the Names of thoſe who were found guilty, (which here follow) unto *Ezra* and theſe Aſſeſſors; who examined whether they found more than theſe, and of what Quality and Condition they were.

Ver. 17. *And they made an End with all the Men that had taken ſtrange Wives, by the firſt Day of the firſt Month.*] Three Months therefore were ſpent in this Diſquiſition; which ſhews it was very exact.

Ver. 18. *And among the Sons of the Prieſts, there were found that had taken ſtrange Wives: namely, of the Sons of Jeſhua, the Son of Jozadak, and his Brethren; Maaſeiah, and Eliezer, and Jarib, and Gedaliah.*] No wonder, the People broke the Law, when ſo many of thoſe who were ſuppoſed to underſtand it beſt (*viz.* the Prieſts) gave them ſuch a foul Example of Luſt and Levity (as *Pellicanus* ſpeaks) yea, ſome of the Sons of the High-Prieſt; which made the Example more pernicious. Which may be the Reaſon, as he conjectures, why *Jeſhua*, the High-Prieſt, was repreſented in a Viſion to *Zechariah* the Prophet in *filthy Garments*; becauſe his Family (Sons and Brethren) were defiled with this Impurity. For, as *Cicero* ſaith, out of *Plato*, in a Letter to *Lentulus*, *Tales plerunque cives reliqui eſſe ſolent, quales principes in civitate fuerint viri:* Such the reſt of the Citizens are wont to be, as the great Men in the City are.

Ver. 19. *And they gave their Hands, that they would put away their Wives;*] Solemnly engaged, by making a Covenant, or by an Oath, that they would do what was enjoined. See *Ezek.* xvii. 18. But it may be expounded ſimply, *they put their Hand to the Buſineſs*; that is, did it effectually, and actually put away their ſtrange Wives.

And being guilty, they offered a Ram of the Flock for their Treſpaſs.] More than that, they openly confeſſed their Guilt, and made an Offering for their Offence; and hereby perhaps endeavoured to make ſome amends for their Sin, by being the firſt that condemned themſelves and reformed, and offered a Treſpaſs-offering; which, ſome think, all the reſt made, after their Example.

Ver. 20. *And of the Sons of Immer; Hanani, and Zebadiah.*

Ver. 21. *And of the Sons of Harim; Maaſeiah, and Elijah, and Shemaiah, and Jehiel, and Uzziah.*

Ver. 22. *And of the Sons of Paſhur; Elioenai, Maaſeiah, Iſhmael, Nethaneel, Jozabad, and Elaſah.*] All theſe were Prieſts, who were very deep in this Guilt, and being publick Perſons, led others fearleſly into it.

Ver. 23. *Alſo of the Levites; Jozabad, and Shimei, and Kelaiah (the ſame is Kelita) Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.*] There were not ſo many *Levites*, as there were Prieſts, in the Tranſgreſſion.

Ver. 24. *Of the Singers alſo, Eliaſhib; and of the Porters, Shullum, and Talem, and Uri.*] Theſe ſeem to have been more modeſt; there being but one Offender found among the Singers; and but three among the Porters.

Ver. 25. *Moreover, of Iſrael, of the Sons of Paroſh; Ramiah, and Jeziah, and Malchiah, and Miamin, and Eleazar, and Malchijah, and Benaiah.*] The *Hebrews* call all thoſe *Iſrael*, who were not *Levites*, or dedicated to the Service of the Temple. Whence the Court of *Iſrael* was that Place wherein the Men of *Iſrael* worſhipped, as they were diſtinguiſhed from the Prieſts and *Levites*,

Ver. 26. *And of the Sons of Elam; Mattaniah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, and Abdi, and Jeremoth, and Eliah.*] This *Jehiel* was *Shechaniah*'s Father, *ver.* 2. And yet notwithſtanding, tho' his Father and Kindred were guilty of this Crime, which *Ezra* bewailed, he did not ſtick to ſpeak his Mind, how it ſhould be puniſhed. An admirable Example of zealous Integrity!

Ver. 27. *And of the Sons of Zattu; Elioenai, Eliaſhib, Mattaniah, and Jeremoth, and Zabad, and Aziza.*] The two former, *Paroſh* and *Elam*, with this *Zattu*, and all that follow to *ver.* 32. were of the Tribe of *Judah*.

Ver. 28. *Of the Sons alſo of Bebai. Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.*

Ver. 29. *And of the Sons of Bani; Meſhullam, Malluch, and Adaiah, Jaſhub, and Sheal, and Ramoth.*

Ver. 30. *And of the Sons of Pahath-moab; Adna, and Chelal, Benaiah, Maaſeiah, Mattaniah, Bezaleel, and Binnui, and Manaſſeh.*

Ver. 31. *Of the Sons of Harim; Eliezer, Iſhijah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Shimeon,*

Ver. 32. *Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.*] Now follows an Account of thoſe of the other Tribe.

Ver. 33. *Of the Sons of Haſhum; Mattenai, Mattathah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manaſſeh, and Shimei.*

Ver. 34. *Of the Sons of Bani; Maadai, Amram, and Uel,*

Ver. 35. *Benaiah, Bedeiah, Chelluh,*

Ver. 36. *Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliaſhib,*

Ver. 37. *Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaaſau,*

Ver. 38. *And Bani, and Binnui, Shimei,*

Ver. 39. *And Shelemiah, and Nathan, and Adaiah,*

Ver. 40. *Machnadebai, Shaſhai, Sharai,*

Ver. 41. *Azareel, and Shelemiah, Shemariah,*

Ver. 42. *Shallum, Amariah, and Joſeph.*

Ver. 43. *Of the Sons of Nebo; Jeiel, Mattathiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jadau, and Joel, Benaiah.*] Some take *Nebo* for a Place, of which the following Families were Citizens. But nothing of this is worth enquiring into.

Ver. 44. *All theſe had taken ſtrange Wives:*] There is no great Number of them, in Compariſon with all that returned from Captivity: But they ſeem to have been eminent Perſons, who would have ſpread the Contagion, if a Stop had not been put to it.

And ſome of them had Wives, by whom they had Children.] There were ſome of them Women, that had brought them Children, as the Vulgar tranſlate it; which *de Dieu* ſhews, is the plaineſt Tranſlation of theſe Words. Here was a fair Occaſion to have ſpoken of the putting away their Children as well as their Wives, if that Motion had been proſecuted. But nothing being here ſaid of it, it makes me think, the Obſervation is true which I made Verſe 11. See there.

A COMMENTARY UPON THE BOOK OF *NEHEMIAH.*

THAT *Nehemiah* himſelf was the Author of this Book there can be no reaſonable Doubt; for he ſaith as much in the beginning of it, and all along relates what he did in his own Perſon, for the rebuilding the Wall of *Jeruſalem*, and other Things. He lived in the Reign of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, and came into *Judæa* thirteen Years after *Ezra*; unto whom the King of *Perſia* gave great Authority, as he had done to *Ezra*; God diſpoſing his Heart to have ſome *Jews* ſtill about him in his Court, for whom he had a Kindneſs. After him, we do not find that the Kings of *Perſia* made any Governor, but left Things, it is probable, to the Management of *Jaddua* the High-Prieſt, as *Corn. Bertram* thinks. See *De Republ. Judaica*, p. 168, 173, 175.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *THE Words of Nehemiah*] Or, as *Pellicanus* tranſlates it, *Geſta* (for ſo the *Hebrew* Word often ſignifies) the Things which *Nehemiah* did.

The Son of Hachaliah.] We are no where told who this was, nor of what Tribe: *Euſebius* and others ſay of the Tribe of *Judah*.

And it came to paſs in the Month Chiſleu,] Which anſwers to our *November*, and Part of *December*.

In the twentieth Year,] Not of *Artaxerxes*, but of *Nehemiah* his Life. See *Chap.* ii. 1.

As I was in Shuſhan the Palace,] In the Region of *Elymais*, where the *Perſian* Kings kept their Court in Winter, and from its pleaſant and beautiful Situation, was called by Heathen Writers *Suſa*, which ſignifies a *Lily*; or (as *Athenæus* ſaith, *Lib.* xii.) *a Roſe*. *Stephanus Byzantinus* gives this Account of it, it was called Σῦσα, ἀπὸ τῶ κρίνων ἃ πολλὰ ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ πεφύκει ἐκεινῃ, from the Lilies that grew in Abundance in that Country. Our Dr. *Hyde* hath a peculiar Fancy, that the *Perſians* called it *Sus*, which ſignifies *Liquorice*; but the *Jews*, to compliment *Ahaſuerus*, called it in theſe Books by this Name

Name of a better Sound, which ſignifies a Lily, *Hiſt. Relig. vet. Perſ.* Cap. 35. p. 414.

Ver. 2. *That Hanani, one of my Brethren,*] And, I ſuppoſe, one of his Family.

Came, he and certain Men of Judah,] Came from *Jeruſalem* to *Shuſhan*, either about Buſineſs, or finding Things very hard with them in *Judea*.

And I aſked them concerning the Jews that had eſcaped, which were left of the Captivity, and concerning Jeruſalem.] He enquired of the Condition wherein they were who returned out of *Babylon* into *Judæa*, and whether *Jeruſalem* were again become a flouriſhing City; as it was natural for him to do, eſpecially being a Man that loved his Nation exceedingly.

Ver. 3. *And they ſaid unto me, The Remnant that are left of the Captivity there in the Province,*] So *Judea* is called, *Ezra* v. 8. See there.

Are in great Affliction and Reproach: the Wall of Jeruſalem alſo is broken down, and the Gates thereof are burnt with Fire.] They anſwer to both Parts of this Inquiry, that the People were in great Diſtreſs and Contempt by their inſolent Neighbours, wherewith they were ſurrounded, and *Jeruſalem* lay without any Walls or Gates to defend it from their Injuries. He knew very well that it was burnt by *Nebuchadnezzar*, and the Walls beaten down; therefore their Meaning is, that the Walls and Gates lay as the *Chaldeans* left them after that Devaſtation, and were not repaired, tho' the Temple was built again.

Ver. 4. *And it came to paſs when I heard theſe Words, that I ſat down*] Upon the Ground, as the Manner was, in great Sorrow, and perhaps in Aſhes.

And wept, and mourned certain Days, and faſted, and prayed before the God of Heaven,] With his Face toward *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 5. *And ſaid, I beſeech thee, O LORD God of Heaven,*] In this Style they all ſpake of God (as I obſerved, *Ezra* i.) after the Captivity; ſignifying, as *Conradus Pellicanus* obſerves, his ſovereign Dominion over all Things that are contained within the Compaſs of the Heavens; the Sun, Moon, and Stars, Angels and Men, and all Creatures.

The great and terrible God,] He is called *Great*, not with Reſpect to thoſe petty Gods that the Heathen worſhipped, who had no Power at all, but with reſpect to all Potentates either in Heaven or in Earth; and he is call'd *terrible*, becauſe he is moſt humbly to be worſhipped and reverenced by them all.

That keepeth Covenant and Mercy for them that love him, and obſerve his Commandments:] Next, he celebrates his Faithfulneſs and Truth in performing his Promiſes, to thoſe that plainly declare they ſincerely love him, by keeping his Commandments. Theſe he never fails to bleſs, becauſe they are faithful to him.

Ver. 6. *Let thine Ear now be attentive, and thine Eyes open, that thou mayeſt hear the Prayer of thy Servant, which I pray before thee now, Day and Night, for the Children of Iſrael thy Servants, and confeſs the Sins of the Children of Iſrael, which we have ſinned againſt thee: both I, and my Fathers Houſe have ſinned.*] A deep Senſe of our own Unworthineſs, is a good Qualification for the Mercy we beg of God: This *Nehemiah* expreſſes very ſenſibly, both here and in the next Verſe.

Ver. 7. *We have dealt very corruptly againſt thee,*] Some of the *Jews* expound it, We have deſpiſed and contemned thee.

And have not kept the Commandments, nor the Statutes, nor the Judgments, which thou commandedſt thy Servant Moſes.] But violated every one of them, to the high Offence both of God and Man.

Ver. 8. *Remember, I beſeech thee, the Word that thou commandedſt thy Servant Moſes, ſaying, If ye tranſgreſs, I will ſcatter you abroad among the Nations:*] Which they had ſeen fulfilled by the *Aſſyrians* and *Chaldeans*.

Ver. 9. *But if ye turn unto me, and keep my Commandments, and do them;*] As he hoped ſome of them now did.

Tho' there were of you caſt out unto the uttermoſt Part of the Heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the Place that I have choſen to ſet my Name there.] This Promiſe made by *Moſes* he hoped God would fulfil, as he had done the Threatning. It is a very pious Obſervation of Dr. *Jackſon* (Book iii. Chap. 17.) that *Nehemiah* framed this Prayer to God, and directed his Enterprize for the Reſtoration of *Jeruſalem*, by the Rule of *Moſes*, mentioned in *Deut.* xxx. 1, 2, 3, 4. and he plainly found the Truth of that Prediction in the Readineſs of the King of *Perſia* to grant his Petition; which confirm'd his Belief of what *Moſes* there ſaith, altho' a Prophet by Profeſſion diſſuaded his Enterprize, as likely to prove dangerous to his Perſon, *ch.* vi. 10, 11.

Ver. 10. *Now theſe are thy Servants, and thy People, whom thou haſt redeemed by thy great Power, and by thy ſtrong Hand.*] For nothing but the over-ruling Power of God could have moved *Cyrus* to diſmiſs this whole Nation out of Captivity, and let them return to their own Land. Or, as ſome think, he beſeeches his Compaſſion to them, becauſe they were his peculiar People, redeemed out of the *Egyptian* Bondage by many Miracles.

Ver. 11. *O LORD, I beſeech thee, let now thine Ear be attentive to the Prayer of thy Servant, and to the Prayer of thy Servants, who deſire to fear thy Name:*] He was not alone in this Petition for Mercy, but there were many others, who would worſhip him ſincerely. So the Words are in the *Hebrew*, *who will fear*, or *delight to fear thy Name*.

And proſper, I pray thee, thy Servant this Day,] He prayed Night and Day, as he ſaith, *ver.* 6. But this was the Prayer he made on that Day when he went to wait upon the King.

And grant him Mercy in the Sight of this Man.] He means the King, unto whom he pointed as it were with his Finger, when he was going to attend upon him.

For I was the Kings Cup-bearer.] And perhaps, as he came into his Preſence, he ſecretly made this Prayer to God in his own Breaſt. Many of the *Jews*, by the ſingular Favour of God, obtained conſiderable Dignities in their Captivity, as *Daniel* and his Companions, *Zerubbabel* and others: Among whom was this

good Man, who was advanced to this Place of *Cup-bearer*, when he was but a Youth, as our *Rainoldus* hath ſhewn, in his *Cenſura Lib. Apocryph.* p. 1496.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *AND it came to paſs in the Month Niſan, in the twentieth Year of Artaxerxes the King,*] Which was almoſt four Months after he heard of the deſolate Condition wherein *Jeruſalem* lay: In all which Time, I ſuppoſe, his Turn of Waiting did not come; ſo that he wanted Opportunity to ſpeak unto the King. Or, as others will have it, he and his Friends retired all this Time, and ſpent it in Faſting and Prayer.

That Wine was before him:] He was at Dinner or Supper, and he called for Wine; which was ready for him.

And I took up the Wine, and gave it unto the King:] After the Manner that the Cup-bearer was wont to do.

Now I had not been beforetime ſad in his Preſence.] But always appeared chearful and well pleaſed, as young Men ſo advanced uſe to be; and perhaps entertained the King at Table with pleaſant Diſcourſe.

Ver. 2. *Wherefore the King ſaid unto me, Why is thy Countenance ſad, ſeeing thou art not ſick?*] There did not appear in his Countenance any Sign of Indiſpoſition of Body.

This is nothing elſe but Sorrow of Heart.] Some inward Trouble which grieved his Spirit.

Then I was very ſore afraid,] Leſt the King ſhould have a Suſpicion, that he had any treaſonable Deſign in his Thoughts, and intended to poiſon him, as it was eaſy for the Cup-bearer to do: Or rather, he was afraid he ſhould not prevail in his Suit; the Court, it's likely, being full of ſuch as would oppoſe it.

Ver. 3. *And ſaid unto the King, Let the King live for ever:*] They that think he was afraid the King ſhould be jealous of him, take the Meaning to be, Let not the King fear I mean him any Harm, but pray for his long Life. But this was a common Form, of wiſhing the King long Happineſs, as appears from ſeveral Places in *Daniel*, and hath no Reſpect to that now mentioned.

Why ſhould not my Countenance be ſad, when the City, the Place of my Fathers Sepulchres, lieth waſte, and the Gates thereof are conſumed with Fire?] Men naturally have a great Love to the Monuments of their Anceſtors, and are troubled to ſee the Place where they are laid deſolate. He did not ſpeak a Word of Religion, or the Divine Worſhip, (as *Grotius* obſerves:) For tho' *Artaxerxes* had a great Affection for the *Jews*, and had their God in Veneration, (as appears by the Edict he ſent to *Ezra* thirteen Years before) yet the Company about him might not be ſo well diſpos'd; but had the ſame Affection and Concern for their Country and Relations that he had, tho' they did not worſhip the ſame God.

Ver. 4. *Then the King ſaid unto me, For what doſt thou make Requeſt?*] This argues, the King had a great Kindneſs for him, that he ſo readily aſk'd what he would have him do for him, to eaſe him of his Trouble.

So I prayed to the God of Heaven.] In his Mind he ſilently beſeeched God to guide his Tongue, and to bow the King's Heart to grant his Requeſt.

Ver. 5. *And I ſaid unto the King, If it pleaſe the King, and if thy Servant have found Favour in thy Sight,*] It was a bold Requeſt he was going to make, and therefore before he mentions it, he ſubmits it to the King's Will and Pleaſure; and acknowledges he had no Merit, but depended wholly upon the King's Kindneſs; unto whom perhaps he might have performed ſome acceptable Service.

That thou wouldſt ſend me unto Judah, unto the City of my Fathers Sepulchres,] This might lead *Euſebius* and others to think *Nehemiah* was of the Tribe of *Judah*, becauſe his Anceſtors dwelt in *Jeruſalem*, and were there buried.

That I may build it.] Build the Walls of it, and make it a City again; whereas now it was but an open Town.

Ver. 6. *And the King ſaid unto me (the Queen alſo ſitting by him)*] Which was not uſual, as Hiſtorians ſay, but is noted here as a Thing extraordinary; becauſe it is likely ſhe favoured him, and promoted the Grant of his Requeſt.

For how long ſhall thy Journey be? and when wilt thou return?] This is another Argument of the Kindneſs he had for him; that he would not loſe his Service, nor be long without it.

So it pleaſed the King to ſend me, and I ſet him a Time.] He having told the King how long he deſired to be abſent from his Duty, the King permitted him to go. How long that was, is not certain. But it is not likely it was for twelve Years, (mentioned *c.* v. 14. xiii. 6.) but rather he aſked Leave for a Year, or perhaps for half ſo much; which made him ſo quick in diſpatching the building of the Wall, which he finiſhed in two and fifty Days, *ch.* vi. 15. After which, it is likely, he returned to *Shuſhan*, according to his Appointment: And the King ſent him back as his Governor for twelve Years; his Preſence being very ſerviceable, or perhaps neceſſary there, for the better ordering of that Province, to the King's Content.

Ver. 7. *Moreover, I ſaid unto the King, If it pleaſe the King, let Letters be given me to the Governors beyond the River, that they may convey me over, till I come into Judah:*] Give him a ſafe Conduct, and furniſh him with Neceſſaries in his Journey, thro' their ſeveral Provinces, where they had Authority.

Ver. 8. *And a Letter unto Aſaph the Keeper of the Kings Foreſt,*] I ſuppoſe, he means the Foreſt of *Lebanon*; from whence he might be furniſh'd with Materials for his Building. Here the Word *Pardes* ſignifies differently from what it doth in other Places where it is uſed; which are but two, beſides this, *Eccleſ.* ii. 5. *Canticles* iv. 13. where it ſignifies a moſt pleaſant Garden, planted with all Sorts of Trees: And this Foreſt, it ſeems, was ſo ſweet and pleaſant a Place, that it deſerved to be called by the ſame Name.

That he may give me Timber to make Beams for the Gates of the Palace, which appertained to

the Houſe,] The vulgar *Latin*, by the Palace underſtands the *Tower of the Houſe*; and ſo *Pellicanus*, *Portas Templi*, the Gates of the Temple. For tho' the Temple itſelf was built, yet the ſeveral Courts ſeem not to have been walled about, nor the Gates to the Temple made; for that it ſhould be meant of the Gates of the King's Palace, which was near the Temple, is altogether unlikely, there being no Occaſion to build a Palace for the King of *Perſia*; and no other King could be intended.

And for the Wall of the City, and for the Houſe that I ſhall enter into:] He deſired Leave to build a convenient Houſe for himſelf, and for thoſe that ſhould be future Governors.

And the King granted me according to the good Hand of my God upon me.] The Hand is ſometimes taken (as *Druſius* obſerves) in an ill Senſe, for inflicting Puniſhments, *Ruth* i. 13. *Jerem.* xv. 17. for we ſtrike others with the Hand: And ſometimes in a good Senſe, for helping and aſſiſting others, for we extend Favours to Men with our Hand. Thus he explains *Pſalm* lxxxviii. 6. *cut off from thy Hand*, that is, fallen from thy Grace and Favour. *Pindar*, he obſerves, thus uſes the *Hand of God*, for his Help and Aid, *Olymp.* X. Θεῦ σὺν παλάμα, *by the Hand of God*; which the *Scholiaſt* interprets, Τῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ δυνάμει καὶ βοηθείᾳ, by the Power and Help of God, *Miſcellanea*, Cent. i. Cap. lxxxv. Thus *Nehemiah* is to be here underſtood; by the Divine Favour, which inclined the King to do what he deſired; which he calls God's *good Hand.*

Ver. 9. *Then I came to the Governors beyond the River, and gave them the Kings Letters. (Now the King had ſent Captains of the Army, and Horſemen with me.)*] This the King did over and above what he deſired, which procured him the greater Reſpect from the Governors, when they ſaw the Care the King took for the Safety of his Perſon.

Ver. 10. *When Sanballat the Horonite,*] He ſeems to have been a petty Prince of *Moab*, or ſome great Man of that Country; for *Horonaim* was an eminent City there, *Iſaiah* xv. 5. xlviii. 3, 5, 34.

And Tobiah the Servant, the Ammonite,] He had been a Slave of that Country, but now advanced to ſome Authority (perhaps, to be a Governor of a Province) in theſe Parts. The Mention of theſe two great Men, ſhews, that the Nations of *Moab* and *Ammon* were reſtored as well as the *Jews*, according to the Divine Oracles; and were well known, that their Deſtruction by the People of God might be the more obſervable; which was in the Time of the *Maccabees*, who ſubdued thoſe Nations according to the Predictions of ſeveral Prophets.

Heard of it, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a Man to ſeek the Welfare of the Children of Iſrael.] With ſuch Authority from the King, and in ſuch Favour with him; as appeared by the Letters he brought with him, and the Guard that attended him, and the Diligence of the ſeveral Governors, thro' whoſe Provinces he paſſed, to ſerve him.

Ver. 11. *So I came to Jeruſalem, and was there three Days.*] In which he reſted himſelf, and received the Viſits of his Friends; as *Ezra* had done, *chap.* viii. 32.

Ver. 12. *And I aroſe in the Night,*] At the End of thoſe Days, it is likely, for he was reſolved to make no Delay.

I and ſome few Men with me,] In whom he moſt confided.

Neither told I any Man what my God had put in my Heart to do at Jeruſalem:] He being a Courtier, had learned to hold his Peace, and obſerve when it was a fit Time to ſpeak, and to whom; for he would not truſt to every Body, knowing there was much Falſeneſs in Mens Hearts; and Secrecy was neceſſary to keep his Deſigns from being betrayed.

Neither was there any Beaſt with me, ſave the Beaſt that I rode upon.] They all went on Foot beſides himſelf, that there might be the leſs Noiſe, and no Notice taken of what he did. What Beaſt it was, on which he rode, whether Horſe or Mule, is not worth the Inquiry; it is likely a Mule, on which great Men were wont to ride in thoſe Countries.

Ver. 13. *And I went out by Night, by the Gate of the Valley,*] This Valley is mentioned again, *ch.* iii. 13. but whereabout it was, is not remembred, but only that it lay before the Well called the *Dragon-Well.*

Even before the Dragon-Well,] So called, either from the ſilent ſliding of the Water (as a Serpent creeps) from the Fountain *Siloam*; or, from a Dragon (as *Bochartus* thinks) which haunted this Place ſince the City lay deſolate; for Serpents delight in ſuch Places, eſpecially near Fountains of Water.

And to the Dung-port,] Out of which Dung was wont to be carried out of *Jeruſalem*, when it was before inhabited.

And viewed the Walls of Jeruſalem, which were broken down, and the Gates thereof were conſumed with Fire.] Trying (as *Conradus Pellicanus* reaſonably conjectures) whether the Foundation was ſtill ſound, and would ſupport a new Wall laid upon it; or, whether it was rotten, and muſt be laid again.

Ver. 14. *Then I went on to the Gate of the Fountain,*] Either of *Siloe*, or of *Gihon*. The Wall was not ſo broken down, but ſome Part of it ſtill remained, and the Place where the Gates were was known. See *ch.* iv. 6, 7. vi. 1.

And to the Kings Pool:] Which is generally ſuppoſed to be that which *Hezekiah* made, 2 *Chron.* xxxii. 3, 30.

But there was no Place for the Beaſt that was under me to paſs.] Being full of Rubbiſh, or of Water.

Ver. 15. *Then went I up in the Night by the Brook,*] The ſame Night he went by the Brook *Kidron.*

And viewed the Wall, and turned back, and entred by the Gate of the Valley, and ſo returned.] He ſeems not to have gone round about the whole City; for there were ſeveral other Gates which are not here mentioned; but having ſeen in what Condition ſo many Parts of the Wall were, by which he judged of the reſt, he turned back into the City, and entred at the ſame Gate, from whence he went out, *ver.* 13.

Ver.

Ver. 16. *And the Rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did,*] Theſe Rulers (*Conradus Pellicanus* thinks) were *Gentiles*, for they are diſtinguiſhed from the *Jews* in the following Words, and from other Rulers among them; and therefore were the Officers of the Kings of *Perſia*, who had hitherto obſtructed the Work.

Neither had I as yet told it to the Jews, nor to the Prieſts, nor to the Nobles, nor to the Rulers,] To any of the People of the *Jews*, for he had not ſo much as acquainted the Prieſts, nor the Nobles, nor any that had Authority among them, with his Intentions.

Nor to the reſt that did the Work.] Whom he intended hereafter to employ in the Work: Or, he told none of thoſe that went with him to view the Ruins, what his Deſign was.

Ver. 17. *Then ſaid I unto them, Ye ſee the Diſtreſs that we are in, how Jeruſalem lieth waſte, and the Gates thereof are burnt with Fire,*] Not long after he took a fit Opportunity to repreſent to them their low Condition, and to let them underſtand what he intended, and had Power to undertake.

Come, and let us build up the Wall of Jeruſalem, that we be no more a Reproach.] Expoſed to the Scorn and Inſults of the People round about them.

Ver. 18. *Then I told them of the Hand of my God, which was good upon me; as alſo the Kings Words that he had ſpoken unto me.*] He acquainted them how favourable God had made the King to him, and all the Diſcourſe he had with him, and the Commiſſion which he had received from him.

And they ſaid, Let us riſe up and build. So they ſtrengthned their Hands for this good Work.] When they heard of the Favour of God, and of the King.

Ver. 19. *But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Servant the Ammonite, and Geſhem the Arabian heard it,*] It is probable, *Geſhem* was the King's Deputy in *Arabia*, as the two former were in *Moab* and *Ammon:* But others take them rather to have been all three great Men among the *Samaritans*.

They laughed us to Scorn, and deſpiſed us,] As Men that made a vain Attempt, which they would never be able to accompliſh.

And ſaid, What is this Thing that ye do? will ye rebel againſt the King?] This was the moſt odious Calumny they could invent, that they intended to ſet up for themſelves, and be no longer the King's Subjects.

Ver. 20. *Then anſwered I them, and ſaid unto them, The God of Heaven he will proſper us;*] We have Authority for what we do from an higher Power than yours.

Therefore we his Servants will ariſe and build: But you have no Portion, nor Right, nor Memorial in Jeruſalem.] Do not you trouble your ſelves about this Matter, who have no Part, either in the Labour, or the Merit, or the Fame of it; for you are not of our Religion, and therefore may mind your own Buſineſs, and not meddle with ours.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *THEN Eliaſhib the High-Prieſt roſe up with his Brethren the Prieſts,*] Now he ſhews, by whom, and in what Order the Wall was built; which was begun by *Eliaſhib*, the Grand-Child of *Jeſhua* the High-Prieſt, (as we read, *ch.* xii. 10.) who with his Brethren gave a noble Example, in being the firſt that went about the Work, and built the Gate here mentioned.

And they built the Sheep-Gate,] Which was at the South-ſide of the City, in that Part of the Valley which looked towards the City of *David* and the Temple. The Sheep uſed to enter in here, which were to be ſacrificed; and therefore, I ſuppoſe the Prieſts undertook this Part of the Work as moſt proper for them. Dr. *Lightfoot* hath taken a great deal of Pains to find in what Quarter theſe Gates were; to whom I refer the Reader in his *Chorog. Century of the Land of Iſrael*, Chap. xxvi.

They ſanctified it, and ſet up the Doors of it;] When they had compleated it, they bleſſed it by ſolemn Prayers, and perhaps by Sacrifices; as the firſt Fruits of this pious Work. For we do not read, that any other Part, but this which they built, was ſanctified. Some think, this was done, becauſe of the Relation that this Gate had to ſacred Uſes; but it was rather ſuch a Ceremony, as was imitated by other Nations, when they begun their Walls, which they commended to the Protection of their Gods. Some tranſlate it, *they made it an excellent Structure:* Others, *they cleanſed* it from the Rubbiſh, and the Profanation which the *Babylonians* had brought upon it; reſtoring it to its ancient Splendor. But our Tranſlation, I think, is beſt; for it being the Prieſts Work, it became them to bleſs and ſanctify it.

Even unto the Tower of Meah they ſanctified it, unto the Tower of Hananeel.] They ſanctified the reſt of the Wall, which they built as far as the Tower of *Meah* on one Side, and the Tower of *Hananeel* on the other. But *Pellicanus* thinks, that *Meah* is not the Name of a Tower, but ſignifies an *Hundred*; and makes the Senſe to be, they not only built the Sheep-Gate, but an hundred Cubits of the Wall to a Tower ſo far off from the Gate, and alſo to the Tower of *Hananeel*. This *Sheep-Gate* ſome think is the ſame with the Προβατικὴ, mentioned *John* v. 2. which being the firſt that was built by the Prieſts of God, and particularly commended to his Bleſſing, had that ſingular Gift beſtow'd upon the neighbouring Pool, that it ſhould miraculouſly heal thoſe that firſt entered into it every Day; and that from this Time it had this Virtue: Afterward they dedicated the whole Wall, as we read, *ch.* xii. 27.

Ver. 2. *And next unto him builded the Men of Jericho: and next to them builded Zaccur the Son of Imri.*] Whom ſome take for a principal Perſon in *Jericho*.

Ver. 3. *But the Fiſh-Gate did the Sons of Haſſenah build,*] This was a Gate which looked towards the Sea; from whence Fiſh was wont to be brought, and ſold here.

Who alſo laid the Beams thereof, and ſet up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof.] They made a compleat Piece of Work of this Gate; to which they gave the laſt finiſhing; which was not done univerſally till after ſome Time. See *ch.* vi. 1. vii. 1.

Ver. 4. *And next unto them repaired Meremoth the Son of Urijah, the Son of Koz: and next unto them repaired Meſhullam the Son of Berechiah, the Son of Meſhezabeel: and next unto them repaired Zadok the Son of Baana.*] Theſe repaired the Wall till they came to the old Gate; for there was no other Gate till they came there.

Ver. 5. *And next unto them the Tekoites repaired*;] The People of the City of *Tekoa* carried on the Wall with thoſe three before-named.

But their Nobles put not their Necks to the Work of their Lord.] They were either proud, and would not ſtoop to this Work; or, they were negligent, and cared not whether it were done or no. By *their Lord* ſome underſtand the Leader and Head of the whole Family, who was active in it; others *Nehemiah*; and ſome, God himſelf, whoſe Work this was; unto which therefore well-diſpoſed Perſons, tho' ever ſo great, *put their Neeks*; that is, laboured hard, not refuſing to carry Burdens, *&c.*

Ver. 6. *Moreover, the old Gate repaired Jehoiada the Son of Peſeah, and Meſhullam the Son of Beſodeiah*;] Some think, it was called *the old Gate*, becauſe there were ſome Remains of it from the Times of the *Jebuſites*, yea of *Melchizedeck*, by whom it was at firſt built.

They laid the Beams thereof, and ſet up the Doors thereof, and the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof.] They imitated thoſe mentioned *ver.* 3. as ſeveral others did, *ver.* 13, 14, 15.

Ver. 7. *And next unto them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite, and Jadon the Meronothite, the Men of Gibeon, and of Mizpah, unto the Throne of the Governor on this Side the River.*] Theſe, and they that follow in the next Verſe, repaired as far as to the Wall of the broad Street. And among theſe was a great Man, whoſe Name was *Chiſſe* (ſo *Pellicanus* tranſlates the Word we render *the Throne*) a petty Prince in *Syria*, under the King of *Perſia*; who being proſelyted joined in this Work.

Ver. 8. *Next unto him repaired Uzziel the Son of Harhahiah, of the Goldſmiths: next unto him alſo repaired Hananiah the Son of one of the Apothecaries, and they fortified Jeruſalem unto the broad Wall.*] Theſe were two eminent Perſons; one among the Goldſmiths, the other among the Perfumers; who did not build the Wall, becauſe it was very good in this Place; but only fortified it, and made it ſtrong. Near to this was the broad Street of the City, where there was a Market-place, for the ſelling of Commodities.

Ver. 9. *And next unto them repaired Rephaiah the Son of Hur, the Ruler of the half Part of Jeruſalem.*] There were two principal Overſeers of the Work, on the two Sides of the City: This, as ſome think, in that Part which was in the Tribe of *Judah*; and the other (*ver.* 12.) in that which was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*. See *ch.* iv. 19.

Ver. 10. *And next unto them repaired Jedaiah, the Son of Harumaph, even over-againſt his Houſe: and next unto him repaired Hattuſh, the Son of Haſhabniah.*] The firſt of theſe repaired *againſt his Houſe*; becauſe that lay moſt convenient for him to beſtow his Coſt upon it; and thereby he conſulted his own Safety together with the publick Good.

Ver. 11. *Malchijah the Son of Harim, and Haſhub the Son of Pahath-moab, repaired the other Piece, and the Tower of the Furnaces.*] The Words we tranſlate *the other Piece*, are the *ſecond Meaſure*. But what the *firſt* was, we cannot tell, and therefore are ignorant of the *ſecond*. Perhaps, half as much as the former had repaired. *The Tower of the Furnaces* is mentioned again, *ch.* xii. 38. as near to this Place. See there.

Ver. 12. *And next unto him repaired Shallum the Son of Haloheſh, the Ruler of the half Part of Jeruſalem,*] There was another Part mentioned before, *ver.* 9.

He and his Daughters.] Who are generally thought, either to be Heireſſes, or rich Widows; who piouſly contributed to this Work.

Ver. 13. *The Valley-gate repaired Hanun and the Inhabitants of Zanoah; they built it, and ſet up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof, and a thouſand Cubits on the Wall unto the Dung-gate.*] This was called the Valley of *Jehoſhaphat*, which lay between the City, and the Mount of Olives; thro' which the Brook *Kidron* ran, from the North to the South. The Gate which led to this was the Eaſt-gate; which was repaired, together with more of the Wall than any others repaired, by theſe Perſons here mentioned.

Ver. 14. *But the Dung-gate repaired Malchiah, the Son of Rechab, the Ruler of Part of Beth-haccerem: He built it, and ſet up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof.*] He was a great Man, who commanded Part of a City, which had its Name from the Vineyards that were there, as *Pellicanus* probably conjectures.

Ver. 15. *But the Gate of the Fountain repaired Shallum the Son of Col-hozeh, the Ruler of Part of Mizpah: He built it, and covered it, and ſet up the Doors thereof, the Locks thereof, and the Bars thereof, and the Wall of the Pool of Siloah, by the Kings Garden,*] This Man alſo was a great Benefactor, being a conſiderable Perſon, as the former was.

And unto the Stairs that go down from the City of David.] Which ſtood upon the high Hill of *Sion*; from whence they deſcended by Steps to *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 16. *After him repaired Nehemiah the Son of Azbuk*] Of the ſame Name, but not of the ſame Family with the Writer of this Book.

The Ruler of the half Part of Beth-zur, unto the Place over-againſt the Sepulchres of David,] Where *David* had a Sepulchre for himſelf, and for his Succeſſors in the Kingdom.

And to the Pool that was made,] This is ſuppoſed to be the Place mentioned 2 *Kings* xx. 20.

And unto the Houſe of the Mighty.] There the King's Guard were lodged, who were all mighty Men of Valour. But we can only gueſs at the Senſe of theſe Words.

Ver. 17. *After him repaired the Levites, Rehum the Son of Bani: next unto him repaired Haſhabiah the Ruler of the half Part of Keilah, in his Part.*] In his Street (as *Pellicanus* renders it) or with the Men of his Part or Country where he was Ruler.

Ver. 18. *After him repaired their Brethren,*] Other *Levites*.

Bavai the Son of Henadad, the Ruler of the half Part of Keilah.] Of the other half of the City.

Ver. 19. *And next to him repaired Ezer the Son of Jeſhua, the Ruler of Mizpah, another Piece*] Or rather, *one Piece*; becauſe another is mentioned in the next Verſe.

Over againſt the going up to the Armoury] There is ſuch a Place mentioned in the Foreſt, *Iſa.* xxii. 8. which *Solomon* it is likely made; but this was in *Jeruſalem*, then well known, and one of the moſt noted Places in the City, becauſe here all warlike Proviſion was laid up.

At the turning of the Wall.] At ſome Corner, where the Wall turned another Way.

Ver. 20. *After him Baruch, the Son of Zabbai, earneſtly repaired the other Piece,*] With great Zeal, as if he was aſhamed the Work went on ſo ſlowly; or, that they ſhould repair only one Piece, and leave the other undone.

From the turning of the Wall] From the Place before-mentioned.

Unto the Door of the Houſe of Eliaſhib the High Prieſt.] Who had the Honour to begin this good Work, *ver.* 1.

Ver. 21. *After him repaired Meremoth the Son of Urijah, the Son of Koz, another Piece from the Door of the Houſe of Eliaſhib, even to the End of the Houſe of Eliaſhib.*] He carried on the Work from the Place where the other left off, from the Entrance of the Houſe to the End of it; which being the Houſe of a great Man, we may ſuppoſe very large.

Ver. 22. *And after him repaired the Prieſts, the Men of the Plain.*] Near to *Jeruſalem*, *ch.* xii. 28.

Ver. 23. *After him*] There was ſome eminent Prieſt, who engaged others with him, as *Eliaſhib* had done his Brethren, *ver.* 1.

Repaired Benjamin, and Haſhub, over againſt their Houſe: after him repaired Azariah the Son of Maaſeiah, the Son of Ananiah, by his Houſe.] Theſe were ſome of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, ſettled in *Jeruſalem*, who repaired over-againſt their own Doors, as far as their Houſes extended.

Ver. 24. *After him repaired Binnui the Son of Henadad, another Piece, from the Houſe of Azariah, unto the turning of the Wall, even unto the Corner.*] This, in all Likelihood, was another of the Tribe of *Benjamin*, who carried on the Wall from the Place where *Azariah* ended.

Ver. 25. *Palal the Son of Uzai, over againſt the turning of the Wall, and the Tower which lieth out from the Kings high Houſe, that was by the Court of the Priſon: after him, Pedaiah the Son of Paroſh.*] There are ſo many *Turnings of the Wall* mentioned, that none can now give an Account of them, nor of the *King's high Houſe* (which ſome take to have been an Houſe built for that Proſpect.) The Court of the Priſon is often mentioned in the Book of the Prophet *Jeremiah*.

Ver. 26. *Moreover, the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel, unto the Place over againſt the Water-gate toward the Eaſt, and the Tower that lieth out.*] Not only the Prieſts and *Levites*, but the meaneſt Perſons that belonged to the Houſe of God, inferior Officers, contributed to this Work. And the *Water-gate*, it is likely, was that at which theſe lower Miniſters brought in Water for the Uſe of the Temple: Near to which *Ophel* was, which ſeems to have been a great Tower, 2 *Chron.* xxvii. 3. *The Tower which lay out* I can give no Account of, but the next Verſe tells us where it was.

Ver. 27. *After them the Tekoites repaired another Piece, over againſt the great Tower that lieth out, even unto the Wall of Ophel.*] The People of this Place are mentioned before, *ver.* 5. whoſe Nobles perhaps, who at the firſt withdrew themſelves from this Work, lent their Help, now that they ſaw every Body engaged in it.

Ver. 28. *From above the Horſe-gate repaired the Prieſts, every one over againſt his Houſe.*] It was called the *Horſe-gate*, as ſome think, becauſe they went through it to water their Horſes at the Brook *Kidron*: Or, there was a Place for the ſtanding of Horſes.

Ver. 29. *After them repaired Zadok the Son of Immer, over againſt his Houſe: alſo after him repaired alſo Shemaiah, the Son of Shechaniah, the Keeper of the Eaſt-gate.*] It is uncertain whether he ſpeaks of the Eaſt-gate of the City, or of the Temple: But which ſoever it was, it ſeems to have been a principal Gate, and therefore committed to the Cuſtody of an eminent Perſon.

Ver. 30. *After him repaired Hananiah the Son of Shelemiah,*] Some Copies read *after me*, as if *Nehemiah* in Modeſty concealed his own Work, and only intimated that he did ſomething himſelf. But ours is the right Reading.

And Hanun the ſixth Son of Zalaph, another Piece:] He had more Zeal it is likely than his elder Brethren, and therefore is here particularly noted as a worthy Man, of leſs Eſtate, but more Virtue than the reſt of his Family.

After him repaired Meſhullam the Son of Berechiah, over againſt his Chamber.] Which he had, I ſuppoſe, in the Temple.

Ver. 31. *After him repaired Malchiah, the Goldſmiths Son, unto the Place of the Nethenims, and of the Merchants, over againſt the Gate Miphkad, and to the going up of the Corner.*] It ſeems the *Nethinims* had a Part of the City aſſigned them for their Habitation, which was among the Merchants: Near to whom there was an Houſe of Correction (as ſome think the Word *Miphkad* imports) where they viſited (as the *Hebrews* ſpeak) that is puniſhed Men for their Faults.

Ver. 32. *And between the going up of the Corner unto the Sheep-gate,*] There they began (*ver.* 1.) and there they ended: Which ſhews that they left not off till they had compaſſed the whole City with a Wall, and that it was but one (as *Pellicanus* obſerves) not two or three, which was ſufficient to preſerve them from the Incurſions of their Enemies.

Repaired the Goldſmiths and the Merchants.] Some will have theſe to have been their Names, taken at firſt from their Profeſſions.

No Man can think (as the ſame *Pellicanus* notes) that the Names of them that repaired the Walls of *Jeruſalem* were ſet down ſo diligently, as here they are, without ſome rational Cauſe for it. And the Reaſon was, becauſe it was a Work of great Virtue, to love and to do Honour to their Country; a Work of Piety to reſtore the Holy City; a religious Thing to defend the true Worſhippers of God, that they might ſerve him in Quietneſs and Safety; and a couragious Thing, in the midſt of ſo many Enemies, to go on with this Work in a pious Confidence of the Power of God to ſupport them. The Names therefore of ſuch Perſons deſerved to be preſerved and tranſmitted to future Generations, as a moſt noble Example to them.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *BUT it came to paſs, that when Sanballat heard that we builded the Wall, he was wroth, and took great Indignation, and mocked the Jews.*] Tho' he boiled inwardly with Anger, yet he ſeemed to contemn that which he feared, and ſcoffed at the *Jews*.

Ver. 2. *And he ſpake before his Brethren, and the Army of Samaria,*] By *his Brethren* are meant the Commanders in Chief in thoſe Parts; who muſtered, I ſuppoſe, all their Forces in *Samaria*, as if they intended to invade the *Jews*, and hinder the Work they were about.

And ſaid, What do theſe feeble Jews?] But firſt he expoſes them to Scorn, as a People that had no Power.

Will they fortify themſelves? Will they ſacrifice? Will they make an End in a Day?] He heard there were ſo many Hands at Work, as if they meant to build the Wall, and keep a Feaſt, and dedicate it by Sacrifice, all in one Day; and ſo takes an Occaſion to laugh at their fooliſh Diligence, and the Haſte they made, as if they could begin and end at once.

Will they revive the Stones out of the Heaps of the Rubbiſh which are burnt?] He repreſents it as impoſſible they ſhould repair the Wall, unleſs they could make the broken Pieces, which were alſo mouldred, to become whole Stones again.

Ver. 3. *Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him,*] One of *his Brethren*, mentioned in the Verſe before-going.

And he ſaid, Even that which they build, if a Fox go up, he ſhall even break down their Stone-Wall.] Foxes abounded in that Country, eſpecially about *Jeruſalem*, ſince its Devaſtation, *Lament.* v. 18. At the Wall of which *Tobiah* jeered, ſaying, It was ſo low that thoſe Creatures might leap over it; and ſo weak, that they might throw it down, or break through it. This Opinion, it is likely, made them neglect to interrupt them in their Building, till it was too late.

Ver. 4. *Hear, O our God, for we are deſpiſed: and turn their Reproach upon their own Head,*] He beſeeches God to take ſuch notice of their Scoffs, that as they now deſpiſed his People, ſo they themſelves might be laughed to Scorn, and had in Deriſion.

And give them for a Prey in the Land of Captivity:] And carry them far away from the Captives into ſome other Land.

Ver. 5. *And cover not their Iniquity, and let not their Sin be blotted out from before thee:*] This ſeems ſomething harſh, that he ſhould pray they might never be forgiven; but he ſpake by the Spirit of Prophecy, as *David* did in *Pſalm* cix. they being of ſuch a malicious and implacable Spirit againſt God and his People, that he foreſaw they would never be capable of his Mercy, but be utterly deſtroyed by him. And indeed there were ſeveral Oracles upon which this Prayer was grounded, and it was confirmed by the Deſtruction of theſe Nations by the *Maccabees* and their Succeſſors.

For they have provoked thee to Anger before the Builders.] By ſcoffing at them, and diſcouraging them in the Work, which was for God's Honour, and for the Safety of his People. And therefore it highly provoked him, that theſe Men ſhould ſet themſelves with ſuch Spite againſt it.

Ver. 6. *So built we the Wall; and all the Wall was joined together unto the Half thereof:*] Till it was raiſed to the Half of its Height.

For the People had a Mind to work.] Were very much ſet upon it, and went about it chearfully, notwithſtanding their Jeers and Contempt.

Ver. 7. *But it came to paſs, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Aſhdodites,*] Some of theſe People were never mentioned before; and therefore this ſhews, that *Sanballat* endeavoured to draw all the neighbouring Nations into a Confederacy againſt the *Jews*.

Heard that the Walls of Jeruſalem were made up, and that the Breaches began to be ſtopped,] It ſeems the *Chaldeans* had not entirely thrown down the Walls, but contented themſelves to make wide Breaches and Gaps in them.

Then they were very wroth.] So incenſed, that it moved them to take the following Reſolution.

Ver. 8. *And conſpire all of them together, to come and to fight againſt Jeruſalem, and to hinder it.*] The laſt Words in the *Hebrew* are, *to make an Error in it*, that is, to put them by the Work, or to make them not know which Way to turn themſelves.

Ver. 9. *Nevertheleſs we made our Prayer unto our God, and ſet a Watch againſt them Day and Night, becauſe of them.*] They committed themſelves to the Protection of the Almighty, whoſe Servants they were, keeping a conſtant Watch, that they might not be ſurprized; for they knew them to be very vigilant to do Miſchief.

Ver. 10. *And Judah ſaid, The Strength of the Bearers of Burdens is decayed,*] They had wrought ſo long and ſo hard, that ſome of the *Jews* told him the Labourers were quite ſpent.

And there is much Rubbiſh, ſo that we are not able to build the Wall.] There was ſtill a great deal of Rubbiſh remaining, more than they were able to remove; and therefore they muſt deſiſt, at leaſt for the preſent, from building the Wall.

Ver. 11. *And our Adverſaries ſaid, They ſhall not know, neither ſee, till we come in the Midſt among them, and ſlay them, and cauſe the Work to ceaſe.*] They pretended alſo to have Intelligence, that the forenamed Enemies did not intend to appear with an Army before *Jeruſalem*, but to march ſo ſecretly, that they ſhould have no Notice of their Approach till they ſaw them in the City, and put them to the Sword.

Ver. 12. *And it came to paſs that when the Jews which dwelt by them came, they ſaid unto us ten Times,*] But there were ſome *Jews* who were Neighbours to that People that found out their Deſigns, and came to inform them of it a great many Times: For *ten Times* ſignifies a great many in Scripture. See *Gen.* xxi. 7.

From all Places whence ye ſhall return unto us, they will be upon you.] The Words in the *Hebrew* are no more than theſe, *from all Places whence they return unto us*, (there being no Words anſwering to thoſe, *they will be upon you*,) if any Words be added, they ſhould be *they informed us of our Danger*.

Ver. 13. *Therefore ſet I in the lower Places behind the Wall,*] Where the Wall was not yet raiſed to its juſt Height, *Ver.* 6.

And on the higher Places,] Where it was compleatly finiſhed.

I even ſet the People after their Families, with their Swords, their Spears, and their Bows.] With ſuch Weapons as they were furniſhed withal.

Ver. 14. *And I looked, and roſe up,*] When he ſaw how they were diſpoſed, he roſe up, and made this Speech to them.

And ſaid unto the Nobles, and to the Rulers, and to the reſt of the People, Be not ye afraid of them: Remember the LORD which is great and terrible, and fight for your Brethren, your Sons and your Daughters, your Wives, and your Houſes.] All was at Stake, therefore he exhorts them to be valiant, truſting in God, who was ſtronger than all their Enemies.

Ver. 15. *And it came to paſs when our Enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their Counſel to nought, that we returned all of us to the Wall, every one unto his Work.*] When they heard their Plot was diſcovered, and they had no Hope to ſurprize us, but we were ready to receive them, they laid aſide their Deſigns, and we went on with ours.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs from that Time forth, that the half of my Servants wrought in the Work, and the other half of them held both the Spears, the Shields, and the Bows, and the Habergeons*;] But leſt their Enemies ſhould imagine they were ſecure, and had quite laid aſide their Arms, and ſo might reſume their Enterprize, he ordered, that while half of his own Servants wrought upon the Walls, another half ſhould ſtand by with Weapons ready to put into their Hands, if there were Occaſion.

And the Rulers were behind all the Houſe of Judah.] The reſt, I ſuppoſe, followed this Example; and the Rulers ſtood at their Backs to encourage them, and put them forward in their Work.

Ver. 17. *They which builded on the Wall, and they that bare Burdens, with thoſe that laded, every one with one of his Hands wrought in the Work, and with the other Hand held a Weapon.*] That is, they were well appointed for both, to build and to fight. For it is a figurative Speech, it not being poſſible for them to work if both Hands had not been at Liberty. And the next Verſe ſaith, their Swords were by their Sides.

Ver. 18. *For the Builders, every one had his Sword girded by his Side, and ſo builded:*] This expounds the foregoing Words.

And he that ſounded the Trumpet was by me.] To give the Alarm, if need ſhould be, and ſo call them unto him for Orders. It appears by this, that he was continually with them while they wrought.

Ver. 19. *And I ſaid unto the Nobles, and to the Rulers, and to the reſt of the People, The Work is great and large, and we are ſeparated upon the Wall, one far from another.*] In ſeveral Quarters of it, ſome of which were at a good Diſtance from others.

Ver. 20. *In what Place therefore ye hear the Sound of the Trumpet, reſort ye thither unto us: our God ſhall fight for us.*] For while they lay ſcattered they could not oppoſe their Enemies ſucceſsfully, but being united with him, and under his Direction and Conduct, he bids them not doubt of God's Protection.

Ver. 21. *So we laboured in the Work; and half of them held the Spears.*] For the Uſe of every Man, if there ſhould be Occaſion.

From the Riſing of the Morning till the Stars appeared.] All the Day long, from Break of Day till it was quite Night.

Ver. 22. *Likewiſe at the ſame Time ſaid I unto the People, Let every one with his Servant lodge within Jeruſalem, that in the Night they may be a Guard to us, and labour in the Day.*] It is likely, that many of them at Night went into the Suburbs, or neighbouring Villages, and lodged there; but he would have them all lodge in *Jeruſalem*, for the greater Security of the City in the Night, and that they might be more ready to work in the Morning.

Ver. 23. *So neither I, nor my Brethren, nor my Servants, nor the Men of the Guard which followed me, none of us put off our Clothes.*] He, and his Kindred, and Family, and Guard, gave them a noble Example; for none of them put off their Clothes when they went to Bed, but lay in them, that they might be more ready to fight if any Aſſault was made on the City.

Saving that every one put them off for waſhing.] Theſe laſt Words are variouſly expounded by Interpreters, and the feweſt approve of our Tranſlation. *Rabbi Solomon* repeats the Word *not*; *They put not off their Clothes, no not for waſhing*. The *Hebrew* Word is *Water*, which ſome here take for *the Water of the Feet*, as the *Hebrews* ſpeak, and make the Senſe to be, *no not when they made Water*. *De Dieu*, quite contrary, except only to make Water. But it is a more ſimple Senſe, every Man had his Sword ready when he made Water. So the Word *Schicho* may be rendered, as we tranſlate it in the Margin, *every Man went with his Weapon for Water*. But *Grotius* follows our Tranſlation, and takes theſe Words for an Exception to what went before: And the plain Meaning is, they put off their Garments only for thoſe Ablutions, which

which the Law required, or Cuſtom had introduced.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *AND there was a great Cry of the People, and of their Wives, againſt their Brethren the Jews.*] At this Time there was a grievous Complaint of the Poor againſt their rich Brethren: For tho' they were cured of their Idolatry by their Captivity, yet they were not cured of their other Sins, but loved ſtrange Women, as we read before in the Book of *Ezra*; and were ſo covetous, that they oppreſſed the Poor and Needy, and this at a Time, when their Enemies threatned the Deſtruction of them all. But this was the more heinous Crime, becauſe the twentieth of *Artaxerxes*, wherein this was done, began about the End of a Sabbatick Year, (as Dr. *Alix* obſerves) which raiſed the Cry of the Poor to a greater Height againſt their Creditors, who exacted their Debts of them contrary to the Law, *Deut.* xv. 2. which was read to them publickly in ſuch a Year, *Deut.* xxxi. 12. For it was of ſuch Moment, that it moved *Nehemiah* to make the *Jews* take a ſolemn Oath that they would obſerve this Law, and releaſe all the Debts that were owing to them in this Year, *c.* x. of this Book, *v.* 31.

Ver. 2. *For there were that ſaid, We, our Sons, and our Daughters are many:*] They had numerous Families.

Therefore we take up Corn for them, that we may eat, and live.] They had no Way to keep them from ſtarving, but by buying Corn for them at unreaſonable Rates; which the Rich demanded, when they ſaw them in ſuch Neceſſity, that they muſt pay what they aſked, or die.

Ver. 3. *Some alſo there were that ſaid, We have mortgaged our Lands, Vineyards, and Houſes, that we might buy Corn, becauſe of the Dearth.*] There had been a great Scarcity for Want of Rain; which God denied, becauſe they minded building their own Houſes more than his, as we read *Haggai* i. 9, 10, 11. Now the Effects of ſuch Droughts cauſed among the People great Scarcity of Proviſions, in which the Rich had no Compaſſion on their poor Brethren, but forced them to ſell all they had for Bread.

Ver. 4. *There were alſo that ſaid, We have borrowed Money for the Kings Tribute, and that upon our Lands and Vineyards.*] They do not complain that they were conſtrained to borrow Money, but that they could not have it without taking it up on Uſury, as it appears from *ver.* 7. which was contrary to the Law of God, *Exod.* xxii. 25, *&c.* otherwiſe they could not have paid their Tribute to the King of *Perſia*, who laid it upon all his Subjects every where, *Ezra* iv. 13. vii. 24.

Ver. 5. *Yet now our Fleſh is as the Fleſh of our Brethren, our Children as their Children:*] They repreſent very pathetically that there was no Difference between them and their Brethren, but that they were poor, and the other rich; for they were all *Jews* of the ſame Stock, from the ſame Original, all alike circumciſed; ſo that by Nature, and by the Favour of God, they were every Way the ſame, and therefore ought to enjoy the ſame Freedom that they and their Children did.

And lo, we bring into Bondage our Sons and our Daughters, to be Servants,] In caſe of great Neceſſity this was lawful, *Exod.* xxi. 7. But they were very void of Compaſſion, who forced their Brethren to do a Thing ſo much againſt Nature.

And ſome of our Daughters are brought unto Bondage already,] Some of the tender Sex, who were leaſt able to endure Hardſhip, they had been already forced to part withal.

Neither is it in our Power to redeem them: for other Men have our Lands and Vineyards.] Their Condition was very lamentable, for none would lend them Money freely, and to pay their Uſury, they were forced to ſell their Children, whom they had not Power to redeem, becauſe their Lands were mortgaged to thoſe Oppreſſors; ſo that they were in a worſe Condition than when they were in *Babylon*, being not in ſo much Danger to be devoured by their cruel Neighbours, (who ſought their Deſtruction) as by their barbarous Friends and Neighbours.

Ver. 6. *And I was very angry when I heard their Cry, and theſe Words.*] It could not but move his Indignation, to hear them complain one of another, but much more when he heard the Reaſon.

Ver. 7. *Then I conſulted with myſelf,*] It is not ſafe to do any Thing in a Fit of Anger; but coolly to conſider and deliberate what is fit to be done.

And I rebuked the Nobles, and the Rulers,] Whom he did not fear to reprove ſeverely, when he found them in Fault.

And ſaid unto them, You exact Uſury, every one of his Brother.] And that a very heavy one, ſuch as was uſed among the Heathen, called, *Centeſima*, the *hundredth Part*, *ver.* 11. which was *twelve per Cent.*

And I ſet a great Aſſembly againſt them.] That he might put them to the greater Shame. For this *great Aſſembly* I take to be the whole Body of the People, with their Judges, as *Bertram* obſerves, *De Repub. Jud.* p. 171. See *Ezra* x. 8, 14.

Ver. 8. *And I ſaid unto them, We, after our Ability,*] Either he ſpeaks of himſelf in the Plural Number, as great Men are wont to do; or he means, he, with *Ezra*, and ſuch like Lovers of their Country, had done what follows.

Have redeemed our Brethren the Jews, who were ſold unto the Heathen;] Had done their utmoſt to deliver the *Jews* out of the Captivity of *Babylon*; whereby they were reſtored both to their own Country, and to their Liberty: And perhaps they had with their own Money procured the Freedom of ſuch as were Slaves to ſome of the *Babylonians*; who would not part with them, when they deſired to go to *Jeruſalem*, unleſs they were paid the Price of them, being their own proper Goods.

And will you even ſell your Brethren?] For that they might expect, ſince their Parents could not redeem them.

Or ſhall they be ſold unto us?] Muſt I redeem them out of your Hands, as I have helped to redeem ſome out of *Babylon?*

Then they held their Peace, and found nothing to answer.] There was such an express Law of God against them, *Deut.* xxiii. 19. that they had nothing to reply; and therefore were silent because they could neither deny the Fact, nor were able to justify it.

Ver. 9. *And I said, It is not good that ye do:*] This encouraged him to proceed in his Reprehension, and to tell them, that they had committed a great Sin: For that's the Meaning of, *It is not good:* A soft Form of Speech, used when they mean it is very bad, *Prov.* xvi. 29. and many other Places.

Ought ye not to walk in the Fear of our God,] Being so lately delivered by him from Oppression, and having so many Enemies about them, to observe what they did.

Because of the Reproach of the Heathen our Enemies?] Who might justly upbraid them with Inhumanity; and thereupon reproach their Religion.

Ver. 10. *I likewise, and my Brethren, and my Servants, might exact of them Money and Corn:*] As a Reward of their Care and Diligence in the publick Service.

I pray you let us leave off this Usury.] But what then would become of the poor People, who were too much oppressed already? And therefore he beseeches them to leave off this Usury, seeing he and his rather waved their own Right, than demanded any Thing for their Labour and Toil in the Discharge of their Offices.

Ver. 11. *Restore, I pray you, to them, even this Day, their Lands, their Vineyards, their Oliveyards, and their Houses,*] Tho' they had lent Money upon the Security of those Lands, *&c.* yet since they were the Possessions of the Poor, who were reduced to great Straits, and could not pay them, he beseeches them to restore them, and that without Delay.

Also the hundredth Part of the Money, and of the Corn, the Wine, and the Oyl, that ye exact of them.] The hundredth Part was an Usury then practised in those Countries, as afterwards among the *Romans*; which was the hundredth Part of what was lent every Month; so that every Year they paid the eighth Part of the Principal. Thus 'tis commonly said. But *Salmasius* hath observed, that in the Eastern Countries there were never any Laws to determine what Interest should be taken for Money lent for a Day, or a Week, or a Month, or a Year, (for there were all these Sorts of Usury) but every one was left to demand what he pleased; and according to what was agreed, they paid for what was borrowed. Therefore we cannot certainly tell whether this was heavy or light Usury. But among the *Greeks* and *Romans* there was a Measure set, (as he notes in his Book *De Fœnore Trapezitico)* and Ἑκατοστή, the hundredth Part, was among the *Greeks* the lowest Usury; tho' it was more or less in several Ages, as he there shews, and in his Book *De Modis Usurarum*; where he notes the Difference between the *Greeks* and *Romans* in this Matter, *Cap.* vi. *p.* 230, *&c.*

Ver. 12. *Then said they, We will restore them,*] They readily consented to restore their Lands, Vineyards, and Houses.

And will require nothing of them;] Demand no Interest for the Money.

So will we do as thou sayest.] They so entirely agreed to what he desired, that it made a Kind of *Jubilee* among the People; for, no Doubt, there was great Joy when this was done.

Then I called the Priests, and took an Oath of them, that they should do according to this Promise.] While they were in this good Mind, he called the Priests, and made them swear in their Presence, who were Witness to it, that they would keep their Word.

Ver. 13. *Also I shook my Lap, and said, So God shake out every Man from his House, and from his Labour, that performeth not this Promise, even thus be he shaken out and emptied.*] He prayed God that they might lose all they had, who did not make good his Promise; and predicted their Poverty by an external Sign, as the Manner of the Prophets was to do: For folding up the Skirts of his Garment, and then scattering them abroad, he represented how God would cast them out of their Possessions, and the Fruit of their Labours, who did not observe this Oath.

And all the Congregation said, Amen, and praised the LORD.] God so wrought upon the People's Hearts, that even they who had been guilty of taking Usury, consented to this Imprecation, and wished the same Mischief to themselves, if they did not do as he required: And which was more, they praised God, who had given them such a Governor, and put into them this good Mind, to submit unto him.

And the People did according to this Promise.] Made an immediate Restitution of what had been mortgaged to them, and released them of their Obligation for Money.

Ver. 14. *Moreover, from the Time that I was appointed to be their Governor in the Land of Judah, from the twentieth Year, even unto the two and thirtieth Year of Artaxerxes the King, that is, twelve Years,*] All which Time he was not in *Judea*; but he ordered him, who was his Deputy, in his Absence, to do as he did.

I and my Brethren] He and his Domesticks; or, those, who, as I said, he deputed in his Room.

Have not eaten the Bread of the Governor.] Taken the Allowances which were made to the Governors, appointed by the Kings of *Persia*, to provide them a Table: Which it was but reasonable they should have; that they who did the publick Business should be maintained at the publick Charge. But he would not do that which was lawful, when he saw it would be burdensome to his Countrymen, and therefore lived upon his own Estate which he had in *Judea*, and upon the Salary which he had as Cupbearer to the King of *Persia*, in whose Service, it is likely, he had enriched himself before he came to *Jerusalem.*

Ver. 15. *But the former Governors that had been before me, were chargeable unto the People, and had taken of them Bread and Wine, beside forty Shekels of Silver,*] Who these were, he doth not say, but spares their Names; it being sufficient to declare he did not imitate them, whosoever they were. Nor doth he relate how much

much Bread and Wine they exacted, but only that they had beſides, forty Shekels of Silver every Day, I ſuppoſe, to make Proviſion of other Things for their Table. But from theſe Words *Scaliger* concludes, that before *Nehemiah* and *Ezra* there had been other Governors placed over them by the Kings of *Perſia*. And if we may believe the *Jewiſh Annals*, compil'd by the Author of *Seder Olam Zuta*, the firſt Governor, *Zerubbabel*, returning from *Jeruſalem* to *Babylon*, died there, and was ſucceeded in his Government of *Judea* by his Son *Meſhullum*, and after him by his Grandſon *Chananiah*.

Yea, even their Servants bare Rule over the People:] They connived at the Exactions of their Servants, who demanded what they pleaſed.

But ſo did not I, becauſe of the Fear of God.] It was not Vain-glory that made him thus generous, but his Love to God, and to his Country: For he loved Religion better than Riches, and took not his own Due, that the People might ſerve God more chearfully.

Ver. 16. *Yea, alſo I continued in the Work of this Wall.*] And all this while he took as much Pains as any of them, in building the Wall of *Jeruſalem*.

Neither bought we any Land:] Which they might have done of the Poor at an eaſy Price, if they had deſired Wealth; but they would not make any Advantage to themſelves of other Mens Neceſſities.

And all my Servants were gathered thither unto the Work.] They were conſtantly employed alſo in the ſame Work, and received no Pay for their Labour, tho' it could not be done without Neglect of his private Buſineſs.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, there were at my Table an hundred and fifty of the Jews and Rulers, beſides thoſe that came unto us from among the Heathen that are about us.*] This was the greater Expence, becauſe they were not inferior People that were entertained at his Table, but Perſons of Quality among the *Jews*, and Strangers who came about Buſineſs, and, perhaps, brought him Intelligence concerning the State of the neighbouring Heathen, and of their Deſigns.

Ver. 18. *Now that which was prepared for me daily, was one Ox, and ſix choice Sheep; alſo Fowls were prepared for me, and once in ten Days, Store of all Sorts of Wine:*] This ſhews that he kept a noble Houſe, as we ſpeak; and, indeed, it was very becoming a great Man to entertain great Perſons, both of his own Country and Strangers, with Magnificence.

Yet for all this required I not the Bread of the Governor, becauſe the Bondage was heavy upon this People.] They could not without great Hardſhip maintain themſelves.

Ver. 19. *Think upon me, my God, for Good, according to all that I have done for this People.*] He expected his Reward only from God, who he hoped would ſhew him the ſame Kindneſs that he had done for his People. There is no Reaſon to think he ſpeaks too much of himſelf, and his own worthy Acts; for it was no more than was neceſſary in ſuch a State of Things, that Poſterity might be furniſhed with an excellent Example of extraordinary Virtue; and no more than St. *Paul* was conſtrained to ſpeak of himſelf in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*; of whom he would take nothing, that he might ſtop the Mouths of falſe Apoſtles, and covetous People. See *chap.* xiii. 22.

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs, when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and Geſhem the Arabian, and the reſt of our Enemies*] Mentioned, *chap.* iv. 7.

Heard that I had builded the Wall, and that there was no Breach left therein; (though at that Time I had not ſet up the Doors upon the Gates)] Not upon all of them, tho' ſome had been ſet up at the Charge of particular Perſons, *ch.* iii. 3, 6, 13, *&c.*

Ver. 2. *That Sanballat and Geſhem ſent unto me, ſaying, Come, let us meet together*] Either to conſult about the common Good of their ſeveral Provinces, wherein they governed, (of which perhaps they pretended they were to give an Account to their Maſter) or to eſtabliſh a Friendſhip and good Correſpondence one with another, or ſome ſuch Purpoſe.

In ſome one of the Villages in the Plain of Ono:] A Place in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, *chap.* xi. 35. and 2 *Chron.* viii. 12. ſee there.

But they thought to do me Miſchief.] He would not truſt them, ſuſpecting they intended to kill him; of which, perhaps, he had received ſome private Intelligence.

Ver. 3. *And I ſent Meſſengers unto them, ſaying,*] He ſhewed ſo much Reſpect to them, as not to return an Anſwer by thoſe whom they ſent to him, but diſpatched a Meſſenger of his own to them.

I am doing a great Work, ſo that I cannot come down: Why ſhould the Work ceaſe whilſt I leave it, and come down to you?] He did not know any Buſineſs they could have with him of ſuch great Concernment, as that which he had in Hand, and therefore he would not put a Stop to it, to confer with them: This was one Reaſon, but not the only one for his Refuſal.

Ver. 4. *Yet they ſent unto me four Times after this Sort;*] They were reſtleſly bent upon his Deſtruction, and therefore importuned him often to give them a Meeting: For they thought, I ſuppoſe, if they did not take this Opportunity to overthrow what he had done, before he ſet up the Doors upon the Gates, they ſhould never be able to enter the City afterwards.

And I anſwered them after the ſame Manner.] He ſtill perſiſted conſtantly to give no other Anſwer; whereby they might underſtand he was reſolved to finiſh the Work.

Ver. 5. *Then ſent Sanballat his Servant unto me in like Manner, the fifth Time,*] There is no Mention of *Tobiah* in all the foregoing Negotiation, and now *Geſhem* is left out, and *Sanballat* alone ſent him a Meſſage, pretending, it is likely, ſpecial Reſpect and Kindneſs unto him, in informing him what was laid to his Charge: Certain it is, he was the great Contriver and Manager of all the Miſchief intended againſt him.

With an open Letter in his Hand:] Before, the Meſſage was delivered by Word of Mouth, but

but now by Letter; yet open, that every one might ſee of what he was accuſed.

Ver. 6. *Wherein was written; It is reported among the Heathen,*] The Report was ſpread among the Nations thereabout.

And Gaſhmu] The ſame, I ſuppoſe, with *Geſhem*, mentioned, *ver.* 1.

Saith it,] Undertakes to prove it.

That thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which Cauſe thou buildeſt the Wall, that thou mayeſt be their King, according to theſe Words.] That he might eſtabliſh his Authority, and reign over them, according to the common Report.

Ver. 7. *And thou haſt alſo appointed Prophets to preach of thee at Jeruſalem, ſaying, There is a King in Judah:*] This was cunningly ſuggeſted, that he might not think there was any Prophet on his Side; as indeed there was, for he had corrupted *Shemaiah*, as it preſently follows.

And now ſhall it be reported to the King, according to theſe Words: Come now therefore, and let us take Counſel together.] How they ſhould wipe off this Suſpicion, if it ſhould be put into the King's Mind, as he told him it certainly would.

Ver. 8. *Then I ſent unto him, ſaying,*] In an open Letter, I ſuppoſe, that every Body might ſee it.

There are no ſuch Things done as thou ſayeſt,] Nothing done to give a Jealouſy of a Rebellion, nor any Prophet that encouraged it.

But thou feigneſt them out of thine own Heart.] He had invented this Report, to defame *Nehemiah*, without any Ground for it.

Ver. 9. *For they all made us afraid, ſaying, Their Hands ſhall be weakened from the Work, that it be not done: now therefore, O God, ſtrengthen my Hands.*] Their Buſineſs was to contrive falſe Stories, to put the *Jews* in Fear; being confident they would be diſcouraged by ſuch Reports, as ſome were: Therefore he beſeeches God to ſtrengthen him that he might ſupport others.

Ver. 10. *Afterward I came unto the Houſe of Shemaiah the Son of Delaiah, the Son of Mehetabeel,*] Who was a Prophet, (it appears from *ver.* 12.) whom, it is likely, *Nehemiah* took to be his Friend, and therefore went to conſult and adviſe with him at his Houſe.

Who was ſhut up;] Out of Fear, he pretended; and by this Action would have had *Nehemiah* to underſtand what he himſelf ſhould do for his own Security; for it was the Manner of the Prophets to inſtruct the People by Actions and Signs, as well as by Words. But others think he *ſhut himſelf up*, that is, retired, as an holy Man from the Affairs of the World, to ſpend his Time in Meditation and Prayer, in ſome of the Chambers of the Temple; whither he adviſed *Nehemiah* to retire, and to take Sanctuary there, from the great Dangers to which he was expoſed.

And he ſaid, Let us meet together in the Houſe of God, within the Temple, and let us ſhut the Doors of the Temple; for they will come to ſlay thee,] By *the Temple* he means the outward Court of it, where he had a Chamber; whither, as a Friend in whom *Nehemiah* confided, he prayed him *to come*, that they might meet and conſult together how to preſerve *Jeruſalem*, and where he might be ſafe himſelf from his Enemies; who could not eaſily enter in there, it being a ſtrong Place, and beſides privileged by its Holineſs; unto which even Heathens, perhaps, might have ſuch Regard, as not to violate it; whereas the Gates of *Jeruſalem* were not yet in ſuch a Condition, as to keep them out: By this Means he hoped *Nehemiah* would become contemptible, when the People ſaw his Cowardice, and the *Jews* would be diſheartned, as much as their Enemies took Courage. And, perhaps, he intended, with ſome Prieſts, his Confederates, to ſeize on him, and deliver him into the Hands of *Sanballat*. At leaſt, it would give ſome Countenance to the Calumny he had raiſed, of his affecting to be King; becauſe he fled from his Work, and durſt not ſtand upon his Integrity. *Shemaiah* alſo might think hereby to draw him in to offend God, by coming into that Court where the Prieſts only might come, and where it is ſuppoſed this Prophet now was.

Yea, in the Night will they come to ſlay thee.] I take the Meaning to be, even this very Night will they fall upon thee; therefore conſult thy Safety, by fleeing hither.

Ver. 11. *And I ſaid, Should ſuch a Man as I flee?*] Who am a Governor, and ought to give a good Example of undaunted Courage; and have profeſſed to put great Confidence in God; and hitherto been marvellouſly preſerved by him, and aſſiſted in his Undertaking.

And who is there, that being as I am, would go into the Temple to ſave his Life? I will not go in.] There might have been Colour for this Advice, if *Jeruſalem* had been an open Place, without any Walls, without armed Men in it, or that had no Courage to defend it; but they had appeared on the Walls to defend it, (*ch.* iv. 13.) and being ſo well appointed, he was reſolved till to rely on God, and on their Fidelity and Valour; and not be ſo baſe as to deſert them, till they deſerted him; which they might well do, if they ſaw him flee from them for Fear.

Ver. 12. *And, lo, I perceived that God had not ſent him, but that he pronounced this Prophecy againſt me:*] Not to ſecure him, but to betray him; as he plainly diſcovered in a little Time; which ſhewed, there was no ſuch Danger, as this falſe Prophet pretended.

For Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.] *Tobiah* was not idle all this Time, but it's likely invented this Plot, to bribe this Man to be a falſe Prophet: Which perhaps was diſcovered to *Nehemiah* by ſome undoubted Prophets of God, who were on their Side.

Ver. 13. *Therefore was he hired, that I ſhould be afraid, and do ſo, and ſin,*] That they might draw him to offend God, by diſtruſting his Care of him; and diſhonour himſelf by baſe Cowardice.

And that they might have Matter for an evil Report, that they might reproach me.] As a Man guilty of what they accuſed him.

Ver. 14. *My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat, according to theſe their Works,*] Their Calumnies, and malicious Contrivances, and foul Practices, which he hoped God would take a Time to puniſh.

And on the Propheteſs Noadiah, and the reſt of the Prophets that would have put me in fear.] The wicked Temper of this People is very wonderful, who had already got falſe Prophets among them, both Men and Women, whom *Nehemiah* did not think fit as a Judge to puniſh, but left them to the Judgment of God. Nor do we read that he informed the King of *Perſia* of the foul Dealings of theſe Men, (which certainly he would have puniſhed,) but prayed God to reward them after their Deeds: For he would have all know that he depended wholly upon the Power of God to enable him to perfect this Work, and not upon the Help of human Force.

Ver. 15. *So the Wall was finiſhed in the twenty and fifth Day of the Month Elul, in fifty and two Days.*] Which may ſeem incredible to thoſe who do not reflect what a great Number of People (who were not hired, but voluntarily) engaged in this Work, and how full they were of Zeal, and that the Foundation of the Wall was not raiſed by the *Chaldeans*, nay, there were ſome Pieces of it ſtanding, only great Gaps being made in it. And other Hiſtories acquaint us with the like Diligence; particularly *Arrianus* and *Curtius* relate, that *Alexander* the Great built the Walls of *Alexandria* (which was ſeven Miles in Compaſs) in the Space of twenty Days.

Ver. 16. *And it came to paſs that when all our Enemies heard thereof, and all the Heathen that were about us ſaw theſe Things,*] When they heard how all the Deſigns of their Enemies were diſappointed, and ſaw *Jeruſalem* was built and flouriſhed.

They were much caſt down in their own Eyes; for they perceived that this Work was wrought of our God.] Being finiſhed in ſo ſhort a Time, beyond all Expectation, and in the Midſt of great Fears and ſad Apprehenſions.

Ver. 17. *Moreover, in thoſe Days the Nobles of Judah ſent many Letters unto Tobiah, and the Letters of Tobiah came unto them.*] To add to all the other Wickedneſs of this Nation, that were falſe Brethren among their great Men, who held a Correſpondence with their moſt peſtilent Enemies againſt *Nehemiah*.

Ver. 18. *For there were many in Judah ſworn unto him,*] Againſt the Intereſt of their Country, and of their Religion; to ſuch a Height of Impiety were many arrived.

Becauſe he was the Son-in-law of Shechaniah the Son of Arah; and his Son Johanan had taken the Daughter of Meſhullam the Son of Berechiah.] So dangerous were Marriages with Foreigners, which *Ezra* therefore had great Reaſon to make void; for by theſe Alliances they were engaged in wicked Deſigns againſt their Country.

Ver. 19. *Alſo they reported his good Deeds before me,*] To ſuch an Impudence were they arrived, that they highly commended him as a very worthy Man in the Preſence of *Nehemiah*, who knew ſo much of his Wickedneſs.

And uttered my Words to him:] Or informed him of all that *Nehemiah* did. For ſo we tranſlate in the Margin, *Matters*, not Words.

And Tobiah ſent Letters to put me in fear.] Still continued ſuch Practices as are mentioned, *Ver.* 6. that if it were poſſible they might put him into ſuch Fear, as would move him to do ſomething to diſgrace himſelf.

CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs when the Wall was built, and I had ſet up the Doors, and the Porters, and the Singers, and the Levites were appointed,*] The Porters were to attend the Gates; but what the *Levites* and the Singers had to do there, is not eaſily reſolved. Perhaps they were to be ready againſt the Time that the Wall ſhould be dedicated, which is mentioned *Chap.* xii.

Ver. 2. *That I gave my Brother Hanani,*] Who was the Man that came from *Jeruſalem* to *Shuſhan*, to acquaint him with the deplorable Condition of the City, and implore his Help, *Chap.* i. 2.

And Hananiah the Ruler of the Palace,] So the Houſe where *Nehemiah* dwelt is called, becauſe he was Governor for the King, and a Kind of Viceroy, who did all the King's Buſineſs, and here gave Audience to all People, as the King was wont to do in his Palace.

Charge over Jeruſalem:] He made *Hanani*, I ſuppoſe, principal Governor over *Jeruſalem*, and *Hananiah* was his Aſſiſtant and Deputy.

(For he was a faithful Man, and feared God above many.)] He ſaith nothing of *Hanani*, who was well known to be zealous for God and for his Country, by the Journey he took to *Shuſhan*, (which I before mentioned,) but he gives the Reaſon why he joined *Hananiah* with him, becauſe he knew he might be truſted, being a Man of Conſcience, who acted out of religious Principles, which a great many in thoſe Days did not. The Reaſon why he took this Care for the City, it is likely, was, becauſe he himſelf was returning to *Shuſhan*, to give the King an Account of the State of Affairs in *Judea*, and therefore placed ſuch Men in *Jeruſalem*, as he knew would faithfully ſecure it in his Abſence.

Ver. 3. *And I ſaid unto them, Let not the Gates of Jeruſalem be opened, until the Sun be hot;*] Till it had been riſen a good while, that they might ſee clearly round about them, and that all the People might be ready in caſe of any Danger.

And while they ſtand by, let them ſhut the Doors, and bar them:] And at Night he charges them to ſtand by and ſee the Gates ſhut and barred in their Preſence. Or, as ſome expound it, they ſhould not ſuffer any Man to ſtir till they ſhut the Gates, leſt thro' Careleſſneſs they ſhould chance to be left open. So *De Dieu* renders the Words, *While the Standers-by ſhut the Gates, hold them faſt*; that is, he gave them Power to keep all there preſent, and not let them go away till this was done.

And appoint Watches of the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem, every one in his Watch, and every one to be over-againſt his Houſe.] The Gates being ſhut, he charges them to ſet the Watch in proper Places; every one keeping Watch in that Part which was next to his own Houſe.

Ver. 4. *Now the City was large and great:*] And therefore required many Watches.

But

But the People were few therein,] In Compariſon with the Bigneſs of the City.

And the Houſes were not builded.] That is, not all that had been in former Times, but a great deal of Ground ſtill lay waſte.

Ver. 5. *And my God put into mine Heart, to gather together the Nobles, and the Rulers, and the People,*] Whatſoever good Motion came into his Mind, he aſcribed it to God, and not to his own prudent Conſideration; though that was employed in this Buſineſs. For without God we can do nothing, who ought therefore to be in all our Thoughts.

That they might be reckoned by Genealogy:] That by knowing of what Family they were, and where they formerly dwelt, he might recal thoſe of them whoſe Habitations had heretofore been in *Jeruſalem*, to come and ſettle there again, now that the Wall was built, and they might dwell there in Safety.

And I found a Regiſter of the Genealogy of them which came up at the firſt, and found written therein,] The Words following.

Ver. 6. *Theſe are the Children of the Province that went up out of the Captivity, of thoſe that had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon had carried away, and came again to Jeruſalem, and to Judah, every one unto his City;*] Theſe are the very Words which we read in the ſecond Chapter of *Ezra*, Ver. 1, &c. from whence he ſeems to have tranſcribed them, and added ſomething to them.

Ver. 7. *Who came with Zerubbabel: Jeſhua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilſhan, Miſpereth, Bigvai, Nehum, Baanah; the Number, I ſay, of the Men of the People of Iſrael, was this;*] He that is here called *Azariah*, is called there *Saraiah*; and there are ſome other ſmall Differences in the Names, but all the ſame, only here *Nahamani* is added.

Ver. 8. *The Children of Paroſh, two thouſand an hundred ſeventy and two.*] I ſhall not tranſcribe all this Genealogy, concerning which I have nothing to obſerve, but that in ſome few Things it differs from that in *Ezra*. See my *Annotations* on *Ezra* ii. 5. There are alſo ſome Families named here which are not in *Ezra*, as in *Ver.* 22. and *Ver.* 48, 49, 51, 52. which are all omitted in *Ezra*. For it muſt be conſidered, that one of theſe Accounts was taken by *Ezra* in *Babylon*, the other by *Nehemiah* in *Judea*. And therefore it is no Wonder that a greater Number are ſometimes mentioned in *Nehemiah* than in *Ezra*; for in the firſt Account that was taken of them, many were ignorant of their Genealogy; but before the laſt, the Book of their Genealogy was found, and yet in the whole Number the two Accounts agree, though in the particular Sums they vary. Compare *Ver.* 66. of this Chapter with the ſecond of *Ezra*, Ver. 64. of which Dr. *Lightfoot* gives this Account in his *Chronicle of the Times of the Old Teſtament*, *p.* 146. *The Matter is to be conceived and apprehended thus; That Nehemiah found that Liſt and Catalogue of thoſe that came up in the firſt of* Cyrus, *as it was taken then; and that he called over the Names of the Families as they lay in Order there: He obſerved the Order of that Liſt in calling and liſting them; but he took the Number of them, as they were now when he numbred them. And ſome Families were now more in Number than they were when that firſt was made, and ſome were leſs; and ſome that were in that Liſt, were not to be found now. For ſome had more of the ſame Stock come out of* Babel *ſince the firſt Numbering; and ſome that had come up at firſt, and were then numbred, were now gone back.* And ſo he obſerved by comparing that Liſt, and the preſent Number, how the Plantation in *Judea* had gone forward or backward, increaſed or decayed ſince the firſt Return.

Ver. 65. *And the Tirſhatha ſaid unto them, that they ſhould not eat of the moſt holy Things till there ſtood up a Prieſt with Urim and Thummim.*] It is the Opinion of *Jacobus Capellus*, that *Zerubbabel* is here meant by the *Tirſhatha* in *Ezra* ii. 63. Whoſoever he was, he expreſſes his Hope that God might in Time reſtore the *Urim* and *Thummim*, (as he had done the Nation,) and ſo give Anſwer about obſcure and difficult Matters, as he had done in former Ages. But till then theſe Prieſts were not admitted to partake of the moſt holy Things, becauſe it did not appear by good Proof, that they were of the Family of the Prieſts; and *not to appear, and not to be, are the ſame Thing* in Law. But the *Talmudiſts*, as the ſame Perſon obſerves, interpret theſe Words as if it had been ſaid, *Till the Dead riſe, or till the Meſſiah come.* For after the firſt Temple was deſtroyed, *the Cities of the Levites, with their Suburbs, were wanting*; and ſo *were Urim and Thummim, and the Kings of the Houſe of Judah.* See his *Hiſtoria Exot. & Sacra, ad A. M.* 3557.

Ver. 70. *And ſome of the Chief of the Fathers gave unto the Work: The Tirſhatha gave to the Treaſure a thouſand Drams of Gold, fifty Baſons, five hundred and thirty Prieſts Garments.*

Ver. 71. *And ſome of the Chief of the Fathers gave to the Treaſure of the Work twenty thouſand Drams of Gold, and two thouſand and two hundred Pounds of Silver.*

Ver. 72. *And that which the reſt of the People gave was twenty thouſand Drams of Gold, and two thouſand Pounds of Silver, and threeſcore and ſeven Prieſts Garments.*] The Offering mentioned in theſe three Verſes, was made by different Perſons from thoſe who are ſaid to have offered in *Ezra* ii. 68, 69. and therefore no wonder the Gold and Silver, and other Things offered, were different.

Ver. 73. *So the Prieſts and the Levites, and the Porters and the Singers, and ſome of the People, and the Nethinims, and all Iſrael dwelt in their Cities;*] Theſe are the very ſame Words with thoſe in the ſecond Chapter of *Ezra*, and the laſt Verſe; and in both Places it is ſaid, *All Iſrael* dwelt in their Cities. Which though it be chiefly to be underſtood of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, yet it is evident ſome of the ten Tribes did return with them, according to thoſe Prophecies, *Jer.* l. 4. *Zech.* viii. 13. And indeed there were many of the *Iſraelites*, that did live in the Tribe of *Judah* before the Captivity, 2 *Chron.* x. 17. xi. 16.

And when the ſeventh Month came, the Children of Iſrael were in their Cities.] When all the Buſineſs before named was over, the People were ſent back, by *Nehemiah*'s Direction, to their ſeveral Cities, unto which they belonged: where

where they remained till the ſeventh Month came; which was five Days after the Wall was finiſhed, on the twenty fifth Day of the ſixth Month, *Chap.* vi. 15.

CHAP. VIII.

Ver. 1. *AND all the People gathered themſelves together as one Man,*] In this Month was the firſt great Feaſt that fell out after the building of the Wall; as it was juſt after their firſt Company returned to *Jeruſalem* from *Babylon*, *Ezra* iii. 1.

Into the Street that was before the Water-gate,] Which Gate is mentioned before, *Chap.* iii. 26. the Street before which being very capacious, they all might meet there; for the Court of the Temple was not large enough to contain ſuch a Multitude.

And they ſpake unto Ezra the Scribe] This, no doubt, is the ſame Perſon mentioned in the foregoing Book; who had been at *Babylon*, it is thought, ſince his firſt coming into *Judea*, and was now returned; beholding with great Joy the Wall of *Jeruſalem* built, as before he had ſeen the Temple.

To bring the Book of the Law of Moſes, which the LORD had commanded to Iſrael.] They called to Mind that Place in *Deuteronomy*, (*Chap.* xxxi. 10, 11, *&c.*) where God requires the Law to be read publickly every ſeventh Year in the Feaſt of Tabernacles, which was appointed to be kept in this Month. This, no doubt, *Ezra* was ready to perform; but ſuch was the forward Zeal of the People at this Time, that they prevented him by their pious Intreaties, that he would obſerve that Law.

Ver. 2. *And Ezra the Prieſt*] So he is called, as before the *Scribe*; both of theſe Titles being put together in the foregoing Book.

Brought the Law before the Congregation, both of Men and Women,] For the City being reſtored and re-inhabited, the next Thing that was proper to be done, was to inſtruct them in thoſe Laws whereby they were to live.

And all that could hear with Underſtanding,] That were not mere Children.

Upon the firſt Day of the ſeventh Month.] Which was not the Feaſt wherein the Law was to be read; but, as *Pellicanus* well obſerves, all this Month was in a Manner holy, ſo that they continued employed in theſe holy Exerciſes till the End of the two and twentieth Day, which was the Concluſion of the Feaſt of Tabernacles.

Ver. 3. *And he read therein before the Street that was before the Water-gate, from the Morning until Mid-day,*] In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *from the Light*, that is, from the Break of Day, (as we ſpeak,) or the Sun-riſing, until Noon. Then, I ſuppoſe, they went to take ſome Repaſt, it being a Feſtival, and a Day of great Rejoicing, *a Memorial of blowing with Trumpets*, Levit. xxiii. 24. on which he thought good to begin the Reading of the Law, that he might do more than they deſired, if they ſpake to him of reading it on the Feaſt of Tabernacles.

Before the Men and the Women, and thoſe that could underſtand; and the Ears of all the People were attentive unto the Book of the Law.] This is a general Account of what he did: The Particulars follow.

Ver. 4. *And Ezra the Scribe ſtood upon a Pulpit of Wood, which they had made for the Purpoſe,*] To raiſe him higher than the People, that he might be the better ſeen and heard by them all; whence, in the *Hebrew*, it is called *a Tower of Wood:* But was not like our *Pulpits*, which contain no more than one Perſon; but large and long, that many Perſons might ſtand in it, as appears by what follows. *Vitringa* hath lately deſcribed it largely in his Book *De Synagoga Veteri*, *p.* 184, *&c.*

And beſide him ſtood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaſeiah, on his right Hand; and on his left Hand, Pedaiah, and Miſhael, and Malchiah, and Haſhum, and Haſhbadana, Zechariah, and Meſhullam.] It is evident by theſe Words, that ſix Perſons ſtood on his Right Hand, and ſeven on his Left, in the ſame Pulpit; being in all fourteen.

Ver. 5. *And Ezra opened the Book in the Sight of all the People, (for he was above all the People)*] He being in the very Middle of the Pulpit, and the fore-named Perſons on each Side of him.

And when he opened it, all the People ſtood up:] Out of Reverence to the holy Word of God. See *Judges* iii. 20.

Ver. 6. *And Ezra bleſſed the LORD the great God, and all the People anſwered, Amen, Amen,*] He ſeems to have uſed the Words, wherein *David* ordered them to bleſs, 1 *Chron.* xvi. 36. where all the People anſwered, *Amen*; as they do here with great Affection. But the *Jewiſh* Doctors pretend, that in the Temple the People never anſwered *Amen*, but ſaid, *Bleſſed be the Name of his glorious Kingdom, for ever and ever.* So *Vitringa* notes in his Book *De Synagoga Veteri*, *p.* 1096. And our Mr. *Thorndike* obſerved the ſame long before, in his *Religious Aſſemblies*, *p.* 230.

With lifting up their Hands; and they bowed their Heads, and worſhipped the LORD with their Faces to the Ground.] Which were all Poſtures in Prayer, and in thankful Acknowledgments to God.

Ver. 7. *Alſo Jeſhua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaſeiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, cauſed the People to underſtand the Law:*] It is thought by ſome, that theſe Perſons expounded to the People what had been read to them; for the ſame Perſons did not read, they imagine, and make them underſtand what was read. But *Stephanus Morinus* hath obſerved very well, that it is not likely that *Ezra* was a mere Reader, and *Levites* the Doctors and Expoſitors of the Law before *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*. It is far more likely, that *Ezra* began to read; and that when he was weary, ſome of thoſe who ſtood by him on each Side went on where he left off; for it was too much for one Man to read from Morning to Mid-day. And he alſo inſtructed theſe *Levites*, if there was any Difficulty, to make the People underſtand what was read.

And the People ſtood in their Place.] Liſtening both to what was read, and what was delivered as the Explication of it.

Ver. 8. *So they read in the Book,*] That is, *Ezra* and his Aſſiſtants read not all the Book of the Law, but only *Deuteronomy*, as they do at this Day.

In the Law of God diſtinctly,] With a clear Voice and diſtinct Pronunciation.

And gave the Senſe, and cauſed them to underſtand the Reading.] *Ezra*, and the other Perſons directed by him, gave the Senſe, and made them underſtand what was read. So the laſt Words are commonly expounded. But *Iſaac Caſaubon*, in an Epiſtle of his to *Suffridus Caligñon*, (Epiſt. DCX.) diſputes at large, that all the *Jews* take the Meaning to be, That the People in their Captivity having diſuſed the *Hebrew* Tongue, and been accuſtomed to the *Chaldee*, *Ezra* and his Companions rendered the *Hebrew* Words exactly into the *Chaldee* Language. And to put all out of doubt, that this is their Senſe, he obſerves, That the *Jews* at this Day retain this Cuſtom (which they received from *Ezra*) in their Synagogues, to read the ſame Portion of Scripture firſt in *Hebrew*, and then in *Chaldee*; as he himſelf was Witneſs at *Frankfort*. And he juſtifies thoſe who take theſe Words [*cauſed them to underſtand the Reading,*] to ſignify expounded the Scripture. Though the Word *Micra* be no where ſo uſed in the Bible, to ſignify *the Scripture*, neither doth it ſignify *Reading*. And another learned Man thinks the *Hebrew* Words may be more exactly tranſlated, *Dabant intelligentiam per ipſam ſcripturam*, They gave the Senſe by the Scripture itſelf. But there is not good Warrant to aſſert this. And the Diſcourſe of *Caſaubon* is grounded on a Tradition of the *Jews*, which hath no better Foundation than this, That they had forgot their Language in *Chaldea*, and therefore they read the Law in that Tongue which they underſtood better than their own. But if this were true, why did the Prophets write in *Hebrew* after their Return from Captivity? And this very Book ſhews the contrary, *Chap.* xiii. 23, 24. where the *Jews* Language appears to have been ſpoken by the People. Nor is the Cuſtom of Reading the *Targum* after the Law very ancient, nor generally uſed in their Synagogues.

Ver. 9. *And Nehemiah, which is the Tirſhatha, and Ezra the Prieſt, the Scribe and the Levites, that taught the People,*] Who had inſtructed them in their Duty out of the Law that had been read to them.

Said unto all the People, This Day is holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep: For all the People wept, when they heard the Words of the Law.] They bewailed the Ignorance wherein they had lived; and the many Violations of the Law, whereof they had been guilty. Juſt as *Joſiah* did when he heard the Words of the Law read out of a Book found unexpectedly, 2 *Chron.* xxii.

Ver. 10. *Then he ſaid*] That is, the *Tirſhatha* gave this Command, who was the principal Perſon among thoſe forenamed, having the ſame Authority that *Zerubbabel* had. See *Chap.* vii. 65.

Go your Way,] Now that it was Noon, it was Time for them to refreſh themſelves.

Eat the Fat, and drink the Sweet,] Make a Feaſt, and provide as good Cheer as you are able, according to the Manner upon their Feſtival Days.

And ſend Portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared:] It did not become religious People only to make much of themſelves; but he would have them out of their Fulneſs to feaſt their poor Brethren, that they might rejoice with them.

For this Day is holy unto our LORD:] Being the firſt New-Moon in the Year, and the Feaſt of blowing with Trumpets, (*Levit.* xxiii. 24.) And nothing was more unſuitable to ſuch Feſtivals than Mourning and Lamentation; for they were appointed to be Solemnities for Mirth and Gladneſs; and are therefore called *the Days of your Gladneſs*, in *Numb.* x. 10. And in *Pſal.* xcii. 4. for the Sabbath, the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *Thou LORD haſt made me glad through thy Works; I will triumph in the Works of thy Hands:* Expreſſing the Subject of his Gladneſs, the Remembrance of the Creation of the World, upon that Day celebrated.

Neither be you ſorry,] Inwardly grieved.

For the Joy of the LORD is your Strength.] Joy in the Lord for the great Things he had done for them, in reſtoring them to their own Land, building the Temple, and the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, was never more becoming than upon a Feſtival Day, which afforded other Matter of Joy. And beſide, it would make them cheerfully perform the reſt of their Duty, and fortify them againſt Troubles and Adverſities; nay, it was the Way to remove them, or to keep them off; for when the Service of God was their Delight, he promiſed to keep off thoſe Plagues which were threatned in the Law againſt Tranſgreſſors, and to give them all the Bleſſings they could deſire.

Ver. 11. *So the Levites ſtilled all the People, ſaying, Hold your Peace, for the Day is holy, neither be ye grieved.*] What *Nehemiah* had ſaid to as many as could hear him, the *Levites* ſaid to the reſt of the People; going about, and perſuading them to lay aſide their Heavineſs, and make it a good Day.

Ver. 12. *And all the People went their Way to eat and to drink, and to ſend Portions, and to make great Mirth,*] As all Nations were wont to do upon their Feſtival Days: There being very few among the *Greeks*, wherein they made Lamentations; but they rather exceeded all Bounds of Decency in their Jollity upon ſacred Solemnities, being wont, beſides Muſick and Dancing, (which were very proper,) to entertain one another with Jeſts and Scoffs, and unbecoming Laughter; as the illuſtrious *Spanhemius* ſhews, in his Obſervations upon *Callymachus* his Hymn, in *Lavacrum Palladis, ad Verſum* 324.

Becauſe they had underſtood the Words that were declared unto them.] This was an extraordinary Reaſon for their Mirth, that they were illuminated in divine Knowledge, and underſtood the Will of God better than they did before.

Ver. 13. *And on the ſecond Day were gathered together the Chief of the Fathers of all the People, the Prieſts and the Levites, unto Ezra the Scribe, even to underſtand the Words of the Law.*] This was no Feſtival Day, but ſo deſirous were they

to be acquainted with the Law, (of the Knowledge of which he had given them a Taſte,) that they came again this Day to beg further Inſtruction. Which, it is evident from hence, *Ezra* gave them, not the Prieſts and the *Levites*, who came to be inſtructed by him as well as the People.

Ver. 14. *And they found written in the Law which the* LORD *had commanded by Moſes, that the Children of Iſrael ſhould dwell in Booths, in the Feaſt of the ſeventh Month:*] It is probable that he read to them particularly the Duties belonging to this Month, wherein they were aſſembled, in which they found the Feaſt of Tabernacles was to be obſerved; and therefore they came to him for Direction how it was to be kept, that they might obey the Precept. And firſt he informed them that they muſt *dwell in Booths:* Which *Maimonides* ſhews how it is to be underſtood in his *Seder Zeraim*, where he explains the Tradition of the Ancients, who believed that when God gave a Precept he alſo gave the Expoſition of it, which he pretends was preſerved by their wiſe Men; which is a vain Fancy of the *Jews*, to ſupport the Credit of their Traditions. But the Book *Coſri* thinks theſe Words [*they found it written*] are to be underſtood of the common People; for the better Sort underſtood well enough that ſuch Feſtivals were to be obſerved, and had not forgotten any of the Precepts, *Pars* III. *Sect.* 63.

Ver. 15. *And that they ſhould publiſh and proclaim in all their Cities, and in Jeruſalem, ſaying,*] Then he tells them that Proclamation ſhould be made in all their Cities, beginning in *Jeruſalem*, that this Feaſt ought to be obſerved on ſuch a Day, *Levit.* xxiii. 4, 34.

Go forth unto the Mount, and fetch Olive Branches, and Pine Branches, and Myrtle Branches, and Palm Branches, and Branches of thick Trees, to make Booths, as it is written.] The neareſt Mount to *Jeruſalem* was the Mount of Olives, where it is likely all theſe Trees grew. But the Word *Shaman* which we tranſlate *Olive Branches*, our famous Dr. *Caſtell* thinks ſignifies *Citrons*; which is not material, they being ſuch Branches as the Mount afforded.

Ver. 16. *So the People went forth, and brought them, and made themſelves Booths, every one upon the Roof of his Houſe,*] Which by the Law was to be built flat, *Deut.* xxii. 8.

And in their Courts, and in the Courts of the Houſe of God, and in the Street of the Water-gate, and in the Street of the Gate of Ephraim.] They durſt not make them without the Walls of the City, for fear of their Enemies.

Ver. 17. *And all the Congregation of them that were come again out of the Captivity made Booths, and ſat under the Booths:*] They not only made them, but left their Houſes, and dwelt in them all the Days of the Feaſt.

For ſince the Days of Joſhua the Son of Nun, unto that Day, had not the Children of Iſrael done ſo; and there was very great Gladneſs.] This is ſcarce credible, as Mr. *Mede* ſpeaks, that for a thouſand Years none of the good Kings in *Iſrael* ſhould obſerve this Feſtival, at leaſt in this main Circumſtance *of dwelling in Booths*. But ſo he thinks it was, and that this horrible Omiſſion of this Feaſt alone fore-ſignify'd the *Jews* would not acknowledge *Chriſt*, whom this ſignified to be *Emmanuel*, God dwelling in our Fleſh. See *Book* I. *Diſcourſe* xlv. *p.* 354. But I think this is not the Meaning, that this Feſtival had never been obſerved ſince *Joſhua*'s Time; for we read in the foregoing Book, that it was kept at their firſt Return from *Babylon*. But the Meaning is, that the Joy had never been ſo great as it was now ſince that Time. For which there was a ſpecial Reaſon, as the *Jews* obſerve in *Seder Olam Rabba*, Cap. 30. for they rejoiced in the Days of *Joſhua*, that they had got Poſſeſſion of the Land of *Canaan*; and now they rejoiced that they were reſtored to it, and quietly ſettled in it, after they had been caſt out of it.

Ver. 18. *Alſo Day by Day, from the firſt Day unto the laſt Day, he read in the Book of the Law of God; and they kept the Feaſt ſeven Days, and on the eighth Day was a ſolemn Aſſembly, according unto the Manner.*] There was a Command that the Law ſhould be read on this Feaſt, as I obſerved above, *Deut.* xxxi. 10, 11, 12. but not that it ſhould be read every Day. This was the Effect of their great Zeal to be inſtructed in the Law of God, which made them deſire to hear it on the ſecond Day of this Month, which was a Feſtival, *Ver.* 13. And perhaps the eighth Day, on which a ſolemn Aſſembly was appointed (*Levit.* xxiii. 26.) they continued the ſame holy Exerciſe. But that ſeems contrary to this Verſe, which ſpeaks only of *ſeven Days*.

CHAP. IX.

Ver. 1. *NOW in the twenty and fourth Day of this Month, the Children of Iſrael were aſſembled with Faſting, and with Sackcloths, and Earth upon them.*] The Feaſt being over, which ended upon the twenty ſecond Day (all which Time Mourning was forbidden, as contrary to the Nature of the Feaſt, which was to be kept with Joy,) they now return to that which they were about before, (*Chap.* viii. 9, 12.) and ſpent this whole Day in humbling themſelves before God for their Sins. The Reaſon why they did not immediately after the Feaſt of Tabernacles keep this Faſt, was (as *Joſephus Scaliger* conjectures) becauſe the twenty third Day was another Feſtival, made by the Conſtitution of the Elders, by the ſame Authority wherewith afterward they appointed the Feaſt of *Purim*, mentioned in the Book of *Eſther*. It was called *the Feſtival of the Law*, ſtill obſerved by the *Jews* on the twenty third Day of this Month, becauſe then they make an end of Reading the Law, which they begin again every Year the next Sabbath after. Now this being a Day of Joy, as other Feſtivals were, on which they were forbidden to mourn, they deferred their Mourning till this Solemnity alſo was paſt, and then they fell to weeping again, as they did when they firſt heard the Law read.

Ver. 2. *And the Seed of Iſrael ſeparated themſelves from all Strangers, and ſtood, and confeſſed their Sins, and the Iniquities of their Fathers.*] Who had been guilty of taking ſtrange Women to be their Wives; for which *Ezra* had ſeverely cenſured them, and conſtrained them to

put them away. But ſo depraved were ſome among them, that it ſeems they tranſgreſſed again in this Matter, as they did in other Things, who confeſſed their own Guilt, and the Guilt of thoſe that were before them, and as a Token of their true Repentance *ſeparated* themſelves from theſe Strangers. Which they did in ſuch a Manner, that they *ſtood* at a Diſtance from them, to ſhew that they renounced them. For ſo the Word *ſtood* is to be taken in this Place, not for a Poſture of Prayer, wherein they confeſſed their Sins; for appearing in Sackcloth, and with Earth on their Heads, it is more likely they lay down and bewailed themſelves, as the Manner was in ſuch Caſes. And accordingly the *Levites* called upon them (*Ver.* 5.) to *ſtand up*; which ſuppoſes that they lay on the Ground, or fell on their Knees, and were not ſtanding when they ſpake unto them.

Ver. 3. *And they ſtood up in their Place, and read in the Book of the Law of the* LORD *their God,*] That is, 'the *Levites* ſtood up in a Place built for them, like that whereon *Ezra* ſtood, *Chap.* viii. 4. For otherwiſe they could not have been heard when they read.

One fourth Part of the Day; and another fourth Part they confeſſed, and worſhipped the LORD *their God.*] They read the Law and confeſſed (that is, praiſed God, *Ver.* 5.) interchangeably. For in one fourth Part of the Day, that is, from the firſt Hour to the third, they did the one, and from thence to the ſixth Hour, (that is, till twelve a-Clock,) they did the other. Then they began the former again till the ninth Hour, and from thence till the Evening they ſpent their Time in the other.

Ver. 4. *Then ſtood up upon the Stairs of the Levites,*] Or upon the *Scaffold* (as the Margin tranſlates it,) which raiſed them above the People, that they might all ſee and hear.

Jeſhua and Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani, and cried with a loud Voice unto the LORD *their God.*] They moſt earneſtly beſeeched him to be merciful to them.

Ver. 5. *Then the Levites, Jeſhua and Kadmiel, Bani, Haſhabniah, Sherebiah, Hodijah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah ſaid, Stand up and bleſs the* LORD *your God for ever and ever:*] After the *Levites* before named had cried to God for Mercy (the People, I ſuppoſe, begging it on their Knees,) another Company of *Levites* bad the People ſtand up, and praiſe the LORD, and give him Thanks as long as they had any Being.

And bleſſed be thy glorious Name, which is exalted above all Bleſſing and Praiſe.] The *Levites*, it is likely, praiſed him in theſe Words, acknowledging that the nobleſt Creatures could not reach his ſuper-excellent Perfections; and all the People repeated the ſame Words after them.

Ver. 6. *Thou, even thou art* LORD *alone; thou haſt made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Hoſt, the Earth and all Things that are therein, the Seas and all that is therein, and thou preſerveſt them all,*] As they confeſs the LORD to be the only God, ſo they attribute two Things to him; That he is the Creator and the Conſervator of the Univerſe; for having made it, no doubt he takes care of every Part thereof.

And the Hoſt of Heaven worſhippeth thee.] Sometimes the Stars, and ſometimes the Angels, are called *the Hoſt of Heaven.* The latter ſeems to be here meant; for the other are mentioned before, when he ſaith *the Heavens with all their Hoſt.* Concerning *the Heaven of Heavens*, ſee in *Solomon*'s Prayer, 1 *Kings* viii. 27.

Ver. 7. *Thou art the* LORD *the God, who didſt chuſe Abram, and broughteſt him forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gaveſt him the Name of Abraham:*] Here follows a compendious Hiſtory of the Affairs of the *Hebrew* Nation in this Confeſſion of God's Benefits, and their Ingratitude. Which *Nehemiah* and *Ezra*, it is likely, compoſed in the Form of a Prayer, and delivered it to the *Levites*, whom they ordered to ſpeak it diſtinctly before the whole Congregation from their ſeveral Scaffolds, which were conveniently placed in ſeveral Parts of the Aſſembly, that they might be heard.

Ver. 8. *And foundeſt his Heart faithful before thee,*] In many Inſtances, eſpecially in that great Trial of his Faith and Obedience, when he required him to offer up his only Son to him, *Gen.* xxii. and ſee alſo *Gen.* xv. 6. xvii. 5, &c.

And madeſt a Covenant with him, to give the Land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebuſites, and the Girgaſhites, to give it, I ſay, to his Seed, and haſt performed thy Words, for thou art righteous:] True to his Word in faithfully fulfilling his Promiſes. See *Gen.* xv. 7, 18. xvii. 2, 4, 7, &c.

Ver. 9. *And didſt ſee the Affliction of our Fathers in Egypt, and heardeſt their Cry by the Red Sea:*] They paſs by all God's Providences over *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, to come to that which God had done for them ſince they were a Nation; that is, ſince he had made good his Covenant with *Abraham*, to multiply his Seed as the Stars of Heaven; at which Time he foretold him of the grievous Affliction of his Seed in *Egypt*, Gen. xv. 5, 13. from which he graciouſly delivered them, they here acknowledge, and compleated their Deliverance at the Red Sea.

Ver. 10. *And ſhewed Signs and Wonders upon Pharaoh, and on all his Servants, and on all the People of his Land:*] Which are recorded in the Book of *Exodus*, Chap. vii, viii, &c.

For thou kneweſt that they dealt proudly againſt them:] Intending to make them their Slaves for ever, as, for the preſent, they treated them with the utmoſt Contempt and Cruelty, *Exod.* v. 17, 18.

So didſt thou get thee a Name, as it is this Day:] See *Exod.* ix. 16.

Ver. 11. *And thou didſt divide the Sea before them, ſo that they went through the midſt of the Sea, on the dry Land,*] *Exod.* xiv. 21, 22.

And their Perſecutors thou threweſt into the Deeps, as a Stone into the mighty Waters.] So that they ſunk down, and roſe up no more to perſecute them. The *Hebrew* Word ſignifies, the *ſtrong* or *rough* Waters. And ſo *Bochartus* obſerves out of many *Greek* Authors, that that Sea is called, and ſaid, in ſhort, to be κατὰ πάντα φοβερὸν,

φοβερὸν, in all regards formidable or terrible. In his *Canaan*, *Lib.* I. *Cap.* 13.

Ver. 12. *Moreover thou leadeſt them in the Day by a cloudy Pillar, and in the Night by a Pillar of Fire, to give them Light in the Way wherein they ſhould go.*] Concerning which ſee *Exod.* xiii. 21.

Ver. 13. *Thou cameſt down alſo upon Mount Sinai, and ſpakeſt with them from Heaven, and gaveſt them right Judgments, and true Laws, good Statutes and Commandments:*] This ſeems to relate, in the Beginning of the Verſe, to the ten Commandments, ſpoken by the Mouth of God himſelf; but the latter Part comprehends all the Law delivered by him to *Moſes* in the Mount, *Chap.* xxi, xxii, xxiii.

Ver. 14. *And madeſt known unto them thy holy Sabbath,*] The Scripture mentions the Sabbath as a ſingular Gift beſtowed upon the Jewiſh Nation, *Exod.* xvi. 29. It being a Sign between him and them, that he was their God who *ſanctified*, that is, ſeparated them out of all other People to be his peculiar People; that is, the Worſhippers of the Creator of the World, whom they acknowledged to be the LORD their God, while the Heathen worſhipped the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and other Creatures as their Gods, *Exod.* xxxi. 13. and *Ezekiel* xx. 12, 20. In which the Prophet tells us, that God intended by this to ſhew that he had choſen *Iſrael*, as I ſaid, to be his peculiar People above all other Nations, and that they had no other God.

And commandedſt them Precepts, Statutes, and Laws, by the Hand of Moſes thy Servant:] Which are thoſe before mentioned, which were not ſpoken by God himſelf, but delivered by him to *Moſes* in the Mount, who was his faithful Servant, and delivered nothing but what he received from God's own Mouth. The Obſervation of which is often preſſed upon them as an Acknowledgment of him to be their Creator, who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*.

Ver. 15. *And gaveſt them Bread from Heaven for their Hunger, and broughteſt forth Water for them out of the Rock for their Thirſt,*] See *Exod.* xvi. 14, 15. xvii. 6.

And promiſedſt them that they ſhould go in to poſſeſs the Land which thou hadſt ſworn to give them.] Which he ſet before them, and bad them go and poſſeſs it, as *Moſes* tells them, *Deut.* i. 8.

Ver. 16. *But they and our Fathers dealt proudly, and hardned their Necks, and hearkened not to thy Commandments,*] A famous Inſtance of this there was when they refuſed to go up and poſſeſs the Land, to the Borders of which he had brought them, *Numb.* xiv. 1, 2, &c. And afterwards more inſolently rebelled againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, who had been their Conductors through the Wilderneſs, *Numb.* xvi. 3.

Ver. 17. *And refuſed to obey, neither were mindful of thy Wonders that thou didſt among them, but hardened their Necks,*] Their Ingratitude was the greater, becauſe theſe Wonders were not done among other Nations, but were peculiar to them; which our Saviour makes a very high Aggravation of the Sins of their Poſterity, *Matth.* xi. 21.

And in their Rebellion appointed a Captain to return to their Bondage:] See *Numb.* xiv. 4. where they conſulted about it, and it ſeems came to this Reſolution, that they agreed upon a Captain to lead them back to *Egypt*. Or their reſolving to do it, was the ſame with the actual Appointment of a Captain, as it was in the Caſe of *Abraham*'s offering his Son.

But thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, ſlow to Anger, and of great Kindneſs, and forſookeſt them not.] This was the Character God gave of himſelf to *Moſes*, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. which he made good to all Generations. See *Pſalm* cxlv. 8.

Ver. 18. *Yea, when they had made them a molten Calf, and ſaid, This is thy God that brought thee up out of Egypt, and had wrought great Provocations:*] This was the higheſt Provocation, conſidering how lately he had ſpoken to them from Heaven not to make a graven Image, and how many Cautions he had afterwards given them againſt it.

Ver. 19. *Yet thou in thy manifold Mercies forſookeſt them not in the Wilderneſs:*] But gave them an early Inſtance of his Clemency.

The Pillar of the Cloud departed not from them by Day, to lead them in the Way, neither the Pillar of Fire by Night, to ſhew them Light, and the Way wherein they ſhould go.] Which teſtified, that notwithſtanding their Provocation, God was ſtill among them, and continued his gracious Preſence with them; of which this was a glorious Token, as *Moſes* told them, *Numb.* xiv. 14.

Ver. 20. *Thou gaveſt alſo thy good Spirit to inſtruct them,*] The Spirit of Prophecy, which was upon *Moſes*, God imparted to ſeventy other Perſons, that the People might be better governed, *Numb.* xi. 16, 17.

And withheldeſt not thy Manna from their Mouth,] But continued it till they came to *Canaan*; or elſe they might have been ſtarved. See *Joſh.* v. 12.

And gaveſt them Water for their Thirſt.] When the whole Congregation deſerved to periſh, according to their own Wiſh, that they had died when their Brethren died before the LORD, *Numb.* xx. 3.

Ver. 21. *Yea, forty Years didſt thou ſuſtain them in the Wilderneſs, ſo that they lacked nothing; their Clothes waxed not old, and their Feet ſwelled not.*] See *Deut.* viii. 4.

Ver. 22. *Moreover thou gaveſt them Kingdoms and Nations, and didſt divide them into Corners:*] Some tranſlate the laſt Words, *Thou didſt divide them by Angels*, that is, he parted thoſe Kingdoms among them as by a Line. But others underſtand it of the People diſpoſſeſſed by the *Jews*, whom he drove into Corners.

So they poſſeſſed the Land of Sihon, and the Land of the King of Heſhbon, and the Land of Og King of Baſhan.] Moſt of the Inhabitants of which he deſtroyed, and the reſt fled and hid themſelves in Corners. But it muſt be obſerved, that *Heſhbon* being the City of *Sihon* (*Numb.* xxi. 26.) the firſt Words ſhould be rendered, *the Land of Sihon, even the Land of the King of Heſhbon.*

Ver. 23. *Their Children alſo multipliedſt thou as the Stars of Heaven, and broughteſt them into the Land, concerning which thou haſt promiſed to their*

their Fathers, that they ſhould go in to poſſeſs it.] See *Gen.* xv. 5.

Ver. 24. *So the Children went in and poſſeſſed the Land; and thou ſubduedſt before them the Inhabitants of the Land, the Canaanites, and gaveſt them into their Hands, with their Kings, and the People of the Land, that they might do with them as they would.*] Theſe Words expreſs the eaſy Conqueſt they made of the whole Country.

Ver. 25. *And they took ſtrong Cities,*] The Walls of *Jericho* falling down flat before them.

And a fat Land,] A fruitful Country flowing with Milk and Honey.

And poſſeſſed Houſes full of all Goods, Wells digged, Vineyards, and Oliveyards, and Fruit-Trees in Abundance:] They were inriched with the Eſtates of the People whom they deſtroyed, having Houſes ready built, and well furniſhed, together with all Sorts of Trees planted to their Hands.

So they did eat, and were filled, and became fat,] They wanted nothing, but rather had Superfluity of all worldly Bleſſings.

And delighted themſelves in thy great Goodneſs.] Their higheſt Pleaſure indeed ought to have been in their Thoughts how good God was unto them; but the Meaning of theſe Words is no more than this, That God had beſtowed ſo many Bleſſings upon them, that they took great Pleaſure in the Enjoyment of them.

Ver. 26. *Nevertheleſs, they were diſobedient, and rebelled againſt thee, and caſt thy Law behind their Backs,*] The pleaſant Life they led in the good Land God gave them, made them wanton, and forgetful of God and of his Laws, which they regarded not at all.

And ſlew the Prophets which teſtified againſt them, to turn them to thee,] We read of many Prophets ſlain by *Jezabel*, 1 *Kings* xviii. 4. xix. 10.

And they wrought great Provocations.] By abominable Idolatries.

Ver. 27. *Therefore thou deliveredſt them into the Hand of their Enemies, who vexed them; and in the Time of their Trouble, when they cried unto thee, thou heardeſt them from Heaven; and according to thy manifold Mercies, thou gaveſt them Saviours, who ſaved them out of the Hand of their Enemies.*] The whole Book of *Judges* verifies this, that God delivered them for their Sins unto the *Moabites*, the *Canaanites*, and divers other Enemies, who grievouſly domineered over them; but when they cried to God for Help, he was ſo gracious as to ſend ſuch great Men as *Barak*, *Gideon*, and others to be their *Saviours*, that is, Deliverers from their Tyranny.

Ver. 28. *But after they had Reſt, they did evil again before thee:*] No ſooner did they begin to proſper, and the Judge that ſaved them was dead, but they revolted from God, who had been ſo good to them.

Therefore lefteſt thou them in the Hand of their Enemies, ſo that they had the Dominion over them:] God ſo abandoned them, that he let the *Philiſtines* rule over them forty Years, *Judges* xiii. 1. unto which perhaps this Paſſage relates.

Yet when they returned, and cried unto thee, thou heardeſt them from Heaven, and many times didſt thou deliver them, according to thy Mercies:] For nothing elſe could move him to it; they being through all Generations unconſtant, and unſteadfaſt in their Obedience.

Ver. 29. *And teſtifiedſt againſt them, that thou mighteſt bring them again unto thy Law:*] By many remarkable Puniſhments he teſtified how highly he was diſpleaſed with them, that he might reform them.

Yet they dealt proudly,] Which one would have expected ſhould have humbled them; but they grew more bold and obſtinate in their Sins.

And hearkened not unto thy Commandments, but ſinned againſt thy Judgments, (which if a Man do, he ſhall live in them,)] That is, be a happy Man.

And withdrew the Shoulder, and hardened their Neck, and would not hear.] Withdrawing the Shoulder is a Metaphor (I have obſerved before) taken from refractory Oxen that draw back, and will not ſubmit to the Yoke.

Ver. 30. *Yet many Years didſt thou forbear them,*] Before he ſuffered them to be carried Captive out of their own Land.

And teſtifiedſt againſt them by thy Spirit in thy Prophets:] Whom he raiſed up (I have obſerved elſewhere) in every Age, in every King's Reign, to tell them their Duty, and reprove them for their Sins.

Yet would they not give ear; therefore gaveſt thou them into the Hands of the People of the Lands.] At laſt he delivered them into the Hands of the *Chaldeans*, as we read, 2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 15, 16. who are called the *People of the Lands*, becauſe they had got Poſſeſſion of all the Countries thereabout, which God put under their Power, as he had done other Countries beyond *Euphrates*.

Ver. 31. *Nevertheleſs, for thy great Mercies ſake, thou didſt not utterly conſume them, nor forſake them,*] But left them a Remnant of the poorer Sort in the Land, and ſhewed Favour to the Captives in the Land of *Babylon*.

For thou art a gracious and merciful God.] To which alone they owed their Preſervation from utter Deſtruction.

Ver. 32. *Now therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible God, who keepeſt Covenant and Mercy;*] Thus he began his Addreſs to God before he came from *Shuſhan*. See *Chap.* i. *Ver.* 5.

Let not all the Trouble ſeem little before thee, that hath come upon us, on our Kings, on our Princes, and on our Prieſts, and on our Prophets, and on our Fathers, and on all thy People, ſince the Time of the Kings of Aſſyria, unto this Day.] For thoſe Kings firſt began to invade their Country, and carried away the ten Tribes, 2 *Kings* xv. 19. xvii. 3, 5, &c. After which, Calamities came upon *Judah*, their good King *Joſiah* being ſlain, *Manaſſeh* carried to *Babylon* before the great Captivity.

Ver. 33. *Howbeit, thou art juſt in all that is brought upon us; for thou haſt done right, but we have done wickedly.*

Ver. 34. *Neither have our Kings, our Princes, our Prieſts, nor our Fathers, kept thy Law, nor hearkened unto thy Commandments, and the Teſtimonies wherewith thou didſt teſtify againſt them.*

Ver. 35. *For they have not ſerved thee in their Kingdom, and in thy great Goodneſs that thou gaveſt them, and in the large and fat Land which thou gaveſt before them, neither turned they from their wicked Works.*] In theſe three Verſes they acknowledge the Juſtice of God, in all the Puniſhments he had inflicted on them, though heavy, and of long Continuance. For from the higheſt to the loweſt they had done all wickedly, and would not be reclaimed.

Ver. 36. *Behold we are Servants this Day, and for the Land that thou gaveſt unto our Fathers, to eat the Fruit thereof, and the Good thereof, behold, we are Servants in it.*] God had indeed marvellouſly reſtored them to their own Country; yet the Marks of his Diſpleaſure for their Sins ſtill remained very viſible: For they were but Servants unto others, not Owners and Proprietors of the Land which God had given to their Fathers; out of which they had been caſt for their Wickedneſs, and had not yet perfectly recovered it, but laboured for their Lords and Maſters.

Ver. 37. *And it yielded much Increaſe unto the Kings whom thou haſt ſet over us, becauſe of our Sins:*] For their Land paid a great Tribute to the Kings of *Perſia*, out of the Profit of it, *Ezra* vi. 8. vii. 24. and in this Book, *Chap.* v. 4.

Alſo they have Dominion over our Bodies, and over our Cattle, at their Pleaſure,] For their Bodies were liable to be preſſed to ſerve in the King's Wars, or in his Works; and their Cattle ſubject to them, when they had Occaſion to ſend Poſt about the King's Buſineſs.

And we are in great Diſtreſs.] Though they were permitted to live by their own Laws, (as we read in the Book of *Ezra*,) which was a great Privilege, yet they lay under thoſe publick Burdens, and were compelled to bear them. By which we may learn how vain their proud Boaſts were in *John* viii. 33. that they *were never in Bondage to any Man*; when they had long been Slaves in *Egypt*, and lately in *Babylon*, and after they came from thence, as they here complain; and even then they paid Tribute to the *Romans*, when they made thoſe Brags to our Saviour.

Ver. 38. *And becauſe of all this, we make a ſure Covenant and write it; and our Princes, Levites, and Prieſts ſeal unto it.*] In Conſideration of which they reſolved to renew their Covenant with God of better Obedience; which they promiſed under their Hands and Seals, as the only Remedy to procure perfect Deliverance. And to make it more effectual, they ſeem to declare this in the Preſence of God, at the Concluſion of the foregoing Confeſſion and Prayer.

It ſignified little indeed, as *Pellicanus* obſerves, what ſuch an untoward People promiſed; for what Regard would they have to their own Hand-Writing, who regarded not the Ten Commandments, written on Tables of Stone by the Finger of God? But it was very uſeful that there ſhould be a publick Inſtrument to convince them of their Impiety, and that they might be publickly confounded when they proved perfidious Deſerters, by ſhewing them their Engagements under their own Hands to future Fidelity.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *NOW thoſe that ſealed, were Nehemiah the Tirſhatha, the Son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah,*] *Nehemiah* was the Governor of the Country under the King of *Perſia*, and therefore the principal Prince among them, who led the Way to the reſt; who are not mentioned, unleſs we ſuppoſe *Zidkijah* to have been a Prince; for they that followed were Prieſts.

Ver. 2. *Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,*] I need not tranſcribe the reſt of the Names to the eighth Verſe, at the End of which it is ſaid *theſe were the Prieſts*, that is, the Chief of them, for there are but twenty and one of them in all; and there is no Mention of *Ezra* the Prieſt among them; of which it is hard to give an Account, unleſs we ſuppoſe him to be now gone to *Babylon*: Which muſt be very lately; for he was at *Jeruſalem* in the Beginning of the ſeventh Month, *Chap.* viii. 2. Though on the twenty fourth Day of it, when they faſted and prayed, we do not find him named throughout the whole ninth Chapter; yet at the Feaſt of the Dedication he was come to *Jeruſalem* again, *Chap.* xii. 36. Some therefore think, he was now hindred by Sickneſs from being preſent at this Sealing.

Ver. 9. *And the Levites, both Jeſhua the Son of Azaniah, Binnui of the Sons of Henadad, Kadmiel;*

Ver. 10. *And their Brethren, &c.*] There are fourteen, *Levites* mentioned in theſe and the following Verſes, to *Ver.* 14. which perhaps were all the *Levites* that were then preſent; or, rather were the principal *Levites*, who were not Prieſts: For ſome of theſe are mentioned before, as choſen to expound the Law to the People, and to make publick Prayers to God, *Chap.* viii. 7. ix. 4, 5.

Ver. 14. *The Chief of the People; Paroſh, &c.*] It had been tedious to make all the People ſubſcribe and ſeal the Writing; therefore the principal Perſons did it in the Name of the reſt, whoſe Names, in Number forty and three, are here recorded till *Ver.* 28.

Ver. 28. *And the reſt of the People, the Prieſts, the Levites, the Porters, the Singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had ſeparated themſelves from the People of the Lands unto the Law of God, their Wives, their Sons, and their Daughters, every one having Knowledge, and having Underſtanding:*] All that did not ſubſcribe and ſeal, becauſe they were too many, yet gave their Conſent to what the forenamed Perſons did. And not only the Men, but their Wives, and their Children, who were arrived at Years of Diſcretion, engaged themſelves, as follows in the next Verſe.

Ver. 29. *They clave to their Brethren, their Nobles,*] They declared, they were of the ſame Mind with thoſe that had ſealed; and owned by Word of Mouth what they had ſet their Hands unto; and ſaid, it was their Act and Deed, as much as their Nobles and Brethren, from whom they would not depart.

And entred into a Curſe, and into an Oath, to walk in God's Law, which was given by Moſes, the

the Servant of God, and to obſerve and do all the Commandments of the LORD *our God, and his Judgments, and his Statutes:*] And more than that, they added an Oath, whereby they obliged themſelves to obſerve the Law; and an Imprecation upon themſelves, wiſhing all the Curſes written in the Law might fall upon them, if they did not do as the Law required in all Things.

Ver. 30. *And that we would not give our Daughters unto the People of the Land, nor take their Daughters for our Sons:*] Beſides their general Promiſe, they ſpecify thoſe Things that were moſt difficult; as not marrying with Strangers, obſerving the Sabbath, bringing Oblations for the Uſe of the Temple, *&c.* The firſt Thing here ſpecified was of great Importance; and they ſolemnly engaged to perform it; for though both *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* had found them guilty of breaking this Law, yet they were ſo prone to offend in this Thing, that it ſeems, notwithſtanding all they could do, ſome continued to violate it.

Ver. 31. *And if the People of the Land*] That is, their Heathen Neighbours.

Bring Ware, or any Victuals on the Sabbath-Day, to ſell, that we would not buy it of them on the Sabbath,] We do not find any expreſs Law forbidding them to buy what was offered to be ſold on the Sabbath-Day; but they obliged themſelves not to do it, that the Reſt might be better obſerved. For none would come to ſell, when there were no Chapmen for their Commodities.

Or on the Holy-Day:] That is, on all Days of Reſt from their Labours; ſuch as the Paſſover, the Feaſt of Tabernacles, and others.

And that we would leave the ſeventh Year,] That is, let their Land reſt every ſeventh Year, and leave the Fruit of it, which grew up of itſelf, for the Poor, as the Law required, *Levit.* xxv. 4, *&c.*

And the Exaction of every Debt.] That is, remit in that Year the Debts which the Poor owed them, *Deut.* xv. 2, 4, *&c.*

Ver. 32. *Alſo we made Ordinances for us, to charge ourſelves yearly with the third Part of a Shekel, for the Service of the Houſe of our God;*] We do not find this enjoined any where by an expreſs Law; but Reaſon required it at this Time; and therefore they obliged themſelves to it by an Ordinance of the Elders, that the Service of God at the Temple might be maintained by this ſmall Duty, which was laid upon every one.

Ver. 33. *For the Shew-Bread, and for the continual Meat-Offering, and for the continual Burnt-Offering, of the Sabbaths, of the New-Moons; for the ſet Feaſts, and for the holy Things; and for the Sin-Offerings, to make an Atonement for Iſrael; and for all the Work of the Houſe of our God.*] There was a Treaſury formerly in the Houſe of God, out of which all theſe Things were ſupplied: And when it was exhauſted by the many great Sums which were ſent out of it to foreign Princes in the Days of *Hezekiah*, that Prince maintained the Burnt-Offerings at his own Charge, 2 *Chron.* xxxi. 3. But both theſe failing for the preſent, there was this Oblation made to furniſh all the Things here mentioned, and every Thing elſe that was neceſſary for the Service of God. And no doubt, many good People dedicated Things to the ſame Uſe; whereby the Expences were well maintained.

Ver. 34. *And we caſt the Lots among the Prieſts, the Levites, and the People, for the Wood-Offering, to bring it into the Houſe of our God, after the Houſes of our Fathers, at Times appointed, Year by Year, to burn upon the Altar of the* LORD *our God, as it is written in the Law:*] They determined by caſting of Lots, how much Wood every one ſhould bring in for their Share, to maintain their Fire continually upon the Altar to burn the Sacrifices; and in what Order it ſhould be brought, (what Family, that is, ſhould begin firſt, and what ſhould follow next,) and at what Times of the Year. For there was another ſolemn Feaſt, (beſide thoſe I mentioned before,) called *the Feaſt of the Wood-Offering*, which took its Original from hence; and, as *Scaliger* obſerves, was kept on the twenty ſecond Day of the Month *Ab*. But Mr. *Thorndike* obſerves, out of the *Miſchnah*, (in his *Religious Aſſemblies*, *p.* 269.) that it was held nine Days in ſeveral Months, whereof a great Part fell in that Month; and is meant by theſe Words, *at Times appointed, Year by Year*. The *Talmudiſts* alſo ſay, that every Family, on the Day when they brought in the Wood, ſacrificed a voluntary Burnt-Offering, called the *Korban of Wood*, as *Petrus Cunæus* obſerves in his Book *De Republica Hebræorum*, *Lib.* II. Cap. 13. Where he notes alſo, that herein *Joſephus* differs from the *Talmudiſts*; that he mentions but one Day of the Feaſts, which he calls ξυλοφορεία: which was ſuch a ſolemn Feſtival, (as *Maimonides* ſaith, in his *Furniture of the Temple*, *Cap.* 6.) that none might mourn on this Day, nor faſt, nor do any Work.

Ver. 35. *And to bring the Firſt-Fruits of our Ground, and the Firſt-Fruits of all Fruit of all Trees, Year by Year, unto the Houſe of the* LORD:] According to the Command, *Exod.* xxiii. 19. *Levit.* xix. 23. See below, *Ver.* 39.

Ver. 36. *Alſo the Firſt-born of our Sons and of our Cattle, (as it is written in the Law,) and the Firſtlings of our Herds, and of our Flocks, to bring to the Houſe of our God, unto the Prieſts that miniſter in the Houſe of our God:*] The Law which gave all the Firſtlings to God, is in *Exod.* xiii. the Beginning, and *Ver.* 11, 12. and God gave them all to *Aaron* the Prieſt, in *Numb.* xviii. 15, 16.

Ver. 37. *And that we ſhould bring the Firſt-Fruits of our Dough, and our Offerings,*] See *Levit.* xxiii. 17. and *Numb.* xv. 19, 20. It was to be ſo large, that it is called *a Gift*, in *Deut.* xviii. 4.

And the Fruit of all manner of Trees, of Wine, and of Oil, unto the Prieſts, to the Chambers of the Houſe of our God,] See *Numb.* xviii. 12, *&c.*

And the Tithes of our Ground unto the Levites, that the ſame Levites might have the Tithes in all the Cities of our Tillage.] See *Levit.* xxvii. 30. *Numb.* xviii. 21.

Ver. 38. *And the Prieſt the Son of Aaron, ſhall be with the Levites, when the Levites take Tithes; and the Levites ſhall bring up the Tithe of the Tithes unto the Houſe of our God, to the Chambers,*

bers, into the Treaſure-Houſe.] As the People gave the Tithe of their Land to the *Levites*, ſo the *Levites* gave a Tithe to the Prieſts. And when the People brought them to the *Levites*, one of the Prieſts was appointed to be preſent to inſpect them, and to ſee that without Fraud they tithed the Tithes, that is, ſet out the tenth Part of the Tithes they had received for the Prieſt, which were brought to the Chambers, wherein they were depoſited for the Prieſts in God's Houſe.

Ver. 39. *For the Children of Iſrael, and the Children of Levi, ſhall bring the Offering of the Corn, of the new Wine, and the Oil,*] See *Deut.* xii. 6, 11.

Unto the Chambers, where are the Veſſels of the Sanctuary, and the Prieſts that miniſter, and the Porters, and the Singers:] Where other holy Things were kept, and where God's Miniſters attended, for whoſe Uſe they were deſigned, and were to be brought thither at their own Charge. Theſe Chambers were in the Court of the Prieſts: But *L'Empereur* thinks the Court of the People likewiſe might have ſuch Places in it, wherein theſe Things were beſtowed, being more than the other could contain. For (as the *Jews* obſerve) though the Prieſts had a Court proper to themſelves, into which none might come but they alone, yet they were not excluded from the Court of *Iſrael*; and if there was not Room enough to receive all the Things fore-mentioned, there were Receptacles under Ground, beſides the Upper-Room mentioned *Jerem.* xxxv. 4.

And we will not forſake the Houſe of our God.] They promiſe, according to their Covenant and Oath, to be no more ſo negligent in theſe Matters, as they had been; and accordingly they did fulfil this Promiſe, as we read *Chap.* xii. 44, 45. unto the End.

CHAP. XI.

Ver. 1. *AND the Rulers of the People dwelt at Jeruſalem:*] Their Neighbours were ſo inraged to ſee the Walls at *Jeruſalem* built again, and were ſo reſtleſs in their Deſigns to keep this City from riſing to its former Splendor, that it terrified many of the *Jews* from coming to dwell there, thinking themſelves more ſafe in the Country, where their Enemies had no Pretence to diſturb them. The Rulers therefore of the People came and ſettled themſelves at *Jeruſalem*, that they might invite and encourage others to come and inhabit it; and ſeveral Perſons, as the next Verſe intimates, did come and offer themſelves freely to dwell with them there.

The reſt of the People alſo caſt Lots to bring one of Ten to dwell in Jeruſalem the holy City, and nine Parts to dwell in other Cities.] But though the Rulers were ſettled here, and ſome followed their Example, and all that formerly belonged to *Jeruſalem* were ordered to return, (*Chap.* vii. 4, 5.) yet ſtill there was Room for more Citizens; and the City, conſidering how large it was, being very empty, they conſulted to make it populous, by compelling every tenth Man in *Judah* and *Benjamin* to quit their preſent Habitations in the Country, and come and dwell there; leaving the reſt to dwell where they pleaſed. For which End they caſt Lots, that among ten Men it might be known whom God choſe to come thither; and the Lot falling by a divine Appointment upon ſuch a Perſon, rather than another, no doubt, he removed the more contentedly to this City.

Ver. 2. *And the People bleſſed all the Men that willingly offered themſelves to dwell at Jeruſalem.*] Beſide thoſe who were choſen by Lot, it ſeems there were ſome that voluntarily choſe to go and live there; whom the People highly commended and praiſed, beſeeching God to bleſs and proſper them: For indeed they were worthy to be honoured as Men that ſought the Welfare of their Country, the Glory of God, the Reſtoring of their Nation, the Defence of their City, and had a Zeal for the Divine Service performed there.

Ver. 3. *Now theſe are the Chief of the Province,*] Of thoſe *Jews* that came from *Babylon* into the Province of *Judea*.

That dwelt in Jeruſalem:] Whoſe Names are mentioned *Ver.* 4, *&c.*

But in the Cities of Judah dwelt every one in his Poſſeſſion in their Cities, to wit, Iſrael, the Prieſts, and the Levites, and the Nethinims, and the Children of Solomon's Servants.] But thoſe that dwelt in the other Cities of *Judah*, he would not reckon in this Catalogue; whom he comprehends under the Name of *Iſrael*, the *Prieſts*, the *Levites*, the *Nethinims*, and *Solomon's Servants*. By *Iſrael* he means all the People of the ten Tribes, as well as *Judah* and *Benjamin*, who were the Chief; but he calls them *Iſrael*, becauſe thoſe of *Judah* and *Benjamin* dwelt at *Jeruſalem*; the reſt of *Iſrael* were in the other Cities of *Judah*.

Ver. 4. *And at Jeruſalem dwelt certain of the Children of Judah, and of the Children of Benjamin:*] For theſe were the Tribes that anciently poſſeſſed *Jeruſalem*; which ſtood partly in the one, partly in the other Tribe. Therefore in ſome Places of Scripture, *Jeruſalem* is reckoned as belonging to the Children of *Judah*, (ſee *Joſh.* xv. 63. *Judges* i. 8.) and ſometimes in the ſame Words to the Children of *Benjamin*, (*Judges* xviii. 20. xxi. 28.) and here to both. But what Part of the City belonged to the one, and what to the other, is not agreed among learned Men. *Pineda* hath repreſented the ſeveral Opinions about it at large, in his Book *De Rebus Solomonis, Lib.* V. *Cap.* 5.

Of the Children of Judah; Athaiah the Son of Uzziah, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Amariah, the Son of Shephatiah, the Son of Mahalaleel, of the Children of Perez;] Theſe were all of that Family of *Pharez*, the Son of *Judah*. If the Names of theſe Perſons mentioned in this Chapter, be compared with the Names of thoſe who came back with *Zerubbabel*, it will appear, that they were the fourth, fifth, and ſixth Generation from *Zerubbabel*; which is a Demonſtration, that *Nehemiah* did not come to *Jeruſalem* in the Time of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, but of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*. For this Obſervation I am beholden to my worthy Friend Dr. *Alix*.

Ver. 5. *And Maaſeiah the Son of Baruch, the Son of Colhozeh, the Son of Hazaiah, the Son of Adaiah, the Son of Joiarib, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Shiloni.*] Theſe were all of the ſame Family, as the next Verſe informs us.

Ver. 6. *All the Sons of Perez that dwelt at Jeruſalem, were four hundred threeſcore and eight valiant Men.*] Who ſeem to me to have offered themſelves to dwell at *Jeruſalem*, and help to defend it by their Valour, whoſe Chiefs were *Attaiah* and *Maaſeiah*.

Ver. 7. *And theſe are the Sons of Benjamin; Sallu the Son of Meſhullam, the Son of Joed, the Son of Pedaiah, the Son of Kolaiah, the Son of Maaſeiah, the Son of Ithiel, the Son of Jeſaiah.*

Ver. 8. *And after him Gabbai, Sallai,*] Theſe two, and *Sallu* (before named) were the chief Men among them.

Nine hundred twenty and eight.] There were almoſt as many more of *Benjamin*, as of *Judah*, (who were but four hundred ſixty and eight;) for though Mount *Sion* was in the Tribe of *Judah*, yet the City of *Jeruſalem* was in the Tribe of *Benjamin*; which made them have a great Deſire to ſee it inhabited, and inflamed the Minds of the moſt Valiant, who were beſt able to defend it, to come and live there.

Ver. 9. *And Joel the Son of Zichri was their Overſeer, and Judah the Son of Senuah was Second over the City.*] The former of theſe was the Governor of the City; and the other was his Deputy; who is called *Secondary*, becauſe he was next to him in the Diſcharge of that Office. Who is he, as *Bertram* thinks, that is called in the ſecond Book of *Maccabees*, iii. 4. προεσάτης τῦ ἱερῦ, *the Prefect of the Temple*; and by *Joſephus*, Antiq. xiv. 11. ὑποστρατηγὸς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις, *the Under-Governor in Jeruſalem*. See his *Repub. Jud.* p. 163.

Ver. 10. *Of the Prieſts, Jedaiah the Son of Joiarib, Jachin.*] Now he comes to ſpeak of the Tribe of *Levi*; many of which it was neceſſary ſhould dwell there, to attend the Houſe of God. And firſt he begins with the Prieſts, who were his chief Miniſters.

Ver. 11. *Seraiah the Son of Hilkiah, the Son of Meſhullam, the Son of Zadok, the Son of Meraioth, the Son of Ahitub, was the Ruler of the Houſe of God.*] This *Seraiah* was ſuch a chief Man among the Prieſts, as he that is mentioned in 2 *Chron.* xix. 11. ſee there. Some take him to be the ſame with him that is called in the *New Teſtament* στρατηγὸς τῦ ἱερῦ, which we tranſlate, *the Captain of the Temple*.

Ver. 12. *And their Brethren that did the Work of the Houſe, were eight hundred twenty and two:*] Who diſcharged all the Offices of the Prieſts in the Temple.

And Adaiah the Son of Jeroham, the Son of Pelaliah, the Son of Amzi, the Son of Zechariah, the Son of Paſhur, the Son of Malchiah.

Ver. 13. *And his Brethren, Chief of the Fathers, two hundred forty and two; and Amaſhai, the Son of Azareel, the Son Ahaſai, the Son of Meſhillemoth, the Son of Immer.*

Ver. 14. *And their Brethren, mighty Men of Valour, an hundred twenty and eight:*] Some of the Prieſts were noted to be Men of great Courage, who, when there was Occaſion, fought for their Country, eſpecially to defend the Houſe of God.

And their Overſeer was Zabdiel, the Son of one of the great Men.] Or, as the Margin, *the Son of Haggedolim*, was ſet over theſe valiant Men; being deſcended (it is ſuppoſed by ſome) from ſome of the *great Men* among the Prieſts; as the Word *Haggedolim* imports.

Ver. 15. *Alſo of the Levites, Shemaiah the Son of Haſhub, the Son of Azrikam, the Son of Haſhabiah, the Son of Bunni.*] After the Prieſts he gives an Account of the *Levites*; among whom this Perſon, and the two other mentioned in the next Verſes, were the Chief.

Ver. 16. *And Shabbethai, and Jozabad, of the Chief of the Levites, had the Overſight of the outward Buſineſs of the Houſe of God.*] There were a great many Things to be done, without the Temple, as well as within, to prepare for the Service of it; particularly, to gather the third Part of a Shekel, which every one was to give to make Proviſion for it, *Chap.* x. 32. which Work was committed to theſe Men. Though *Bertram* (*de Republica Judaica*, p. 160, 363.) thinks, this may be the Meaning, That they were Judges and Officers in the Country, where their Preſence was neceſſary, when there were but few to diſcharge *ſuch outward Buſineſs in Iſrael*, as it is called in 1 *Chron.* xxvi. 29.

Ver. 17. *And Mattaniah the Son of Micha, the Son of Zabdi, the Son of Aſaph, was the Principal to begin the Thankſgiving in Prayer:*] He was the Precentor (as we call him in our Choirs) who begun to ſing the Hymn at Morning and Evening Sacrifice; which ſeems to be that in 1 *Chron.* xvi. 7, 8, &c. in the latter Part of which they pray to God, as in the former they give Thanks.

And Bakbukiah the Second among his Brethren, and Abda the Son of Shammua, the Son of Galel, the Son of Jeduthun.] The firſt of theſe ſeems to have ſupplied the Place of *Mattathiah*, when he was abſent.

Ver. 18. *All the Levites in the holy City, were two hundred fourſcore and four.*] Who certainly attended there; unleſs we ſuppoſe, with *Bertram*, that they went forth ſome Time about ſome *outward Buſineſs*, which they were required to diſpatch.

Ver. 19. *Moreover, the Porters, Akkub, Talmon, and their Brethren that kept the Gates, were an hundred ſeventy and two.*] Who had the Cuſtody of the Gates of the Temple.

Ver. 20. *And the Reſidue of Iſrael, of the Prieſts and the Levites, were in all the Cities of Judah, every one in his Inheritance.*] He had ſaid before, that the reſt of *Iſrael* dwelt in their own Cities, (*Ver.* 3.) and now he ſaith, that ſo did the reſt of the Prieſts and the *Levites* dwell in the Cities anciently appointed for them.

Ver. 21. *But the Nethinims dwelt in Ophel:*] Which was a Place upon the Wall of *Jeruſalem*, or a Tower near it. See iii. 26. 2 *Chron.* xxvii. 3.

And Zia and Giſpa were over the Nethinims.] Two Perſons of their own Body, I ſuppoſe, who were appointed to ſee them do their Duty.

Ver. 22. *The Overſeer alſo of the Levites at Jeruſalem, was Uzzi the Son of Bani, the Son of Haſhabiah, the Son of Mattaniah, the Son of Micha:*] He was ſet over the *Levites*, to govern them, and ſee them diſcharge their Offices in an orderly Manner. The LXX tranſlate it Ἐπίσκοπος, and ſo doth the *Vulgar*; for he was Superviſor of thoſe below him.

Of the Sons of Aſaph, the Singers were over the Buſineſs of the Houſe of God.] They were ordered

to look after the Reparation of the Temple; for which they had the more Leiſure; both becauſe they did not come in their Courſes to *Jeruſalem*, as others did, but were ſettled there; and were to attend at the Temple only at certain Hours, after which they might look after other Buſineſs.

Ver. 23. *For it was the King's Commandment concerning them, that a certain Portion ſhould be for the Singers, due for every Day.*] Beſide the fore-named Reaſons, they had great Encouragement from the King, who ordered them a certain Portion for their Maintenance every Day. Some are of Opinion, that this was King *David*, who firſt appointed them to attend in a ſettled Courſe; but it is more likely, it was the King of *Perſia*, who out of his Munificence made them a daily Allowance for their better Support; they that ſung Hymns to their Gods being Perſons much valued in all Countries: And if *David* made any Proviſion for them, it being loſt, moſt likely was not yet reſtored.

Ver. 24. *And Pethahiah, the Son of Meſhezabeel, of the Children of Zerah, the Son of Judah,*] We had the Children of *Pharez* named before, who ſettled at *Jeruſalem*, (Ver. 6.) and now it appears that ſome of the Poſterity of his Brother did the ſame; for here is one Man mentioned who was of great Authority under the King of *Perſia*, as it here follows.

Was at the King's Hand in all Matters concerning the People,] The King appointed him to receive all Petitions from the People, and by him returned them Anſwers. This ſeems the plain Senſe, according to our Tranſlation. But ſome tranſlate it not *at the King's Hand*, but *on the King's Part*, that is, he heard all Cauſes in Civil Matters between the King and the People; as about his Tribute, or any Grievance of which they complained. And *Bertram* thinks it appears by the very Context, that he was appointed by the King (ſo *at his Hand*, or *by his Hand* may be underſtood) to ſee all Things ſupplied which the People were bound to furniſh for the Temple: Or rather, as *Pellicanus* thinks, to ſee that what the King allowed for publick Sacrifices to be made for him, and for his Family (*Ezra* vi. 10.) were duly paid out of the Treaſury of the Province.

Ver. 25. *And for the Villages with their Fields, ſome of the Children of Judah dwelt at Kirjatharba and in the Villages thereof, and at Dibon and in the Villages thereof, and at Jekabzeel and in the Villages thereof,*] He gives no Account of the Families that dwelt in the Country, as he doth of thoſe that ſettled in *Jeruſalem*, but only mentions the Towns wherein they dwelt, which formerly had been walled Cities, but now open Villages, wherein Houſes were built, but not their Walls.

Ver. 26. *And at Jeſhua, and at Moladah, and at Bethphelet,*] In this and in the following Verſes, unto *Ver.* 31. he mentions the other Towns wherein the Children of *Judah* dwelt, who did not come to inhabit at *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 27. *And at Hazar-ſhual, and at Beer-ſheba and in the Villages thereof.*

Ver. 28. *And at Ziklag, and at Mekonah and in the Villages thereof.*

Ver. 29. *And at En-rimmon, and at Zareah, and at Jarmuth,*

Ver. 30. *Zanoah, Adullam, and in their Villages, at Lachiſh and the Fields thereof, at Azekah and in the Villages thereof. And they dwelt from Beerſheba unto the Valley of Hinnom.*] It appears by this Account that ſome of theſe great Towns or Cities without Walls, had little Villages about them, but others had only Fields, and no Villages in them, the Country being as yet but thinly peopled.

Ver. 31. *The Children alſo of Benjamin, from Geba, dwelt in Michmaſh, and Aija, and Bethel, and in their Villages,*] *Geba* had formerly been an eminent Place in this Tribe, and ſo was *Bethel*.

Ver. 32. *And at Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah,*

Ver. 33. *Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim,*

Ver. 34. *Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat,*

Ver. 35. *Lod and Ono, the Valley of Craftſmen.*] We read of *Lod* and *Ono* before in the firſt Book of *Chronicles*. See *Chap.* viii. *Ver.* 12.

Ver. 36. *And of the Levites, were Diviſions in Judah, and in Benjamin.*] The reſt of the *Levites* who were not ſettled at *Jeruſalem*, were diſtributed among the People of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, who dwelt in the forenamed Towns, whom they taught and inſtructed in Religion and good Manners.

We read alſo, 1 *Chron.* ix. 3. that ſome of the Children of *Ephraim* and *Manaſſeh* dwelt at *Jeruſalem*; but, I ſuppoſe, they were ſo few, that they are not here remembred; or, perhaps, they removed to ſome other Place when *Jeruſalem* continued without Walls.

CHAP. XII.

Ver. 1. *NOW theſe are the Prieſts and the Levites that went up with Zerubbabel the Son of Shealtiel, and Jeſhua:*] The Chief of the Prieſts, as they are called, *Ver.* 7. whom he thought fit to mention here, becauſe he intended to deſcribe the Dedication and Conſecration of the City, where the Miniſtry of the Prieſts and *Levites* was to be employed.

Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,] If this was the ſame *Ezra* that wrote the foregoing Book, or Part of it, then he went back to *Babylon* after his coming up to *Jeruſalem* with *Zerubbabel*, and came again inſtructed with a large Power in the ſeventh Year of *Artaxerxes:* But there are many Reaſons to prove he was not the ſame.

Ver. 2. *Amariah, Malluch, Hattuſh,*] He that is here called *Malluch*, is called *Melicu*, Ver. 14. And ſuch Differences are in ſome of the followidg Names, which are repeated, *Ver.* 15, 16, &c. It being common among the *Jews* (as I have noted upon the Book of *Chronicles*) to vary in the Pronunciation of Names, and ſometimes to give two Names.

Ver. 3. *Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,*] The firſt of theſe is called *Shebaniah*, Ver. 14. and the other two, in *Ver.* 15. are called *Harim* and *Meraioth*.

Ver. 4. *Iddo, Gennetho, Abijah,*] The ſecond of theſe is called *Ginnethon*, Ver. 16. which is a ſmall Difference. And *Abijah* was the Head of the Courſe of Prieſts from whom *Zechariah*, the Father of *John Baptiſt* ſprung, as *Bertram* thinks, *de Rep. Jud.* Cap. xviii. p. 311.

Ver. 5. *Miamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,*] The firſt of theſe is called *Miniamin*, and the next *Moadiah*, Ver. 17. which are likewiſe very ſmall Variations.

Ver. 6. *Shemaiah, and Joiarib, Jedaiah,*

Ver. 7. *Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah:*] The firſt of theſe is called *Salai*, Ver. 20.

Theſe were the Chief of the Prieſts,] Heads of the Courſes of the Prieſts which *David* inſtituted, and were reſtored after their Return from Captivity, though as yet not ſo many as they had been before. See *Ezra*, vi. 18.

And of their Brethren in the Days of Jeſhua.] Who was the High Prieſt at the Return from Captivity. The Meaning ſeems to be, that they were not only Heads of all thoſe who were under them, but the Chief of the Heads who were properly their Brethren.

Ver. 8. *Moreover the Levites; Jeſhua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, which was over the Thankſgiving, he and his Brethren.*] They were appointed to ſee the Pſalm of Thankſgiving ſung every Morning and Evening at the Burnt-Sacrifice.

Ver. 9. *Alſo Bakbukiah, and Unni, their Brethren, were over againſt them in the Watches.*] That is, theſe miniſter'd in their Courſes as the others did, and kept their Stations over againſt them in their Turns of Attendance, which are called *their Watches* or Wards. See *Ver.* 24.

Ver. 10. *And Jeſhua begat Joiakim, Joiakim alſo begat Eliaſhib, and Eliaſhib begat Joiada.*

Ver. 11. *And Joiada begat Jonathan, and Jonathan begat Jaddua.*] In theſe two Verſes is an Account of the Succeſſion of the High Prieſts, from the Return of the Captivity, till the Time that they began to bear the greateſt Sway in the Jewiſh Nation. For this *Jaddua* is commonly thought to be that *Jaddus* the High Prieſt who went to meet *Alexander* the Great in his pontifical Habit, as he came from the Conqueſt of *Tyre* and *Gaza*, and procured great Privileges for the Jewiſh Nation. Now this being granted, the Scripture Hiſtory ends, as *Grotius* obſerves, where the very Light of Times, (as he ſpeaks,) that is, the Affairs of *Alexander* begins: From which Time all Things in Hiſtory are clear, the Affairs of the *Jews* being recorded by many *Greek* Writers, (ſeveral of which are now periſhed,) as appears by St. *Hierom* upon *Daniel*.

Ver. 12. *And in the Days of Joiakim were Prieſts, the Chief of the Fathers; of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah.*

Ver. 13. *Of Ezra, Meſhullam,* &c.] As he had mentioned thoſe who were Chief of the Prieſts in the Days of *Jeſhua*, ſo now he thinks fit to mention the Sons of every one of them who officiated in the Days of *Joiakim* the Son of *Jeſhua*, either as Aſſiſtants to their Fathers, or ſucceeding them when they were dead. He begins with thoſe three named, *Ver.* 1. and ſo proceeds in order to give an Account of the reſt which reaches to *Ver.* 22. and need not be tranſcribed.

Ver. 22. *The Levites in the Days of Eliaſhib, Joiada, and Johanan,* (called *Jonathan*, Ver. 11.) *and Jaddua, were recorded Chief of the Fathers; alſo the Prieſts, to the Reign of Darius the Perſian.*] This is thought by many to be that *Darius* whom *Alexander* conquered, till whoſe Time there were Records kept of the principal Families of the *Levites*, in the Days of thoſe four High Prieſts, as well as of the Prieſts already mentioned.

Ver. 23. *The Sons of Levi, the Chief of the Fathers, were written in the Book of the Chronicles, even until the Days of Johanan the Son of Eliaſhib.*] As there had been a Regiſter of them in the publick Records before that Time from *Jeſhua* to *Johanan*. Some think this refers to 1 *Chron.* ix. 14, &c.

Ver. 24. *And the Chief of the Levites; Haſhabiah, Sherebiah, and Jeſhua the Son of Kadmiel, with their Brethren over againſt them, to praiſe, and to give Thanks, according to the Commandment of David the Man of God,*] Theſe were particularly appointed for this Office, which was of great Importance.

Ward over againſt Ward.] In their Turns, one coming on when another went out, to attend in their Courſes, which are called *Wards*.

Ver. 25. *Mattaniah, and Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meſhullam, Talmon, Akkub, were Porters, keeping the Ward at the Threſholds of the Gates.*] Of the Houſe of God, where they attended and performed their Office; or, as ſome will have it, at the *Treaſuries*, as in the Margin of our Bibles.

Ver. 26. *Theſe were in the Days of Jehoiakim, the Son of Jeſhua, the Son of Jozadak, and in the Days of Nehemiah the Governour, and of Ezra the Prieſt, the Scribe.*] It is impoſſible to give a certain Account why theſe are ſo particularly regiſter'd in this Book; but we may be ſure there was ſome great Reaſon for it in thoſe Days: Perhaps, that it might demonſtrate their Care to employ the beſt Men in all Offices for which they were fit; and that they took ſpecial Care to preſerve a faithful Record of thoſe who were to ſerve God as his Miniſters, as long as they were a Nation; which they have not a long Time been, and ſo all Diſtinctions among them are confounded.

Ver. 27. *And at the Dedication of the Wall of Jeruſalem, they ſought the Levites out of all their Places, to bring them to Jeruſalem, to keep the Dedication with Gladneſs, both with Thankſgivings, and with ſinging with Cymbals, Pſalteries, and with Harps.*] As *Solomon* and all the Children of *Iſrael* dedicated the Houſe of the LORD when it was built, (of which ſee 1 *Kings* viii. 2 *Chron.* vii.) ſo now *Nehemiah*, having ſet Things in good Order, thought it meet to dedicate the City, whoſe Wall was built, and Gates ſet up *(Ver.* 30.*)* as a Place in which God had choſen to dwell, by ſettling his Houſe here. And therefore they aſſembled to beſeech his Bleſſing and Protection upon this City; which being made ſtrong, and well defended, they hoped to ſerve God in his Houſe there with greater Quietneſs and Security.

The Jewiſh Doctors are of Opinion, that the Oracle being wanting in the Temple, this Dedication gave no new Sanctity, but only reſtored it to the old; for it was ſtill *the holy City*, as it is called twice in the foregoing Chapter of this Book, *Chap.* xi. 1, 18. See *Selden, Lib.* III. *De Synedriis, Cap.* 13. *Sect.* 6. where he obſerves, that it being ſaid here it was dedicated *with a Song* (for ſo it is in the *Hebrew)* there was ſome parti-

particular Song of Dedication, which had been formerly uſed, which was now ſung upon this Occaſion. And ſome think, that ever after this Time they made a yearly Commemoration of this Dedication, as they conceive there was of *Solomon*'s Dedication of the Temple. For the Heathen, who imitated the *Jews* (whoſe Temple *Solomon* built two hundred and ſixty three Years before *Rome* was built,) were wont ſo to do. But *Selden* thinks *Hoſpinianus* rightly judges, that the *Maccabees* kept the firſt Anniverſary Dedication, *Cap.* 14. *Sect.* 7. and upon another Account.

Ver. 28. *And the Sons of the Singers gathered themſelves together, both out of the plain Country round about Jeruſalem, and from the Villages of Netophathi.*

Ver. 29. *Alſo from the Houſe of Gilgal, and out of the Fields of Geba and Azmaveth:*] Theſe were the Places where they had ſettled their Habitations; from whence, upon *Nehemiah*'s Summons, they came to be preſent and aſſiſt at this Solemnity.

For the Singers had builded them Villages round about Jeruſalem.] That they might be the more ready to attend the Service of God when there ſhould be Occaſion.

Ver. 30. *And the Prieſts and the Levites purified themſelves,*] With certain Ablutions and Expiations, that eſpecially which is mentioned in *Numb.* xix. where a *Water of Separation* is preſcribed to purify all Uncleanneſs, *Ver.* 9, &c. which is called *the Water of Purifying*, Numb. viii. 7.

And purified the People, and the Gates, and the Wall.] By ſprinkling, I ſuppoſe, the ſame Water upon them, and by Prayers and Sacrifices.

Ver. 31. *Then I brought up the Princes of Judah upon the Wall, and appointed two great Companies of them that gave Thanks,*] So the LXX tranſlate the *Hebrew* Words, *Shethe tothoth godoloth*, δύο περὶ αἰνέσεως μεγάλης, *two great for Praiſe*, that is, *two great Choirs*, as the Vulgar tranſlate it, which moſt Verſions follow. But our great *Selden* thinks the Words ſhould be tranſlated, *two Euchariſtical Sacrifices*, prepared for the Altars, which was proper to the preſent Buſineſs. The *Spaniſh Jews* tranſlate the Words, *two grand Proceſſions*, *Lib.* III. *de Syned. Cap.* 13. *Sect.* 6. *p.* 210. And ſee Dr. *Hammond* upon *Pſalm* xxiv. *Annot. p.* 139.

Whereof one went on the Right Hand upon the Wall toward the Dung-Gate:] We add thoſe Words, *whereof the one*, becauſe of the other mentioned, *Ver.* 38. but in the *Hebrew* the Words are, *going on the Right*, &c.

Ver. 32. *And after them went Hoſhaiah, and Half of the Princes of Judah.*

Ver. 33. *And Azariah, Ezra, and Meſhullam,*] Not *Ezra* the Scribe, who was in a more honourable Place, *Ver.* 36.

Ver. 34. *Judah, and Benjamin, and Shemaiah, and Jeremiah.*

Ver. 35. *And certain of the Prieſts Sons with Trumpets, namely, Zechariah the Son of Jonathan, the Son of Shemaiah, the Son of Mattaniah, the Son of Michaiah, the Son of Zaccur, the Son of Aſaph.*

Ver. 36. *And his Brethren Shemaiah, and Azarael, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethaneel, and Judah, Hanani, with the muſical Inſtruments of David, the Man of God, and Ezra the Scribe before them.*] They in this Verſe and the former were Prieſts; and therefore *Ezra*, who was an eminent Prieſt, led them up at the Head of them.

Ver. 37. *And at the Fountain-Gate, which was over againſt them, they went up by the Stairs of the City of David,*] See *Chap.* iii. 15.

At the going up of the Wall, above the Houſe of David, even unto the Water-Gate Eaſtward.

Ver. 38. *And the other Company of them that gave Thanks, went over againſt them, and I after them, and the Half of the People upon the Wall, from beyond the Tower of the Furnaces, even unto the broad Wall.*

Ver. 39. *And from above the Gate of Ephraim, and above the old Gate, and above the Fiſh-Gate, and the Tower of Hananeel, and the Tower of Meah, even unto the Sheep-Gate; and they ſtood ſtill in the Priſon-Gate.*

Ver. 40. *So ſtood the two Companies of them that gave Thanks in the Houſe of God, and I, and the Half of the Rulers with me:*] The great Man before mentioned tranſlates the firſt Words, *So ſtood the two Euchariſtical Sacrifices in the Houſe of God.*

The Order wherein they thus marched in a pompous Manner round about the City, now ſeems a little obſcure: But the Senſe of the whole Deſcription is this; That they being met together in the ſame Place, Half of the Rulers went upon the Wall on the Right Hand, accompanied with ſeveral Prieſts and *Levites*, and *Ezra* the Scribe at the Head of them *(Ver.* 36.) and the other Half took the Left Hand, and walked upon the Wall in the ſame Order, accompanied with *Nehemiah*, who brought up the Rear of them, *(Ver.* 38.) And at length both Parts of this *Chorus* met in the Temple; and there they ſtood ſtill, and compleated their Praiſes and Thankſgivings, and offered Sacrifices, as it here follows. Where all the People walked, it is not certain, but only that half of them went with *Nehemiah* upon the Wall; the reſt, it is likely, walking below, becauſe the Wall could not contain them.

Ver. 41. *And the Prieſts, Eliakim, Maaſeiah, Miniamin, Michaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with Trumpets.*

Ver. 42. *And Maaſeiah, and Shemaiah, and Eleazar, and Uzzi, and Jehohanan, and Malchijah, and Elam, and Ezer; and the Singers ſang loud with Jezrahiah their Overſeer.*] It doth not appear that they ſounded the Trnmpets or ſung while they were in the Proceſſion, but the Song and the Muſick began when they came to the Houſe of God.

Ver. 43. *Alſo that Day they offered great Sacrifices, and rejoiced;*] Feaſting, I ſuppoſe, upon the Euchariſtical Sacrifices which were then offered.

For God had made them rejoice with great Joy;] By reſtoring the holy City to ſuch a ſecure Condition, that they praiſed the LORD there without Fear of Diſturbance.

The Wives alſo and the Children rejoiced:] It was an univerſal Joy.

So that the Joy of Jeruſalem was heard even afar off.] The Singers ſung with ſuch loud Voices,

Voices, and had ſo many loud Inſtruments, the Women and Children alſo ſhouting, that they might be heard at a great Diſtance. Or, the Meaning may be, that the Report of it was ſpread into far diſtant Countries.

Ver. 44. *And at that Time were ſome appointed over the Chambers for the Treaſures, for the Offerings, for the Firſt-Fruits, and for the Tithes, to gather into them out of the Fields of the Cities the Portions of the Law for the Prieſts and Levites:*] By *the Treaſures*, he means thoſe Places where the Oblations, Firſt-Fruits, Tithes (which they had promiſed to pay duly, *Chap.* x. 31, &c.) were laid up, and preſerved for the Uſe of the Prieſts and *Levites:* Of which that they might not be defrauded, a certain Officer was at this Time appointed, to ſee they were brought in according to the Law, and to take care that every one had his Portion.

For Judah rejoiced for the Prieſts, and for the Levites that waited.] They were ſo glad to ſee ſuch a great Concourſe of them *(Ver.* 27, &c.) and that they performed their Duty upon this Occaſion to the general Satisfaction of all that were preſent, that their Hearts were enlarged in Love to them, which moved them to take care they ſhould never want the Proviſion appointed by God for them.

Ver. 45. *And both the Singers and the Porters kept the Ward of their God, and the Ward of the Purification,*] Theſe and other Miniſters (who alſo were *Levites)* did their Duty ſo carefully, that they were much in the People's Favour. For the Singers *kept the Ward of their God*, that is, ſung orderly in their Courſes, and praiſed God; and the Porters *kept the Ward of Purification*, that is, duly obſerved the Orders about *Purification*, in not ſuffering any unclean Perſon or unclean Thing to come into the Houſe of God.

According to the Commandment of David, and of Solomon his Son.] Who had regulated all Things belonging to the Duty of theſe Perſons. See 1 *Chron.* xxv. xxvi.

Ver. 46. *For in the Days of David and Aſaph, of old, there was Chief of the Singers, and Songs of Praiſe and Thankſgiving unto God.*] There were other famous Men joined with *Aſaph*, viz. *Heman* and *Jeduthun*; but he was the principal Perſon whom *David* employed in this Regulation. And this Verſe gives the Reaſon why the *Levites* and the Singers performed their Duty ſo accurately; becauſe from the Time of *David*, who conſtituted their Orders and Offices, there were ſome great Men who preſided over them, and were careful both to inſtruct them in their Duty, and keep them to it.

Ver. 47. *And all Iſrael in the Days of Zerubbabel, and in the Days of Nehemiah, gave the Portions of the Singers, and the Porters, every Day his Portion:*] Thoſe Men that were appointed to look after the Treaſures, mentioned *Ver.* 44. did their Duty ſo well, that theſe inferior Officers, much leſs the reſt of the *Levites* and Prieſts, never wanted what was due unto them, but had it every Day while *Zerubbabel* and *Nehemiah* governed.

And they ſanctified holy Things unto the Levites, and the Levites ſanctified them unto the Children of Aaron.] The People ſeparated and ſet apart the tenth Part of their Crop for the Uſe of the *Levites*; and the *Levites* ſeparated from their Tithes, the tenth Part of them for the Prieſts. For the People had no Right to the tenth Part, but it was holy, that is, to be ſeparated from the reſt for God's Miniſters the *Levites*; and the *Levites* had no Right to the tenth Part of their Tithe which they had received from the People, but it was to be ſet apart (which is called *ſanctified)* for the Children of *Aaron*, that is, the Prieſts.

CHAP. XIII.

Ver. 1. *ON that Day they read in the Book of Moſes in the Audience of the People; and therein was found written, that the Ammonite, and the Moabite, ſhould not come into the Congregation of God for ever;*] This was not done upon the Day of the Dedication of the Wall of the City, but upon ſome Day after *Nehemiah* was returned to *Jeruſalem* from *Perſia*, whither he went to wait upon the King, *(Ver.* 6.) For it is not likely that the People, who were ſo well affected to the Miniſters of God, as we read in the foregoing Chapter, ſhould ſo ſoon forget and neglect them; or that thoſe who were appointed to look after their Concerns *(Chap.* xii. 44.) ſhould be turned out of their Office immediately, or lay aſide all Care of them: For it is apparent, from *Ver.* 10. of this Chapter, their Dues were not paid them when *Nehemiah* was not there to look after them. But when he was returned, all this was amended, and other Abuſes corrected: He continuing the publick Reading of the Law at ſtated Times, probably on the great Feſtivals, when all the People met together (ſuch as thoſe mentioned *Chap.* viii.) upon ſome Day of which that Portion of Scripture was read, in *Deut.* xxiii. 3. which forbids the Admiſſion of the *Ammonites* and *Moabites* into the Congregation of the LORD; the Meaning whereof ſee in my *Annotations* there. I will only add here, that they who *by the Congregation of God* in this Place, underſtand the publick Aſſemblies for divine Worſhip, are very much miſtaken: For no Man of any Nation was forbidden to come and pray to God at the Temple, but Men of every Nation, who would become Proſelytes, were admitted into their Communion; and if they would be circumciſed, had like Privileges with all other *Iſraelites*, even to eat the Paſſover, *Exod.* xii. 48, 49. They therefore that think the Meaning is, they ſhould be excluded from all publick Offices, interpret it better: But that is not the Truth neither; for it is to be underſtood of marrying with them, as I have ſhewn in the Explication of that Law.

Ver. 2. *Becauſe they met not the Children of Iſrael with Bread and with Water, but hired Balaam againſt them, that he ſhould curſe them; howbeit, our God turned the Curſe into a Bleſſing.*] See upon *Deut.* xxiii. 4, 5.

Ver. 3. *Now it came to paſs when they heard the Law, that they ſeparated from Iſrael all the mixed Multitude.*] Who were born of Strangers, whom the Law would not allow to partake of the Rights of Marriage with *Iſraelites.*

Ver. 4. *And before this,*] That is, before this Separation was made.

Eliaſhib the Prieſt,] There were ſeveral of this Name in thoſe Times, and ſome of them Prieſts, *Ezra* x. 6, 24, 26, 37. But this ſeems to have been the High Prieſt, mentioned *Chap.* iii. 1. for his Family was much corrupted, as appears from *Ver.* 28. of this Chapter.

Having the Overſight of the Chamber of the Houſe of our God,] Here the ſingular Number is uſed for the plural; for he had not the Overſight of one Chamber only, but of all the Chambers, as the following *Ver.* 5, 9. ſhew. But this may ſeem to indicate, that *Eliaſhib* was not High Prieſt, it being below him to be *ſet over the Chamber*, (as the Phraſe is in the *Hebrew*,) though the High Prieſt, no doubt, had an Inſpection over them all.

Was allied unto Tobiah:] An *Ammonite*, as he is often called in this Book; with whom he ought to have contracted no Affinity by ſuffering his Grandſon to marry with *Sanballat*'s Daughter; who was the faſt Friend of *Tobiah*, and the great Enemy of the *Jews*. We read alſo in *Ezra* x. 18. that ſeveral of the Prieſts had married ſtrange Wives; and among the reſt, ſome of the Sons of the High Prieſt are there mentioned.

Ver. 5. *And he had prepared for him a great Chamber,*] By breaking down the Partitions, it is likely, between ſeveral little Chambers, where holy Things were laid, he prepared one great Room for his Reception.

Where aforetime they laid the Meat-Offerings, the Frankincenſe, and the Veſſels, and the Tithes of the Corn, the new Wine, and the Oil, (which was commanded to be given to the Levites, and the Singers, and the Porters,) and the Offerings of the Prieſts.] All the Offerings that belonged to the Miniſters of God, (and the Veſſels wherewith they miniſtered,) which there had been great Care taken ſhould be brought into theſe Chambers, (the latter End of *Chap.* x.) were now all profanely thrown out to make Room for this Man.

Ver. 6. *But in all this Time was not I at Jeruſalem:*] They took this Boldneſs in *Nehemiah*'s Abſence; and were the more audacious, becauſe many of the Nobles of *Judah* (it is likely) favoured this *Tobiah*, and were his Friends, as they had been heretofore, *Chap.* vi. 17, 18.

For in the two and thirtieth Year of Artaxerxes King of Babylon, came I unto the King,] He was Governor twelve Years in this Province; but did not continue all that Time in *Judea:* For he ſometimes ſtept to *Babylon*, to give an Account of his Management to the King; who, it is likely, (as I before obſerved,) would not diſpenſe with ſo long an Abſence from his Attendance to his Office at Court. See upon *Chap.* ii. 6. v. 41.

And after certain Days,] In the *Hebrew* the Words are *at the End of Days*, that is, at the End of the Year. For ſo the Word *Jamim* [*Days*] often ſignifies in Scripture. *Exod.* xiii. 10. *Levit.* xxv. 29. See below, *Ver.* 15.

Obtained I Leave of the King:] To return to *Jeruſalem:* From whence, it is probable, he heard of the fore-named Diſorders, and therefore once more begged Leave to go thither, that he might redreſs them.

Ver. 7. *And I came to Jeruſalem, and underſtood of the Evil that Eliaſhib did for Tobiah,*] He was fully informed what Evil had been committed, before he went about to reform it.

In preparing him a Chamber in the Courts of the Houſe of God.] In the Court of the *Iſraelites*, which was a ſacred Place, into which no Stranger might enter.

Ver. 8. *And it grieved me ſore; therefore I caſt forth all the Houſhold-Stuff of Tobiah out of the Chamber.*] His Indignation was raiſed, as well as his Sorrow, to ſee ſuch a Profanation: Firſt, in bringing a Stranger into the Place where only *Iſraelites* were to come; and he an *Ammonite*, one of the worſt of the ſtrange Nations, and a greater Enemy of the *Jews*, than many of the *Ammonites*; for whoſe ſake he had removed the holy Things, and put *Tobiah* in their Place, who brought his Houſhold-Stuff along with him; and all this done by the High Prieſt, who ought to have oppoſed ſuch an Attempt, and, indeed, was the only Man that could have hindred it, till *Nehemiah* came, whoſe Authority, as Governor under the King of *Perſia*, was ſuperior to his; by which he threw all his Goods out of the Chamber, and forced him alſo to depart. Here is no Mention of his reprehending *Eliaſhib*; which is an Argument, that he died after *Nehemiah* went from *Jeruſalem*.

Ver. 9. *Then I commanded, and they cleanſed the Chambers; and thither brought I again the Veſſels of the Houſe of God, with the Meat-Offering and the Frankincenſe.*] He gave Order, that the Chambers, which had been thus profaned, ſhould be reſtored to their former Sanctity by the Water of Purification, mentioned in the *nineteenth* of *Numbers*; whereby Things, as well as Perſons, were cleanſed from their Impurities. And when the Chambers were thus prepared, he brought in again all the Veſſels, and other Things, (mentioned *Ver.* 5.) which had been thrown out to make Room for *Tobiah*.

Ver. 10. *And I perceived, that the Portions of the Levites had not been given them:*] For either the People did not pay them well, when they ſaw they were not laid up for their proper Uſe in the Place appointed, or *Eliaſhib* employed them for the Entertainment of *Tobiah*; which he might as well do, as bring him into the ſacred Place. Into which when they were not brought, the People not knowing what became of them, might keep them to themſelves. See Biſhop *Montague* of *Tithes*, *p.* 347.

For the Levites and the Singers that did the Work, were fled every one to his Field.] This made thoſe that attended the Service at *Jeruſalem* forſake the City, and betake themſelves to their Country Concerns; where they might make Proviſion for the Suſtenance of their Families. And, indeed, it is a great Artifice of the Devil, as *Wolphius* here obſerves, by his Inſtruments to defraud the Miniſters of Religion of their neceſſary Maintenance, that he may thereby aboliſh Religion itſelf.

Ver. 11. *Then contended I with the Rulers, and ſaid,*]

ſaid,] He earneſtly expoſtulated with them, and reproved them.

Why is the Houſe of God forſaken?] There was no Account to be given of it, but the Negligence of the Magiſtrates; whom he awakens to their Duty, by repreſenting to them, that God himſelf was highly affronted, by having none of his Servants to attend him at his Houſe.

And I gathered them together,] He recalled the *Levites* to *Jeruſalem* out of the Country; whither they were fled, to look after their own Eſtates.

And ſet them in their Place.] Every one to his proper Work and Buſineſs.

Ver. 12. *Then brought all Judah the Tithe of the Corn and the new Wine, and the Oil, unto the Treaſuries.*] When they ſaw theſe Things were likely to go the right Way, and be imployed to their proper Uſes, they brought them to their proper Place. For the People (as *Conradus Pellicanus* here notes) readily obey, if the Magiſtrates and the Prieſts be not remiſs in their Duty.

Ver. 13. *And I made Treaſurers over the Treaſuries, Shelemiah the Prieſt, and Zadock the Scribe, and, of the Levites, Pedaiah; and next to them was Hanan the Son of Zaccur, the Son of Mattaniah; for they were counted faithful, and their Office was to diſtribute unto their Brethren.*] There had been ſome appointed heretofore unto this Office, (*Chap.* x. 44, *&c.*) but they not performing their Truſt, *Nehemiah* ſought out ſome Perſons, here mentioned, who had the general Reputation of being Men of Integrity; whoſe Buſineſs it was to give every one of their Brethren their Portion.

Ver. 14. *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and wipe not out my good Deeds that I have done for the Houſe of my God, and for the Offices thereof.*] It is very natural here to obſerve, that to make Proviſion for the Maintenance of God's Miniſters, and of his Worſhip and Service, is a Work of high Eſteem with God. For theſe are the *good Deeds* (as appears by the foregoing Verſes) for which *Nehemiah* recommends himſelf to the Divine Favour and Remembrance. And therefore what ſhall we think of the Times wherein we live; when Men account them the moſt Religious to God-ward, who would unfurniſh the Houſe of God moſt, and who moſt rob his Prieſts? This is the Reflection, which Mr. *Mede* made upon theſe Words of *Nehemiah*, Book I. Diſcourſe 34.

Ver. 15. *In thoſe Days ſaw I in Judah ſome treading Wine-Preſſes on the Sabbath, and bringing in Sheaves, and lading Aſſes; as alſo Wine, Grapes, and Figs, and all Manner of Burdens, which they brought into Jeruſalem on the Sabbath-Day:*] The treading Wine-Preſſes, ſhews that he came back in the latter End of the Year, (as I have explained *in the End of Days*, Ver. 6.) when he found them carrying in Sheaves and Wine, and all Manner of Burdens, (that is, doing all Manner of Work,) on the Sabbath, as if it had been a common Day.

And I teſtified againſt them in the Day wherein they ſold Victuals.] Or, as *Pellicanus* tranſlates it, *I conteſted with them, that they ſhould ſell Proviſions on ſuch Days as they might be ſold, and not on the Sabbath.*

Ver. 16. *There dwelt Men of Tyre alſo therein, which brought Fiſh, and all Manner of Ware*,] The City of *Tyre* was a Place of great Trade, and, lying on the Sea, abounded with Fiſh, which they brought from thence to *Joppa*, and ſo to *Jeruſalem*. *Tyre* was nigh to *Sidon*, which had its Name (as *Juſtin* ſaith, *Lib.* xviii.) *ab Ubertate Piſcium*, from Plenty of Fiſh.

And ſold on the Sabbath unto the Children of Judah, and in Jeruſalem.] Not only in the Country, but in the holy City, as *Jeruſalem* was called; where holy Aſſemblies were to be held, and God worſhipped ſolemnly on the Sabbath.

Ver. 17. *Then I contended with the Nobles of Judah*,] As I had done before, *Ver.* 11. for they who did not correct Abuſes when it was in their Power, were more in fault than they that committed them.

And ſaid unto them, What evil Thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath-Day?] For if they had exerciſed their Authority, the People durſt not have done as they did.

Ver. 18. *Did not your Fathers thus? and did not our God bring all this Evil upon us, and upon this City?*] He bids them reflect and conſider, that this was one of the Crimes of which their Fathers were guilty; for which God ſuffered them to be carried Captive out of their Land, and their City to be deſtroyed. See *Jerem.* xvii. 19, 20, 21, *&c.*

Yet ye bring more Wrath upon Iſrael, by prophaning the Sabbath.] This aggravated their Guilt, that they would not beware of thoſe Sins which had been their Ruin; and would bring greater Judgments upon them, becauſe they were not amended by what they had ſuffered.

Ver. 19. *And it came to paſs, that when the Gates of Jeruſalem began to be dark*,] That is, when they who ſat there could not ſee to do any Thing, which was about Sun-ſetting; the Mountains about *Jeruſalem* intercepting the Light there ſooner than in other Places.

Before the Sabbath,] In the Evening of that Day.

I commanded, that the Gates ſhould be ſhut, and charged, that they ſhould not be opened till after the Sabbath; and ſome of my Servants ſet I at the Gates, that there ſhould no Burden be brought in on the Sabbath-Day.] It ſeems, he could not truſt to the common Porters of the Gates; and therefore appointed ſome of his own Family, who he knew would neither be careleſs, nor corrupted, to ſee the Gates were kept ſhut, and all Traffick hindred.

Ver. 20. *So the Merchants and Sellers of all kind of Ware*,] Who came from *Tyre* and other Places, *Ver.* 16.

Lodged without Jeruſalem once or twice.] In the open Fields, (as appears by the next Verſe,) where perhaps they pitched their Tents, and opened their Packs, hoping to ſell their Wares on the Sabbath to the Country People, though they could not get Admittance into *Jeruſalem.*

Ver. 21. *Then I teſtified againſt them, and ſaid unto them, Why lodge ye about the Wall?*]

He ſolemnly declared to them, and called God to witneſs, that he would not ſuffer them to lodge there any more.

If ye do ſo again, I will lay Hands on you.] Seize their Perſons and their Goods, and puniſh them as Offenders.

From that Time forth came they no more on the Sabbath.] Such Power have good Magiſtrates; eſpecially, when they are reſolute. And it is very obſervable, that theſe being Men of other Nations, were not bound by the Law of the Sabbath, and did not tranſgreſs in breaking it; yet he would not permit them to make the *Jews*, who were under the Obligation of the Law, to break it; and thereby trouble the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, by drawing the People into Sin. It is alſo obſervable, that tho' Buying and Selling was not a ſervile Work, yet he thought this comprehended in thoſe Words, *Thou ſhalt do no Manner of Work.*

Ver. 22. *And I commanded the Levites, that they ſhould cleanſe themſelves, and that they ſhould come and keep the Gates, to ſanctify the Sabbath-Day.*] He thought the *Levites* would be more reverenced than his Servants; and therefore appointed them to this Office of keeping the Gates on the Sabbath-Day, that it might not fail to be ſanctified as it ought to be: And they being alſo on that Day to attend upon other Offices which were holy, he commanded them alſo to cleanſe themſelves by ſome known Purification, which might procure them the greater Reverence. There was another Reaſon why he joined the *Levites* with his Servants, to look after the Gates on the Sabbath-Day, becauſe he would have this Watch continued, when he and his Servants were gone from *Jeruſalem*, till this evil Cuſtom was quite broken.

Remember me, O my God, concerning this alſo, and ſpare me according to the Greatneſs of thy Mercy.] He had beſeeched God to remember his good Deeds, *ver.* 14. but to ſhew that he did not think there was any proper Merit or Worthineſs in them, which required a Reward, as a Debt in Juſtice due unto them, he here explains himſelf, and deſires to be rewarded, or rather pardoned out of God's free Goodneſs, according to *the Greatneſs* or *the Multitude* of his Mercies.

Ver. 23. *In thoſe Days alſo ſaw I Jews that had married Wives of Aſhdod, of Ammon, and of Moab:*] They had at this very Time married Strangers, as *Pellicanus* thinks; and by what *Nehemiah* did for their Correction, one would think ſome were again revolted into that Sin, which they had moſt ſolemnly renounced both before him and before *Ezra*, *ch.* x. 30. *Ezra* x. So hard it is to root out Tares, which will be continually ſprouting up again.

Ver. 24. *And their Children ſpake half in the Speech of Aſhdod, and could not ſpeak in the Jews Language, but according to the Language of each People.*] Whom they had married. For their Mothers, with whom they were bred, ſpake to them in the Language of their own Country, and not in the Language of the *Jews*; which it ſeems by this was very different from that of *Aſhdod*, tho' they were Neighbours to the *Philiſtines*. And ſo was the Language of the *Egyptians*, and other Countries thereabout, very different, as *Bochartus* obſerves in his *Canaan*, Lib. ii. Cap. 1. See *Scaliger*, *de Emend. Temp.* Lib. vi. p. 580. But there doth not ſeem to have been ſuch Difference between the Language of the *Canaanites* and the *Hebrews* in the Time of *Abraham*; for he made Uſe of no Interpreters, that we read of, in his Converſation with them: Yet it is probable, that by Length of Time theſe People had altered their Language very much, which was preſerved pure among the *Jews*.

Ver. 25. *And I contended with them, and curſed them,*] He expoſtulated with them, and denounced God's Judgment againſt them; or, as *Aben Ezra* thinks, he excommunicated them, and caſt them out of the Society of God's People. But that was in uſe only when they could not puniſh Offenders according to their Law, which now they had Power to do; and accordingly it follows, that he did inflict Puniſhments upon them.

And ſmote certain of them,] Ordered the Officers to beat ſome of the moſt notorious Offenders, either with Rods, or with Scourges, according to *Deut.* xxv. 2.

And pluck'd off their Hair,] Which was a great Diſgrace in thoſe Eaſtern Countries. See *Iſa.* l. 6. *Jerem.* xlviii. 37. the Hair being eſteemed a great Ornament, and a Token one was a Freeman: Therefore plucking off the Hair was a putting them to Shame, and making them look like vile Slaves.

And made them ſwear by God, ſaying, Ye ſhall not give your Daughters unto their Sons, nor take their Daughters unto your Sons, or for yourſelves.] He alſo took an Oath of them that they would reform: But this he had done before, *chap.* x. 29, 30. and therefore ſince the moſt ſacred Promiſes of Amendment did not keep them faſt to God, he alſo ſeverely chaſtiſed them in the Manner before related, that nothing might be wanting to make them better.

Ver. 26. *Did not Solomon King of Iſrael ſin by theſe Things?*] He argued alſo with them, and perſuaded them to amend, from the Example of the greateſt Men, who had been undone by ſuch Marriages, particularly King *Solomon*.

Yet among many Nations was there no King like him, who was beloved of his God, and God made him King over all Iſrael: nevertheleſs, even him did outlandiſh Women cauſe to ſin.] As much as to ſay, If ſuch a Man as he, who excelled all Men in Wiſdom, and was ſo highly in God's Favour, that he preferred him before all his Brethren, to be King over all *Iſrael*, was not ſafe from Seducement by ſtrange Women, how ſhall ye be able to preſerve yourſelves from their Inticements?

Ver. 27. *Shall we then hearken unto you to do all this great Evil, to tranſgreſs againſt our God, in marrying ſtrange Wives?*] That is, would you have me connive at this Wickedneſs, and ſo bring Guilt upon my ſelf, and Ruin upon you?

Ver. 28. *And one of the Sons of Joiada, the Son of Eliaſhib the High Prieſt,*] It is ſuppoſed that *Eliaſhib* died before *Nehemiah* returned from *Perſia*, and *Joiada* his Son ſucceeded him, one

of whoſe Sons had offended in this Matter, He was his Grandſon.

Was the Son-in-Law to Sanballat the Horonite:] He is ſaid by *Joſephus* to be that *Manaſſeh*, who by *Sanballat*'s Intereſt procured Leave to build a Temple in Mount *Gerizim*, to which all the *Jews* that had married ſtrange Wives reſorted, (Lib. xi. Cap. 8.) and as *Solomon Virga* ſaith, in *Schebet Judah*, he made Proclamation in all the Countries round about, that whoſoever would come to his Temple, they ſhould pay neither Firſt-Fruits nor Tithes, but only make voluntary Offerings; by which he gained many of the poor Sort to him. See *Selden*, Lib. ii. *de Synedr.* Cap. 15. p. 623.

Therefore I chaſed him from me.] That he ſhould not ſerve at the Altar; which *Joſephus* will have to be decreed by the great *Sanhedrim*, who, if he would have before them renounced that unlawful Wife, and put her away, offered to continue him in the Exerciſe of his Prieſthood. See *Selden*, *de Succeſſion. in Pontif.* Lib. ii. Cap. 6. and Lib. ii. *de Synedr.* Cap. 15. p. 649. where he obſerves, that *Solomon Virga* ſaith, he was put out of his Miniſtry at the Temple by an Aſſembly of all the Prieſts, who met together and expelled him. But there was no Need of their Authority, for *Nehemiah himſelf chaſed him from him*, that is, baniſhed him from *Judea*, as *Bertram* expounds this Phraſe, in his *de Repub. Jud.* Cap. 13. p. 165, *&c.*

Ver. 29. *Remember them, O my God,*] To puniſh them, (that is, according to their Deſerts) as he deſired God to remember him by rewarding him for the Good he had done. But *Raſi* takes it for a Prayer to God, to reform them, and render them Good for Evil.

Becauſe they have defiled the Prieſthood,] God required greater Purity in the Prieſts than in other *Iſraelites*, and in the High Prieſts eſpecially, who might marry none but a Virgin of his own People. See *Leviticus* xxi. 6, 7. unto *ver.* 16.

And the Covenant of the Prieſthood, and of the Levites.] There was a Covenant made with *Phineas* (*Numb.* xxv.) of an everlaſting Prieſthood, which they had violated, becauſe the Covenant was mutual, binding them to obſerve the Laws of the Prieſthood, as God engaged himſelf to preſerve them in their Office. What Covenant was made with the *Levites* I do not find; but I ſuppoſe the Meaning is, they diſhonoured the whole Tribe of *Levi*, who were ſet apart for divine Miniſtries: For it is likely, ſome of the *Levites* had tranſgreſſed in this Matter, by the bad Example of the Prieſts: This great Corruption of the Prieſts ſeems to have been the Occaſion of God's ſending *Malachi*, the laſt of the Prophets, to correct it, after *Ezra* and *Nehemiah* had not been able to root out this Corruption. And the Covenant here mentioned, was that made in the twentieth of *Artaxerxes*, wherein they engaged to put away their ſtrange Wives. Thus Dr. *Alix*, whoſe Judgment I prefer to my own, in this Point.

Ver. 30. *Thus cleanſed I them from all Strangers,*] That is, both Prieſts and *Levites* were ſeparated from their ſtrange Wives.

And appointed the Wards of the Prieſts and the Levites, every one in his Buſineſs:] To obſerve their Courſes of Attendance at the Houſe of God, and every one to perform there that Buſineſs which was proper to him.

Ver. 31. *And for the Wood-offering, at Times appointed, and for the Firſt-fruits.*] He commanded them to obſerve the Decrees which had been paſſed ſome Time ago, *chap.* x. 34, 35. *Maimonides*, in his Treatiſe of *the Manner of offering Sacrifices*, Cap. 14. gathers from theſe Words, that it was lawful for any Man, freely to vow either Wine, or Frankincenſe, or Oil, or Wood, to burn on the Altar: For this, ſaith he, was a Kind of Sacrifice or Offering, as *Nehemiah* here informs us.

Remember me, O my God, for Good.] He concludes his Book with a ſhort Prayer to God, wherein he commends himſelf, and all he had done, unto God's gracious Acceptance: As it becomes all Men, eſpecially thoſe who are employed in Divine Things, if they have done any Thing that is good, to remember it was by God's Help and Aſſiſtance, not by their own Power; beſeeching the Father of Mercies, by his only-begotten Son, to make it ſerviceable to his Church, and his own Good. Thus *Joh. Wolphius* concludes his Commentary upon this Book.

A COM-

M. V^dr Gucht Sculp.

A

COMMENTARY

UPON THE

BOOK

OF

ESTHER.

THERE is a great Variety of Opinions concerning the Author of this Book, whom a great Number of late Interpreters, and ſome of the *Hebrew* Doctors, take to have been *Mordecai*; which is the common Opinion of the *Latins*, and of *Clemens Alexandrinus* among the *Greeks*; which, they think, is ſufficiently warranted by thoſe Words in the *Ninth* Chapter, *ver.* 20, *&c.* where it is ſaid, *Mordecai wrote all theſe Things, and ſent Letters unto the Jews*, &c. This, they think, relates to this whole Hiſtory, which he wrote as it is recorded in this Book: But thoſe Words plainly relate only to the Decree of obſerving the Feaſt of *Purim* perpetually; which ſuppoſes they had been acquainted with the Occaſion and Ground of it, before thoſe Letters came, as *Huetius* obſerves; who therefore is of the ſame Opinion with the *Talmudiſts* in *Baba Bathra*, that this Book was written by the Men of the great Synagogue: Which Opinion he the rather embraces, (tho' I ſee no Ground at all for it,) becauſe it comprehends theirs who think *Mordecai* was the Author, and theirs who aſcribe it to *Ezra*, and theirs who think it was *Joachim* the Son of *Jeſhua* the High-Prieſt; for all theſe might well have been in that Synagogue. Whoever was the Author, *Maimonides* ſaith (in his *More Nevochim*, Par. II. Cap. 45.) their wiſe Men openly declare, *the Book of* Eſther *was dictated by the Holy Ghoſt*, that is, as he explains it, by a Motion or Impulſe (as he calls it) from the Spirit of God, who excited him to write this Hiſtory; as by the ſame Motion others indited Pſalms, and gave wholeſome Precepts, to regulate the Lives of Men. See *Chap.* x. 3.

And that this Hiſtory fell out after the Captivity of *Babylon* was ended, and after the Time of *Darius* the *Mede*, is very evident: For *Shuſhan* was not the Royal City of the *Medes*, but of the *Perſians*. Nor had the *Medes* ſo large

a Dominion, as from *India* to *Ethiopia*. But in what Reign of the *Perſian* King theſe Things fell out, is hard to determine. See the laſt Verſe of this Book.

CHAP. I.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs in the Days of Ahaſuerus*] This was a *Perſian*, but which of them, is a great Doubt; for learned Men think ſeveral of them had this Name. There are, I think, eight ſeveral Opinions about him here mentioned. Our great Primate *Uſher* takes him to have been *Darius Hyſtaſpis*; but he married the Daughter of the Great *Cyrus*, to confirm himſelf in his Kingdom, and would not have ſo eaſily parted with her as *Ahaſuerus* did with *Vaſhti*. The great *Scaliger* therefore thinks him to have been his Succeſſor *Xerxes*; whoſe Wife's Name being *Amyſtris*, he takes her for *Eſther*, this Name being in the *Perſian* Language *Ham-Eſther*. But this hath been confuted by many learned Men, particularly by *Jacobus Capellus*; who obſerves, that this *Amyſtris* was the Daughter of a powerful Man among the *Perſians*, whom *Herodotus* calls *Otanes*. Several other Reaſons he gives againſt this in his *Hiſtoria ſacra & exotica*, *ad A. M.* 3640, and 3650. Where by good Arguments he proves it was not *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, nor *Darius Nothus*, nor *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, but concludes, that it was the next King, *Ochus*, which agrees well with his *Prſian* Name, which was *Achaſch*, to which *Veroſch* being added as his Sirname, he was called by the *Perſians Achaſch-Veroſh*, which the *Greeks* tranſlated *Ahaſuerus*.

(*This is Ahaſuerus which reigned from India even unto Ethiopia, over an hundred and ſeven and twenty Provinces*)] We are told by *Herodotus*, that *Darius* conquered *India*, (*Lib.* IV. *Cap.* 44.) And there might well be ſo many Provinces between that and *Ethiopia*, whether we underſtand thereby the Country beyond *Egypt*, or that near *Arabia*. *Herodotus* ſeems to direct us to the former, when he ſaith, That *Darius* found by his Conqueſts, that *Aſia*, in the Eaſtern Part of the World, was like to *Libya*.

Ver. 2. *That in thoſe Days, when the King Ahaſuerus ſat on the Throne of his Kingdom,*] Enjoying Peace and Quietneſs throughout his large Dominions. Some think, this Phraſe, *when he ſat on the Throne of his Kingdom*, ſignifies when he began to reign. But this is confuted by *Ver.* 3. which ſaith, in the third Year of his Reign he did what follows.

Which was in Shuſhan the Palace,] This was a noble City, which *Strabo* calls Πόλιν ἀξιολογοτάτην, a moſt famous and highly-to-be-praiſed City; where *Cyrus* and the *Perſian* Kings, after the Conqueſt of the *Medes*, (whoſe Country was remote,) ſettled their Royal Seat, that they might not be far from *Babylon*. The Country about it alſo was wonderful fruitful, producing an hundred, and ſometimes two hundred fold, as he writes, *Lib.* XV. *p.* 727 and 731. It was built, as *Pliny* ſaith, by *Darius*, *Lib.* VI. *Cap.* 27. Or rather enlarged, by building there a moſt magnificent Palace, as *Ælian* explains it, *Lib.* XIII. *de Animal. Cap.* 59. which *Ariſtotle* in his Book *de Mundo* calls Θαυμαστὸν βασίλειον οἶκον, a wonderful Royal Palace, ſhining with Gold, and Amber, and Ivory.

Ver. 3. *In the third Year of his Reign he made a Feaſt unto all his Princes and his Servants*;] By his Servants are meant his Subjects; who were called Servants in the Eaſtern Countries. And it was the Manner of the *Roman* Emperors ſometimes to feaſt all the People of *Rome*, as well as the Senate.

The Power of Perſia and Media,] And firſt he ſpeaks of the Feaſt made for the great Men, whom he calls the *Power of Media and Perſia*, Men in Power, as we now ſpeak.

The Nobles and Princes of the Provinces being before him.] He explains who they were; the Governors of Provinces, and other noble Perſons, who were all then at his Court. The Word *Parthemim*, which we tranſlate *Nobles*, ſome would have to be the Corruption of the *Greek* Word παρατιμος, honourable Perſons; and *Junius*, with others, deduce it from the *Greek* Word πρῶτος. But the *Greeks* were not yet got among them; and therefore it is a *Perſian* Word, ſignifying Governors, as *R. Solomon* expounds it: And *Joſeph Kimchi* thinks they were ſuch great Men as governed that Tract of Land that lay upon the River *Phrath*, that is, *Euphrates*. But *Hottinger* will have it to be a compound Word from *Par*, which ſignifies High, and *Ram*, which ſignifies Spirit; as much as to ſay High-ſpirited, or Heroick Perſons: Which ſeems to me to be but an ingenious Conceit.

What the Occaſion of this Feaſt was, is variouſly conjectured. Some think, it was begun on his Birth-day. The *Targum* ſaith, a great Rebellion had been lately ſuppreſſed, which filled him with Joy. But the next Words ſeem to inform us, that it was to ſhew his magnificent Greatneſs to all his Subjects. For in thoſe Countries they delighted much in making great Feaſts; as we read afterward, that *Alexander* (when he was there,) entertained τετρακοσίους ἡγεμόνας, four hundred Captains, or great Commanders, who all ſat in Silver Chairs, *&c.* as *Duris* tells us in *Athenæus*, *Lib.* I. *Deipnoſoph. Cap.* 14.

Ver. 4. *When he ſhewed the Riches of his glorious Kingdom, and the Honour of his excellent Majeſty many Days, even an hundred and fourſcore Days.*] Which was for the Space of ſix Months; from the Vernal to the Autumnal Æquinox; which is an hundred fourſcore and ſeven Days. For *Vaſhti* kept a Feaſt of ſeven Days, at the End of his Feaſt, for the Women of *Suſa*, as *Ochus* did for the Men, *Ver.* 7, 10. Thus *Jacobus Capellus*. Some indeed will have it, that he was thus long in making Preparation for this ſplendid Entertainment, which did not laſt many Days. But this Cuſtom is continued ſtill to this Day, of keeping an Annual Feſtival an hundred and eighty Days, if we may give Credit to Dr. *Fryar*, who lived lately in this Country, and gives us an Account of it in his Travels, *Letter* V. *Cap.* 12. *p.* 348.

Ver.

Ver. 5. *And when theſe Days were expired, the King made a Feaſt unto all the People that were preſent in Shuſhan the Palace, both unto great and ſmall, ſeven Days,*] Not only to the Inhabitants of *Shuſhan*, but to all that were preſent in the City, out of all Parts of his Dominions, the *Iſraelites* not excepted, as the *Targum* ſaith.

In the Court of the Garden of the Kings Palace,] In the Entrance of the Royal Palace; which was very ſpacious, and planted with all Sorts of Fruit-Trees, and Aromaticks, as the *Targum* explains it.

Ver. 6. *Where were white, green, and blue Hangings, faſtened with Cords of fine Linen and Purple to Silver Rings, and Pillars of Marble:*] How the *Targum* came to fancy that theſe Hangings, being ſpread from one Tree to another, were tied to them with ſilken Purple Strings, I know not; for the Text ſaith expreſly, they were hanged on Pillars of Marble, ſet up, no doubt, for that Purpoſe.

The Beds were of Gold and Silver,] On which they ſat, or rather lay at their Meat. The *Beds* themſelves were of *Melitim*, (as *Jonathan* expreſſes it,) of the ſofteſt Wool, that is, the *Mileſian*, which is the beſt in the World, as *Bochartus* hath obſerved out of many Authors, in his *Phaleg*, *Lib.* I. *Cap.* 8. But the *Bedſteds* were of *Gold and Silver*, that is, ſtudded with Gold and Silver, or overlaid with Plates of them, as the Manner was, *Dietericus* ſhews in his *Antiq. Biblicæ*, *p.* 388.

Upon a Pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black Marble.] In the *Hebrew*, upon a Pavement *of Bahat, and Ses, and Dar, and Sochereth*; which ſignify ſeveral Sorts of Stones, as *Bochartus* hath proved beyond Contradiction: But what Stones are here meant is not eaſy to reſolve, nor is it of much Moment to know. He hath ſpent a large Chapter to prove that *Dar* ſignifies a *Pearl*; which, though very precious, it is not incredible was uſed in this *Perſian* Luxury, among other Stones, to adorn this Pavement: Which he juſtifies by many good Arguments; and ſhews, there are Examples of ſuch Profuſeneſs in other Hiſtories, *Hierozoicon*, *Par.* II. *Lib.* V. *Cap.* 8. *Druſius* alſo hath ſaid a great deal about *Sochereth*, to which I refer the learned Reader, *Miſcellanea*, *Cent. I. Cap.* 74.

Ver. 7. *And they gave them Drink in Veſſels of Gold, (the Veſſels being diverſe one from another,) and Royal Wine in Abundance, according to the State of the King.*] There was great Variety of Wines, it is likely, as well as great Plenty; and great Variety of Veſſels to drink in, different from all that they had ſeen. So *Druſius* tranſlates thoſe Words in the Parentheſis, *Variantia diverſa Vaſa*, as the *Jews* are ſaid, *Chap.* iii. 8. to have Laws different from all other People, where there is the ſame Word: *Miſcellanea*, *Cent.* I. *Cap.* 16. *Strabo* ſaith, theſe Princes were ſo luxurious, that they had their Wine from *Syria*, called *Chalybomium*; and the Water they drank with it, from *Eulæus*, it being πάντων ἐλαφρότατον *the lighteſt of all other Waters.*

Ver. 8. *And the Drinking was according to the Law, none did compel:*] The plaineſt Tranſlation ſeems to be, *the Drinking according to Cuſtom, none did compel.* It was cuſtomary to compel Men to drink more than they had a mind to do; but this Prince left every Man to his Liberty, that no Man ſhould incur any Diſpleaſure, if he did not drink what others would impoſe upon him. But *Druſius* thinks the Word *Dath* never ſignifies a Cuſtom.

For ſo the King had appointed to all the Officers of his Houſe, that they ſhould do according to every Man's Pleaſure.] Which made the Feaſt moſt acceptable, when every one drank for his own Pleaſure, and not for other Mens. And ſuch had been the Cuſtom of the ancient *Perſians*, who (as *Xenophon* tells us) were very ſparing in eating and drinking, though in his Time they were grown extreamly riotous. But nothing was more barbarous, than their preſſing Men to drink beyond their Inclinations; which the Son of *Syrach* expreſſes by the Word βιάζεσθαι, *Eccluſ.* xxxi. 37. it being no leſs inhuman to force a Man to drink when he is not thirſty, than to deny him Drink when he is ready to periſh with Thirſt: According to an ancient Saying of *Sophocles* in *Athenæus*, *Lib.* X. Τὸ πρὸς βίαν πίνειν, ἴσον κακὸν τὸ δι᾽ ψᾶν βίᾳ. To compel a Man to drink by Force, is as bad as to compel him to endure Thirſt for want of Drink.

Ver. 9. *Alſo Vaſhti the Queen made a Feaſt for the Women,*] I have before ſaid it is not likely (as Primate *Uſher* thinks) that this was *Atoſſa* the Daughter of *Cyrus*, whom *Darius Hyſtaſpis* married: For the Reaſon of that Match being to ſtrengthen himſelf in the Kingdom, he would not have ſo lightly parted with her. *Jacobus Capellus* thinks, by the Addition of the Word *PAR* to her Name ſhe was called by the *Perſians Par-Vaſhti*, which by the *Greeks* is pronounced *Paryſatis*, the Mother of *Artaxerxes Mnemon.* But ſhe could not be the Wife of *Ochus*, who was his Son.

In the Royal Houſe, which belonged to King Ahaſuerus.] Where ſhe entertained the Wives of the Princes, and other Women; not in the open Air, as the Men were, but more privately, as was fit for Women, who were not wont to eat together with Men.

Ver. 10. *On the ſeventh Day,*] Which was in the Concluſion of this Feaſt.

When the Heart of the King was merry with Wine,] Which made him a little forget himſelf, and not conſider what became both his own State and that of the Queen.

He commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Herbona, Bigtha, and Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the ſeven Chamberlains that ſerved in the Preſence of Ahaſuerus the King,] Theſe Eunuchs (as the Word is tranſlated in the Margin,) were Men of principal Authority in the Court; where they had great Offices about the King. And therefore he did her Honour enough, in ſending ſo many of them to wait upon her, and let her know his Pleaſure.

Ver. 11. *To bring Vaſhti the Queen before the King, with the Crown Royal, to ſhew the People and the Princes her Beauty: for ſhe was fair*

to

to look on.] It is a very abſurd Conceit of the *former Targum*, who ſaith, he commanded her to be brought quite naked, that her comely Proportions might be ſeen, as well as her Face. And yet in *Pirke Elieſer* they are ſo bold as to ſay, it was the Cuſtom of the *Perſian* Kings to have their Wives publickly dance before them naked. It was too much, ſhe thought, that he ſhould expoſe her Countenance to be beheld, eſpecially by all the People: Which was contrary to the Cuſtom of that Country; where they kept their Wives very cloſe, from the Sight of all Men, but themſelves.

Ver. 12. *But the Queen Vaſhti refuſed to come at the Kings Commandment by his Chamberlains:*] Which ſhe might do out of Modeſty, not Pride: Becauſe, as I ſaid, it was contrary to the Cuſtom; and the great Men, inflamed with Wine, might be provoked by her Beauty (as *Jacobus Capellus* ſpeaks) to luſt after her.

Therefore was the King very wroth, and his Anger burned in him.] It was the more immoderate, becauſe his Blood was heated with Wine; which made his Paſſion too ſtrong for his Reaſon: Otherwiſe he would not have thought it decent for the Queen, nor ſafe for himſelf, to have her Beauty (which was very great) expoſed in this unuſual Manner. *Joſephus* ſaith, he was the more enraged, becauſe he ſent more than once to her, but ſtill ſhe refuſed to come: Which is not probable; for though it would have become him to ſend again to know her Reaſon for refuſing, yet he perſiſting in his Command, one would think ſhe would have yielded Obedience.

Ver. 13. *Then the King ſaid to the wiſe Men which knew the Times*] What had been done in former Days; or, what was fit to be done on all Occaſions: Men well verſed in ancient Hiſtories, (as *Vitringa* explains it,) and in the Laws and Cuſtoms of their Countries; who were able to give Coûnſel in all dubious and perplexed Caſes, ſuch as this was, which rarely happened. *De Synag. Veteri, Par.* II. *Lib.* I. *Cap.* 8.

(For ſo was the Kings Manner towards all that knew Law and Judgment:] It was his conſtant Practice; and he did not forget this laudable Cuſtom, even in his Drink, to conſult with his Counſellers before he reſolved any Thing; who were ſkilled in the Laws of their Country, and could judge what Advice was to be given in all Caſes.

Ver. 14. *And the next unto him was Carſhena, Sether, Admatha, Tarſhiſh, Meres, Marſena, and Memucan, the ſeven Princes of Perſia and Media,*] Theſe are called the *Kings ſeven Counſellers*, in *Ezra* vii. 14. who took their Original from *Daniel*, who being in great Power under *Darius* the *Mede*, and having a great Hand in framing the Government of that State, cauſed the *Perſian* Court (as Mr. *Mede* conjectures) to reſemble that of Heaven, ordaining ſeven chief Princes to ſtand before the King, as ſeven great Angels are ſaid in Scripture to ſtand before the Throne of God. See *Book* I. *Diſcourſe* 10.

Which ſaw the Kings Face,] Who were his principal Miniſters, and admitted into his Preſence; which was not allowed to every one, but only to the great Men of the Kingdom. See *Grotius* upon *Matth.* xviii. 10.

And which ſat the firſt in the Kingdom.)] Next to the King; being his Royal Judges, who determined what was right among the *Perſians*, and were the Interpreters of the Laws of the Country. Of whom *Herodotus* makes mention, *Lib.* III. *Cap.* 14, 31. and *Plutarch* in *Artaxerxes*, as Primate *Uſher* obſerves.

Ver. 15. *What ſhall we do unto the Queen Vaſhti, according to the Law, becauſe ſhe hath not performed the Commandment of King Ahaſuerus by the Chamberlains?*] Theſe Words make it plain, that the forenamed great Perſons were the ſupreme Judges what was Law; and that the King did not govern arbitrarily, by his own Will and Pleaſure, but by the Laws of the Kingdom.

Ver. 16. *And Memucan anſwered before the King and the Princes,*] He is the laſt of the ſeven Princes, mentioned *ver.* 14. which inclines me to think, that the Puny Judge, as we now ſpake, delivered his Opinion firſt, (as they do here,) and ſo they ſpake in Order till they came to the firſt. And thus I find the *latter Targum* takes it, *He was the leaſt of them, and therefore gave his Opinion firſt.* But others take it quite contrary, that *Memucan* was the Preſident of the Council, or the King aſked him firſt, what he thought of the Matter.

Vaſhti the Queen hath not done wrong to the King only, but alſo to all the Princes, and to all the People that are in all the Provinces of the King Ahaſuerus.] He declared it to be a Crime of ſuch a dangerous Nature, that it would have a miſchievous Influence upon the whole Kingdom, if it were not ſeverely puniſhed.

Ver. 17. *For this Deed of the Queen ſhall come abroad unto all Women,*] This Tranſgreſſion of the King's Commandment (as *Maimonides* explains it, in *More Nevoch.* Par. I. Cap. 23.) will be known every where; for it could not be concealed, being a publick Affront to his Majeſty.

So that they ſhall deſpiſe their Huſbands in their Eyes, when it ſhall be reported, the King Ahaſuerus commanded Vaſhti the Queen to be brought in before him, but ſhe came not.] His Opinion was, that then they would take upon them to diſobey their Huſbands, and ſlight their Commands, when they heard what *Vaſhti* had done, and was not puniſhed for it.

Ver. 18. *Likèwiſe ſhall the Ladies of Perſia and Media ſay this Day unto all the Kings Princes, which have heard of the Deed of the Queen.*] He repeats it again, that it would have this Effect immediately, eſpecially on the great Women, who from this Time forward would take Example by the Queen, and ſay to their Lords, Are you more honourable than *Ahaſuerus* the King, whoſe Wife would not come when ſhe was ſent for? So the *latter Targum.*

Thus ſhall there ariſe too much Contempt and Wrath.] Contempt in the Wives, and Wrath in their Huſbands; which would make great Brawlings and Contentions in all Families.

Ver. 19. *If it pleaſe the King, let there go a Royal Commandment from him, and let it be written among the Laws of the Perſians and the Medes,*] He would not have a mere Order given, but a Law made, which, as it follows, ſhould ſtand inviolable. The ſame *Targum* ſaith, that *Memucan* had married a Wife, who being richer than himſelf, was very proud, and would not ſpeak to him but in her own Language; and now he took this Opportunity to be revenged of her, and make her do whatever he pleaſed.

That it be not altered,] This was cunningly done, ſaith the ſame *Targum*; for if ſhe had recovered the King's Favour, when his Anger was over, this Counſel might have coſt him his Head: But what made Laws unalterable among them, is uncertain. The *Targum* ſaith, becauſe the King confirmed it by an Oath, and then it became immutable. Or, it was ſealed, not only by the King, but by all the Princes, as one would gueſs from *Dan.* vi. 8, 12, 15.

That Vaſhti come no more before King Ahaſuerus, and let the King give her Royal Eſtate unto another that is better than ſhe.] This was a very rigorous Decree. But *Druſius* obſerves, that the *Perſians* were inclined to be ſevere to their Wives.

Ver. 20. *And when the Kings Decree which he ſhall make, ſhall be publiſhed throughout all his Empire (for it is great) all the Wives ſhall give to their Huſbands Honour, both to Great and Small.*] For none would dare to diſobey, when they heard that the Greatneſs of the Queen could not preſerve her from ſuch an heavy Puniſhment.

Ver. 21. *And the Saying pleaſed the King and the Princes; and the King did according to the Word of Memucan:*] With whom all the other ſix Judges concurred in their Opinion.

Ver. 22. *For he ſent Letters into all the Kings Provinces, into every Province according to the Writing thereof, and to every People after their Language,*] The Meaning ſeems to be, that this Decree was publiſhed in every Province, after the Manner that ſuch Things uſed to be proclaimed, and in their own Tongue, that every one, Women as well as Men, might underſtand it.

That every Man ſhould bear Rule in his own Houſe, and that it ſhould be publiſhed according to the Language of every People.] The Decree runs thus in the *Hebrew*, *That every Man ſhould bear Rule in his own Houſe, and ſpeak in the Language of his People.* It ſeems the *Perſians* had yielded ſo much to their Wives, that when they had married a Stranger, they ſuffered her to bring her own Language into the Family. But this Decree altered that Cuſtom, and allowed no other Language to be ſpoken in the Family but that of the Man, and of the People among whom he lived. See *de Dieu.* And thus the *former Targum*, *Every Man ſhall rule in his own Houſe, and compel his Wife to ſpeak in the Language of her Huſband, and in the Language of his People:* Which indeed was a Token of Dominion; all Conquerors endeavouring to bring in their own Language into the Country which they have conquered. The *latter Targum* hath only theſe Words, that, *Every Man ſhall be honoured in his own Houſe, and ſpeak according to the Language of his People*; that is, give his Commands in his own Language, which every one was bound to learn.

CHAP. II.

Ver. 1. *After theſe Things, when the Wrath of King Ahaſuerus was appeaſed, he remembred Vaſhti, and what ſhe had done, and what was decreed againſt her.*] When his Anger was abated, and the Wine gone out of his Head, his ancient Love began to revive to *Vaſhti*, whoſe Beauty was exceeding charming; but then he remembred withal her undutiful Behaviour, and the Decree he had paſſed againſt her, which was irrevocable, ſo that he was in a great Strait. Yet the *latter Targum* ſaith he called for the ſeven Princes, who had given him the forenamed Counſel, and ſaid unto them; I am no longer angry at *Vaſhti*, but at you, who, from what I ſaid in my Drink, took Occaſion to deſtroy her; and thereupon commanded them all to be ſlain: For which there is no Ground; but by what follows it appears to be a Fable.

Ver. 2. *Then ſaid the Kings Servants, that miniſtred unto him, Let there be fair young Virgins ſought for the King.*] The ſame Servants, in all Likelihood, mentioned, *ver.* 14. of the foregoing Chapter, who continually attended him. And when they ſaw him afflicted, contrived by a new Love to blot out the Remembrance of the old.

Ver. 3. *And let the King appoint Officers in all the Provinces of his Kingdom, that they may gather together all the fair young Virgins unto Shuſhan the Palace,*] The better to divert him, they propound that a great Number of the moſt beautiful Virgins that could be found, ſhould be brought from all Parts to *Shuſhan*, that out of them he might take his Choice, which of them he would make his Queen.

To the Houſe of the Women,] Or, rather *of the Virgins*; for the Houſe of thoſe who were Women or Wives, was different from this, and under another Governor, *ver.* 14.

Unto the Cuſtody of Hege the Kings Chamberlain, Keeper of the Women,] Of the *Virgins*, as *Shaaſhgaz* was of the Women or Concubines, *ver.* 14.

And let their Things for Purification be given them:] In this Houſe, ſaith the *former Targum*, there was a Place for Bathing, and they were furniſhed with Ointments and Perfumes, and all other Things neceſſary either for Ornament or Cleanlineſs; for the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies both.

Ver. 4. *And let the Maiden which pleaſeth the King, be Queen in Stead of Vaſhti. And the*

the Thing pleaſed the King, and he did ſo.] He approved of the Advice, and gave Order about it.

Ver. 5. *Now in Shuſhan the Palace, there was a certain Jew, whoſe Name was Mordecai,*] Who is thought by ſome to have come to *Jeruſalem* with *Zerubbabel*, (becauſe one of that Name is mentioned in his Company,) but returned back again to *Babylon*, being one of the King's Servants; for he was one of his Guard, or Keeper of the Door, or, as we tranſlate it, he ſat in the King's Gate, *ver.* 19, 21. But this was another *Mordecai*, as appears from the Time wherein he lived, in the latter End of the *Perſian* Empire.

The Son of Jair, the Son of Shimei, the Son of Kiſh, a Benjamite:] The *latter Targum* here gives his Pedigree down from *Benjamin*, the Son of *Jacob*; but mixed with ſuch Fables, that no Credit can be given to it.

Ver. 6. *Who had been carried away from Jeruſalem, with the Captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah King of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon had carried away.*] *Mordecai* was not then carried away, but *Kiſh*, who is mentioned juſt before, from whom *Mordecai* was deſcended. See our *Rainoldus*, *Cenſ. Lib. Apocryph. Prælect.* cxlvi. And *Bonfrerius* alſo hath well obſerved (in his *Appendix* to his *Præloquium* to his Commentaries on the Scripture, *Cap.* 7.) if he himſelf was then brought from *Jeruſalem*, he muſt be at leaſt an hundred and ten Years old (ſuppoſing this Hiſtory to have fallen out in the Time of *Darius Hyſtaſpis*) when he came into the Place of *Haman*; for from the Captivity of *Jeconiah*, till their Deliverance from Captivity, was eighty one Years; and from thence to the Reign of *Darius Hyſtaſpis*, was almoſt twenty Years, as *Euſebius* ſaith; and *Haman* was hanged in the twelfth Year of this King; ſo here are an hundred and ten Years: But it is not credible, that a Man of ſuch a great Age ſhould be advanced to ſuch Authority as he had; and more incredible that *Eſther*, who was his Couſin German, ſhould be beloved of *Ahaſuerus* when ſhe was an old Maid, as ſhe muſt have been, if *Mordecai* was of theſe Years.

Ver. 7. *And he brought up Hadaſſah, (that is Eſther) his Uncles Daughter,*] Her *Jewiſh* Name was *Hadaſſah*, ſignifying in *Chaldee*, a *Myrtle*, as the *former Targum* ſaith; but her *Perſian* Name was *Eſther*, which he fancies was from the *Greek* Word Ἀστὴρ, a *Star*. But the other *Targum* derives it from *Satar*, which ſignifies *hidden*, becauſe ſhe was hidden in *Mordecai*'s Houſe a long Time, and no Man ſaw her but he; or rather, becauſe her Nation was concealed, and not known. Primate *Uſher* thinks, that as *Vaſhti* was *Atoſſa*, ſo *Eſther* was ſhe whom the Heathens called *Artyſtona*; who, as *Herodotus* ſaith, was the Wife *Darius* loved above all other, and had her Statue made of pure Gold, *Lib.* iii. *Cap.* 88. and *Lib.* vii. *Cap.* 69. He ſaith, indeed, that ſhe alſo was another Daughter of *Cyrus*, and Siſter to *Atoſſa*; but he was either ignorant (as that great Man thinks) of the *Perſian* Genealogies, or out of Envy concealed their Original: It is more likely he gives a true Account of her Deſcent, as he doth of other Things, and ſhe was not *Eſther*.

For ſhe had neither Father nor Mother,] Her Father died, ſaith the *former Targum*, when her Mother was big with Child of her, and her Mother died as ſoon as ſhe was brought to Bed.

And the Maid was fair and beautiful, whom Mordecai (when her Father and Mother were dead) took for his own Daughter.] The *Vulgar* tranſlates it, *adopted her* for his Daughter: Which doth not ſignify ſuch an Adoption as among the *Romans*, (as Mr. *Selden* obſerves) but only paternal Love and Care to bring up a Child who had loſt her Parents; for the *Hebrew* Doctors are ſo far from acknowledging any *Adoption*, that they ſay he took her to make her his Wife. So *Jarchi*, by *Bat* [*Daughter*,] underſtands *Beth* an *Houſe*; which the LXX follow, he educated her εἰς γυναῖκα, to be his Wife, *Lib. de Succeſſ. Cap.* 4. *p.* 18.

Ver. 8. *So it came to paſs, when the Kings Commandment, and his Decree was heard, and when many Maidens were gathered together unto Shuſhan the Palace, to the Cuſtody of Hegai, that Eſther was brought alſo unto the Kings Houſe, to the Cuſtody of Hegai, Keeper of the Women.*] The Words which we tranſlate *was brought*, may be tranſlated *was taken*, and that by Force, as the Word ſometimes ſignifies, and as the *former Targum* here explains it, *ſhe was brought by Violence*. The *latter Targum* tells the Manner of it at large, That *Mordecai* hearing of this Order, hid his Couſin in a private Place where the Officers could not find her. But when the Virgins were gathered together, and *Eſther* was miſſing, whom all the Neighbours knew to be a very great Beauty, they procured an Order from the King to *Mordecai*, that upon Pain of Death he ſhould produce her; which he did. But perhaps I take too much Notice of theſe *Jewiſh* Fables.

Ver. 9. *And the Maiden pleaſed him, and ſhe obtained Kindneſs of him,*] That is, *Hegai*, who was much taken with her Countenance, and her Mien, and her ſweet Diſpoſition, (it is likely) and all other Things which he thought would make her acceptable to the King.

And he ſpeedily gave her her Things for Purification,] That ſhe might be fit before the uſual Time to go in unto the King, that is, in a Year's Time, as ſome underſtand it, *v.* 12, 16.

With ſuch Things as belong to her,] For her Clothes and Diet, which the *former Targum* makes to be very ſumptuous.

And ſeven Maidens,] One for every Day of the Week, ſaith the ſame *Targum*, whoſe Names he gives us, and the Days of the Week on which they waited.

Which were meet to be given her, out of the Kings Houſe,] Perſons of Quality, fit to attend her.

And he preferred her and her Maids unto the beſt Place of the Houſe of the Women.] And did her ſo much Honour, that he aſſigned her and her Maids the beſt Apartment in the Houſe of the Virgins.

Ver. 10. *Eſther had not ſhewed her People nor her Kindred, for Mordecai had charged her that ſhe ſhould not ſhew it.*] Leſt ſhe ſhould be contemned, and looked upon as no better than a Slave.

Ver. 11. *And Mordecai walked every Day before the Court of the Womens Houſe, to know how Eſther did, and what ſhould become of her.*] He might walk there without being ſuſpected, becauſe he belonged to the Court, and was a Man of Condition; for thoſe that were carried away in *Jeconiah*'s Captivity (as his Anceſtors were,) were of the better Sort, 2 *Kings* xxiv. 14, *&c. Dan.* i. 4. And *Eſther* might find Means by ſome of thoſe that attended her, to let him know the State of her Health, and of her Affairs.

Ver. 12. *Now when every Maid's Turn was come, to go in to King Ahaſuerus, after that ſhe had been twelve Months,*] They were kept cloſe ſo long, that the King might be ſure he ſhould not be impoſed upon by a Child begotten by another Man. And beſides, it was ſuitable to the State of the King to have them wait a great while, before they were brought into his Company. And another Reaſon here follows. *Herodotus* explains the firſt Words, *Lib.* III. *Cap.* 69. where he ſaith, the *Perſian* Women go in to their Huſbands ἐν περιτροπῇ, in a Circle, by Turns.

For ſo were the Days of their Purification accompliſh'd, to wit, ſix Months with Oil of Myrrh, and ſix Months with ſweet Odours,] It is obſerved by *Pliny*, *Lib.* XIII. *Cap.* 1. that Ointments were firſt invented by the *Perſians:* Which were very neceſſary in ſo hot a Country, where Men and Women are apt to ſweat much, and ſo ſmell rankly, without great Care to keep themſelves clean and ſweet. For which Purpoſe the Oil of Myrrh was much uſed, being very fragrant, and apt alſo to make the Skin ſoft and ſmooth, and to cleanſe it from Scurf. The ſweet Odour ſerved to the ſame Uſe, to take away all ill Scents, and, as ſome think, to make the Body more vigorous.

There are many Authors (as *Fortunatus Scacchus* obſerves) who take the Word *Mor* to ſignify not *Myrrh*, but that fragant Herb which we call *Marum*, or, as ſome think, *Marjoram*, from which excellent Oils were drawn, *Lib.* I. *Myrothecium*, *Cap.* 50. But he takes it, as we do, for *Myrrh*; from whence not only a noble Oil was drawn, but being beat to a Powder, ſuch a Fumigation was made with it, as was offered unto their Gods. Whence *Athenæus* blames *Alexander*'s Arrogance, for ſuffering Σμύρνα, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα θυμιάματα, Myrrh and other ſweet Odours to be offered to him, *Lib.* XII. *Cap.* 8.

Six Months] This was a long Time, which was ſet (firſt with that Oil, and as many more with ſweet Odours) *for their Purification:* Or rather for their Abſterſion or Cleanſing, as the ſame *Scacchus* obſerves: For there were no ſuch Purifications here uſed, as were among the *Jews*; but it is a known Thing, that as Women in all Countries were wont to ſpend a great deal of Time in their dreſſing, and trimming up of themſelves, that they might appear well abroad; ſo much more in this Country, and when they were to go to the Bed of a great King. A Year indeed was a long Time; but *Athenæus* ſaith, that among the *Sybarites* (who were a delicate luxurious People) there was a Sanction, That the Women, when they were called to the publick Sacrifices at great Feſtivals, πρὸ ἐνιαυτὸν τὴν παρασκευὴν ποιεῖσθαι, were to make Preparation for it a Year before.

And with other Things for the Purifying of the Women.] Whatſoever was proper for this Purpoſe, was uſed in their Preparations for the King's Bed.

Ver. 13. *Then thus came every Maiden unto the King; whatſoever ſhe deſired was given her, to go with her out of the Houſe of the Women, unto the King's Houſe.*] Whatſoever Ornaments or Attendants ſhe deſired.

Ver. 14. *In the Evening ſhe went, and on the Morrow ſhe returned into the ſecond Houſe of the Women, to the Cuſtody of Shaaſhgaz, the King's Chamberlain, which kept the Concubines:*] She returned no more into the former Houſe, having loſt her Virginity; but was treated in another Houſe, as one of the King's Wives: For ſo *Concubines* were, of a ſecondary Sort, as I have often noted.

She came in unto the King no more, except the King delighted in her, and that ſhe were called by Name.] For every one's Name was regiſter'd, as the *Targum* ſaith, and the Night, I ſuppoſe, when ſhe went in unto the King.

Ver. 15. *Now when the Turn of Eſther, the Daughter of Abihail, the Uncle of Mordecai (who had taken her for his Daughter) was come to go in unto the King, ſhe required nothing,*] But was contented with her own natural Beauty, and deſired nothing of Art to recommend her.

But what Hegai the King's Chamberlain, the Keeper of the Women appointed:] Yet ſhe did not refuſe what he, who had been ſo kind to her, ordered for her.

And Eſther obtained Favour in the Sight of all them that looked upon her.] All that beheld her, as ſhe paſſed from the Houſe of the Women to the King's Houſe, admired her Beauty, which needed no Ornament; for the greateſt Ornaments of Virgins are Modeſty, (as *Pellicanus* ſpeaks,) Silence, well-diſciplined Eyes, a ſerene Countenance without Levity, an Horror of all Wantonneſs; which meeting all in her, made her acceptable to every one that ſaw her.

Ver. 16. *So Eſther was taken unto King Ahaſuerus, into his Houſe Royal,*] She was not ſent back in the Morning unto the ſecond Houſe of the Women, as the reſt were; but the King kept her in his own Houſe, intending to make her more than a Concubine.

In the tenth Month (which is the Month Tebeth) in the ſeventh Year of his Reign.] He made the great Feaſt we read of in the foregoing Chapter, in the third Year of his Reign, in the End of which *Vaſhti* was ſent away. How it came to paſs that it was ſo long before *Eſther* was advanced to ſucceed her, ſeems difficult to reſolve: But we are to conſider, that a great deal of Time was ſpent in gathering the Virgins together, and that ſhe was a Year in preparing herſelf for Admiſſion to the King;

and ſeveral, it is likely, went in before her, who had alſo their Time of Preparation; and took ſome Time, it is likely, to try how he liked her Wit, Humour, and Converſation.

Ver. 17. *And the King loved Eſther above all the Women, and ſhe obtained Grace and Favour in his Sight more than all the Virgins; ſo that he ſet the Royal Crown upon her Head, and made her Queen in the ſtead of Vaſhti.*] She being at this Time, as *Jacobus Capellus* computes, twenty Years old, *ad A. M.* 3645. But ſome make a Queſtion whether ſhe did not commit a great Sin to come at this Dignity, not conſidering the Cuſtom of thoſe Times, and Countries. For thoſe Perſons whom the King took into his Bed after the Manner before mentioned, were not Harlots, but became his Wives of a lower Sort; for whom he provided ever after, and they were no longer chargeable to their Parents or Friends; nor might any other Man marry them. Such an one *Eſther* would have been, if he had not liked her ſo well as to do more for her. Which no doubt was ordered by a ſpecial Providence of God, who thus rewarded her Virtue, and alſo preſerved the whole Nation of the *Jews* from periſhing.

Ver. 18. *Then the King made a great Feaſt unto all his Princes and his Servants, even Eſther's Feaſt,*] So it was called, becauſe it was made in Honour of her, and, if we may believe *Joſephus*, laſted a whole Month.

And he made a Releaſe to the Provinces,] At this Feaſt he gave the People ſome Eaſe in their Impoſts, and forgave them ſome of the Duties they were bound to pay him. Some have affirmed, that this is reported by *Herodotus* to have been a Cuſtom of the *Perſian* Kings at their Marriages. But I can find no more than this in him, that ὁ κατισάμενος Βασιλεὺς, &c. when he was made King, he remitted the Tribute that was due to him from all the Cities, *Lib.* VI. *Cap.* 59.

And gave Gifts according to the State of the King.] He made great Preſents to the Queen, as the Manner of the *Perſian* Kings was; who gave to their Queen at their Marriage ſuch a City to buy them Cloaths, ſuch an one for their Hair, another for their Necklaces, and other Ornaments, and ſo for the reſt of their Expences. Here the *latter Targum* tells an idle Tale, how the King deſired *Eſther* to tell him what Country ſhe was of, and who were her Anceſtors from whom ſhe deſcended. To which ſhe anſwered, that her Parents dying when ſhe was an Infant, ſhe did not know who were her Forefathers: Which the King hearing, he releaſed all Men of their Taxes, and gave them Gifts, ſaying, I will be kind to all People of all Nations, becauſe I will be ſure to be kind to the People of *Eſther*, who are among ſome of them.

Ver. 19. *And when the Virgins were gathered together the ſecond Time, when Mordecai ſat in the King's Gate.*] This doth not ſignify that there was another Inquiſition for Virgins after *Eſther* was married, but to join this Hiſtory with what follows, he repeats what was ſaid before, *Ver* 2. that at the Time when this ſecond Collection of Virgins was made for the Choice of a new Wife, as there had been once before when *Vaſhti* was married, then *Mordecai* was in Attendance at the Gate of the Palace; and ſo proceeds to ſhew how he diſcovered a Plot againſt the Life of the King.

Ver. 20. *Eſther had not yet ſhewed her Kindred, nor her People, as Mordecai had charged her:*] Which he would not have her to diſcover, leſt ſhe ſhould be hated for her Nation's ſake, or her Nation be envied for her good Fortune.

For Eſther did the Commandment of Mordecai, like as when ſhe was brought up with him.] A rare Example of Virtue, that ſhe ſhould be ſo obſervant of him when ſhe was a Queen; for moſt forget what they were, when they are unexpectedly grown very great.

Ver. 21. *In thoſe Days (while Mordecai ſat in the King's Gate) two of the King's Chamberlains, Bigthan and Tereſh, of thoſe which kept the Door, were wroth, and ſought to lay Hand on the King Ahaſuerus.*] Theſe were two great Men, who perhaps kept the Door of the King's Bed-Chamber, and were incenſed at the Divorce of *Vaſhti*, (whoſe Creatures they were,) or at the Advancement of *Eſther*, knowing her to be related to *Mordecai*, who they were afraid would be raiſed to greater Power than themſelves. Thus the *former Targum* writes, *Doth not the Queen by her Power with the King intend to turn us out of our Places, and put in Mordecai?* Therefore they reſolved to poiſon him, as both that and the *latter Targum* underſtand it.

Ver. 22. *And the Thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Eſther the Queen, and Eſther certified the King thereof in Mordecai's Name.*] One of their Servants, whoſe Name (as *Joſephus* ſaith) was *Barnabazus*, diſcovered the Conſpiracy to *Mordecai*, who found Means to inform *Eſther* of it, and ſhe acquainted the King with it from *Mordecai*.

Ver 23. *And when Inquiſition was made of the Matter, it was found out;*] His Information which he gave to the King appeared to be true, upon a due Enquiry into the Matter.

Therefore they were both hanged on a Tree: and it was written in the Book of the Chronicles before the King.] In the Day-Book, wherein all memorable Things were recorded, to be read (as the *Targum* obſerves) before the King, when he required. Here we may ſee the Infelicity and the Danger of the moſt potent Perſons: The Life of a great King depending upon the Fidelity of one ſingle Perſon, whoſe Service was neglected by the Court, though a Memorial was made of it. Thus all Maſters of Families are obnoxious to the Perfidiouſneſs of their Servants that wait upon them. They are the Words of *Conradus Pellicanus*.

CHAP. III.

Ver. 1. *AFTER theſe Things*] About five Years after, as appears from *Ver.* 7.

Did King Ahaſuerus promote Haman the Son of Hammedatha the Agagite,] He was deſcended from the Royal Race of the *Amalekite* Kings, and grown into great Favour in this Court, as *Daniel* and his Companions, who were of noble

Blood alſo, *Dan.* i. 3. The *latter Targum* hath given us the Pedigree of *Haman*, up to *Eliphaz* the eldeſt Son of *Eſau*.

And advanced him, and ſet his Seat above all the Princes that were with him.] Either of his own, or other Nations. For it is likely the *Perſian* Kings, as the *Chaldee* before them, had many Kings and Princes, whom they had conquered, with them, who had the Honour ſometimes, to ſit on Royal Seats before them, 2 *Kings* xxv. 28.

Ver. 2. *And all the King's Servants that were in the King's Gate, bowed and reverenced Haman; for the King had ſo commanded concerning him:*] To bow the Knee or the Body to all great Perſons, was a common Reſpect; for which there needed not a particular Command to require this of every Body with reſpect to *Haman*, ſince no doubt they did it to all Princes, and would much more do it to him, who took Place of them all, and was the Prince's Favourite. There was therefore ſome kind of divine Honour intended in this; ſuch as was paid to the *Perſian* Kings themſelves, to whom the *Greeks* would not pay this ſort of Reſpect, becauſe it was accounted divine. And the Word *Reverence* imports ſomething beyond *Bowing*, which was falling flat upon their Faces to the Ground. Such Proſtrations the Kings of *Perſia* expected: And *Ahaſuerus*, to expreſs his great Affection to *Haman*, would have it paid to him. The *former Targum* I believe thought of this, when he ſaith, *They in the King's Gate bowed down to his Image which he had ſet up, and worſhipped Haman.*

But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him Reverence.] Becauſe he was of a Nation, devoted by God to Deſtruction, with whom therefore the *Jews* would have no Friendſhip, nor ſhew them any Kindneſs, but remember the Injuries they had done them, *Deut.* xxv. 18, 19. But this doth not ſeem a Reaſon weighty enough, why he ſhould not pay him civil Reſpect, which was given to all Men in great Place, eſpecially ſince by denying it he might expoſe his whole Nation to Danger. This is an Argument that there was ſomething more intended: And accordingly the Author of the *Apocryphal* Additions to this Book underſtood it, who repreſents *Mordecai* praying after this Manner: *Thou knoweſt, O LORD, that it is not Contumacy, nor Pride, nor Deſire of Vainglory, that makes me not worſhip Haman; for I would willingly kiſs his Feet, for the Safety of Iſrael: But I do it, that I may not prefer the Glory of a Man to the Glory of God; nor adore any one but thee my LORD alone.*

Ver. 3. *Then the King's Servants which were in the King's Gate ſaid unto Mordecai, Why tranſgreſſeſt thou the King's Commandment?*] I ſuppoſe it ſeemed ſtrange to them, that one ſingle Perſon ſhould refuſe to do what every Body did, eſpecially ſince thereby he diſobeyed the King: Therefore they expoſtulated with him, to make him ſenſible of his Duty and his Danger.

Ver. 4. *Now it came to paſs, when they ſpake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them,*] Seemed not to regard what they ſaid, and perhaps gave them no Anſwer.

That they told Haman, to ſee whether Mordecai his Matters would ſtand;] Whether he would perſiſt in his Stiffneſs, and what would be the Iſſue of it.

For he had told them he was a Jew.] Being much preſſed by them, he confeſſes the Reaſon why he could not do as they did. For that they might not think it was Pride or Sullenneſs that made him not comply with the King's Order, he acquaints them plainly of what Religion and what Nation he was; who might not ſhew any Reſpect to an *Amalekite*, (as ſome take it,) or worſhip any but God alone, as I take the Meaning to be. And thus the *latter Targum* here explains it: When they asked him why he did not obey the King he anſwered, *What is the Son of Man, that he ſhould exalt himſelf? What is he that is born of a Woman, who comes lamenting into the World, and is of few Days, and then returns to his Earth, that I ſhould worſhip him? No, I worſhip God, the living God, who endures for ever*, &c. And ſo he goes on, deſcribing very well the glorious Majeſty of God, the LORD of Heaven and Earth, and thus concludes, *He is to be praiſed by us, and before him we ought to bow down our ſelves.*

Ver. 5. *And when Haman ſaw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him Reverence, then was Haman full of Wrath.*] It is likely he did not mind what every one did that was in the King's Gate, (where there was a great Crowd,) till he was told of *Mordecai*'s Neglect; and then he marked him when he next paſſed by, and was highly enraged at him.

Ver. 6. *And he thought ſcorn to lay Hands on Mordecai alone; for they had ſhewed him the People of Mordecai: Wherefore Haman ſought to deſtroy all the Jews that were throughout the whole Kingdom of King Ahaſuerus, even the People of Mordecai.*] He diſdained to take ſo poor a Revenge, as to rid himſelf of one Man alone, but reſolved to make the whole Nation ſuffer, who he knew were Enemies to that Nation from whence he ſprung.

Ver. 7. *In the firſt Month (that is, the Month Niſan) in the twelfth Year of King Ahaſuerus, they caſt Pur, that is, the Lot, before Haman, from Day to Day, and from Month to Month, to the twelfth Month, that is the Month Adar.*] It was the Manner of the Eaſtern Country, by caſting Lots into an Urn, to enquire what Days would be fortunate, and what not, to undertake any Buſineſs in: According to which Superſtition *Haman* endeavoured to find what Time in the Year was moſt favourable to the *Jews*, and what moſt unlucky. And firſt he enquired what Month was moſt unfortunate, and found the Month *Adar*, which was the laſt Month in the Year, anſwerable to our *February*. For, as *Guil. Schickard* obſerves, there was no Feſtival Solemnity in this Month, nor was it ſanctified by any peculiar Rites. And then he enquired the Day, and found the thirteenth Day was not auſpicious to them, *Ver.* 13. Some think there were as many Lots, as there were Days in the Year, and for every Day he drew a Lot; but found none to his Mind, till he came to the laſt Month of all, and to the Middle

Middle of it. See *Hottinger's Smegma Orientale, p.* 75. Now this whole Buſineſs was governed by a wonderful Providence of God; by whom theſe Lots were directed, and not by the *Perſian* Gods, to fall in the laſt Month of the Year; whereby almoſt a whole Year intervened between the Deſign and its Execution, and gave Time for *Mordecai* to acquaint *Eſther* with it, and for her to intercede with the King, for the revoking or ſuſpending his Decree, and diſappointing the Conſpiracy.

Ver. 8. *And Haman ſaid unto King Ahaſuerus,*] Or rather, *had ſaid:* For it is not likely he would caſt his Lots till he knew his Mind, for Fear he ſhould loſe his Labour.

There is a certain People ſcattered abroad, and diſperſed among the People in all the Provinces of thy Kingdom,] For a great Number of them, being well ſettled in the Land of their Captivity, would not return to *Judea* when *Cyrus* gave them Leave; whom *Haman* repreſents as a deſpicable People, or Vagrants and Stragglers (as the *latter Targum* underſtands it) diſperſed here and there up and down in his Dominions.

And their Laws are diverſe from all People, neither keep they the King's Laws;] A proud high-ſpirited People, (as the ſame *Targum* repreſents the Senſe,) who live by Laws of their own, and will obſerve none of the King's; for they will neither eat of our Meat, nor drink of our Wine, nor keep our Feſtivals; but have ſeveral of their own, on which they will not work, nor do the King's Buſineſs. All which he ſets forth at large in that Paraphraſe.

Therefore it is not for the King's Profit to ſuffer them.] The *former Targum* thus gloſſes upon theſe Words, *The King gets nothing by them, while they live in this Kingdom; but what will he not get if he deſtroys them all?* The other *Targum* makes him repreſent them as griping Uſurers; which was to the Damage of the King's People.

Ver. 9. *If it pleaſe the King, let it be written that they may be deſtroyed:*] He deſires not only a verbal Command, but an Order in Writing, for their utter Extirpation as a peſtilent People.

And I will pay ten thouſand Talents of Silver,] He promiſes to compenſate the Loſs of the Tribute which they paid yearly by a vaſt Sum of Money, which he would pay immediately. But he intended not to pay one Farthing of it himſelf, it being eaſy to raiſe it out of the Spoil of the *Jews* Goods, *Ver.* 13.

To the Hands of thoſe that have the Charge of the Buſineſs,] Not of thoſe who had the Charge to kill them, but of thoſe that received the King's Money; as appears by the next Words, *to bring it into the King's Treaſuries.* And ſo the ſame *Targum, I will pay it into the Hands of thoſe who coin the King's Money,* that is, into the Mint, as we now ſpeak.

Ver. 10. *And the King took his Ring from his Hand, and gave it unto Haman the Son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews Enemy.*] Without any Examination into the Condition of the People, he conſented to their Deſtruction. So loth are Men that love their Pleaſure, to take any Pains to diſtinguiſh between Truth and Falſhood.

Ver. 11. *And the King ſaid unto Haman, The Silver is given unto thee, the People alſo, to do with them as it ſeemeth good to thee.*] He gave him Power to draw up what Decree he pleaſed, and ſeal it with his own Ring; but as for the Money, he loved him ſo much, he would have none of it.

Ver. 12. *Then were the King's Scribes called,*] As there were ſacred Scribes among the *Jews,* who were Men learned in the Law, ſo there were political both among them and other Nations, as *L'Empereur* obſerves upon *Bertram De Repub. Jud. p.* 381. And there were two ſorts of them; one of which was employed in writing publick Letters or Contracts, and other Acts that were to be ſigned by Authority, the more honourable and higheſt of which were ſuch as are called here the *King's Scribes,* whom the *Chaldee* calls the *King's Notaries,* and we now call *Secretaries of State.*

On the thirteenth Day of the firſt Month,] This was not wiſely projected, to let his Deſign be known ſo long before it was to take Effect; for the King's Mind might alter, or the *Jews* might find ſome Way to deliver themſelves, or might ſteal out of the Kingdom.

And there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the King's Lieutenants, and to the Governors that were over every Province, and to the Rulers of every People of every Province, according to the Writing thereof, and to every People after their Language; in the Name of King Ahaſuerus was it written, and ſealed with the King's Ring.] He himſelf indited the Decree by the Royal Authority, and made it, no doubt, as ſtrict as it was poſſible; and perhaps commanded it to be executed under great Penalties, by all Manner of Officers, who were required to take care to ſee it done. And that none might be ignorant, it was written in the Language of every People, and in the Character they could read.

Ver. 13. *And the Letters were ſent by Poſts into all the King's Provinces,*] Concerning theſe Poſts which were in Uſe among the *Perſians,* ſee *Herodotus, Lib.* VIII. *Cap.* 98. where deſcribing the Diſpatches which were ſent into *Perſia* to carry the News of *Xerxes*'s Overthrow, he ſaith, Τετέων δὲ τῶν Ἀγγέλων ὠκύτερον ἐόν Θᾶσσον, ὅτι παρεγίνεται Θνητὸν ἔον, &c. There is nothing upon Earth ſwifter than theſe Meſſengers, whom neither Snow, nor Rain, nor Heat, nor Night can hinder from finiſhing their Courſe ſpeedily: The Manner of which he there ſets down, which the *Perſians,* he ſaith, call Ἀγγαρήιον.

To deſtroy, to kill, and to cauſe to periſh all Jews, both young and old, little Children and Women, in one Day, even upon the thirteenth Day of the twelfth Month, and to take the Spoil of them for a Prey.] This was a ſtrong Motive to ſuch a bloody Execution, that they who killed them ſhould enrich themſelves by their Spoil.

Ver.

Ver. 14. *The Copy of the Writing for a Commandment to be given in every Province, was publiſhed unto all People, that they ſhould be ready againſt that Day.*] Copies of this original Decree of the King were ſent into every Province, and there ordered to be publiſhed, requiring them to be ready againſt that Day.

Ver. 15. *The Poſts went out, being haſtened by the King's Commandment, and the Decree was given in Shuſhan the Palace:*] He procured a new Commandment from the King, requiring their ſpeedy Delivery of this Decree, that the People might not want Time to prepare for its Execution; and he alſo got it ſigned by the King's Council; for that ſeems to be meant by its being given in *Shuſhan*.

And the King and Haman ſat down to drink,] It is likely *Haman* made an Entertainment for the King, to thank him for his great Kindneſs to him in this Grant.

But the City Shuſhan was perplexed.] The *Jews* that lived there, who were very numerous, knew not what to do: And it is probable other People in the City were very fearful what would become of them; not knowing but that they might alſo ſuffer in ſuch a Maſſacre: And perhaps ſome of them were related to the *Jews*, or had made Friendſhip with them, and therefore were much concerned at this horrid Decree.

CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. *WHEN Mordecai perceived all that was done,*] Which it is likely he heard by ſome Friend before it was publickly known, but did not expreſs his Grief till the Edict was hung up.

Mordecai rent his Cloaths,] Both before and behind, ſaith the *latter Targum*.

And put on Sackcloth with Aſhes,] As the Manner was, in great Sorrow.

And went out into the Midſt of the City, and cried with a loud and a bitter Cry:] Saying, as the ſame *Targum* expreſſes it, What an heavy Decree is this which the King and *Haman* have paſſed upon us? Not againſt a Part of us, but upon us all, to root us out of the Earth: Whereupon all the *Jews* flock'd about him, and he cauſed the Book of the Law to be brought to the Gate of *Shuſhan*, covered with Sackcloth; and therein he read thoſe Words of *Moſes* in *Deut.* iv. 30, 31. *When thou art in Tribulation, and all theſe Things are come upon thee, in the latter Days, if thou turn to the* LORD *thy God, and ſhalt be obedient to his Voice: (For the* LORD *thy God is a merciful God,) he will not forſake thee, nor deſtroy thee, nor forget the Covenant of thy Fathers, which he ſware unto them.* After which he exhorted them to Faſting, Humiliation, and Repentance, according to the Example of the *Ninevites*.

Ver. 2. *And came even before the King's Gate,*] That his Cry might come to the Ears of *Eſther*.

For none might enter into the King's Gate clothed with Sackcloth.] But he durſt not take his Place in the Gate, becauſe none that were in Mourning might come there. So careful they were, not in the leaſt to diſturb the King in his Pleaſures. By this it appears, as from many other Places, that in the Gate they made their Court, as we ſpeak, and diſpatched all publick Affairs, (as I have noted often before;) which was here practiſed more than in other Places, becauſe the *Perſian* Monarchs lived more retired than other Princes, few but thoſe who attended them, being admitted into their Palace.

Ver. 3. *And in every Province whitherſoever the King's Commandment and his Decree came, there was great Mourning among the Jews, and Faſting, and Weeping, and Wailing, and many lay in Sackcloth and Aſhes.*] All Day long they faſted, and wept, and lamented themſelves; and in the Night many lay, not in their Beds, but on the Ground in Sackcloth and Aſhes.

Ver. 4. *So Eſther's Maids and her Chamberlains came and told it her:*] As a Piece of News, or perhaps they underſtood there was ſome Relation between them.

Then was the Queen exceedingly grieved,] Imagining ſome Miſchief had befallen him, and not knowing what it was.

And ſhe ſent Raiment to clothe Mordecai, and to take away his Sackcloth from him:] That he might come to Court, and take his Place in the Gate.

But he received it not.] This, no doubt, very much increaſed her Grief.

Ver. 5. *Then called Eſther for Hatach, one of the King's Chamberlains, whom he had appointed to attend upon her,*] In whom the King had a great Confidence, and whom ſhe could intruſt with ſuch a Meſſage.

And gave him a Commandment to Mordecai, to know what it was, and why it was.] What was the Cauſe of his Weeping and Wailing, and why he would not accept of the Garments which ſhe ſent him; as the *latter Targum* very well explains it.

Ver. 6. *So Hatach went forth to Mordecai, unto the Street of the City, which was before the King's Gate.*] Where, it is like, he ſtill continued lamenting their miſerable Condition.

Ver. 7. *And Mordecai told him of all that had happened unto him,*] How he had refuſed to worſhip *Haman*, (as the *former Targum* explains it,) and how this had incenſed him againſt the whole Nation.

And of the Sum of the Money that Haman had promiſed to pay to the King's Treaſuries for the Jews, to deſtroy them.] The ten thouſand Talents he had offered, to procure the King's Conſent to their Deſtruction.

Some of the *Jews* here add another marvellous Thing, which *had happened* to *Mordecai* the very Night before *Hatach* came to him, *which* he deſired *Eſther* might be acquainted withal: Whether it be true or falſe, I think fit here to remember it, (it ſeeming to be ſo piouſly deſigned,) as I had it near threeſcore Years ago from a great Man in the Jewiſh Learning, who quotes for it *R. Moſes Almoſnino* in a Book called *Jede Moſeh*, (the Hands of *Moſes*,) where he ſays, That *Mordecai* going home in great Heavineſs, reflecting on the Danger his whole Nation was in, met three Boys coming

coming from School, whom he examined what they had learned that Day; one of them told him his Leſſon had been in *Prov.* iii. 25, 26. *Be not afraid of ſudden Fear, nor of the Deſolation of the Wicked when it cometh: For the* LORD *ſhall be thy Confidence*, &c. Then *Mordecai* cried out, I am confident this Deſolation ſhall not be ſo ſpeedy. Then the ſecond Child told him he had learned that Day *Iſaiah* viii. 10. *Take Counſel together, it ſhall come to nought; ſpeak the Word*, (or pronounce the Decree,) *it ſhall not ſtand; for God is with us:* O the wonderful Goodneſs of God, ſaid *Mordecai*, that thus out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings ordaineth Strength! And what have you learned, ſaid he to the third Child? who anſwered, *Iſaiah* xlvi. 4. *Even to your old Age I am he*, (that is, the God,) *unto hoary Hairs I will carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry, and will deliver you:* Now bleſſed be God (cried *Mordecai*) that hath not left us comfortleſs; his Hand ſhall be with us as in former Ages, *&c.* But another great Man in this Learning hath lately admoniſhed me this *Rabbin* is but of Yeſterday, and deſigned to elude the Prophecy of *Pſalm* viii. quoted in the Goſpel, and therefore unworthy to be mentioned in this Place.

Ver. 8. *Alſo he gave him the Copy of the Writing of the Decree that was given at Shuſhan to deſtroy them, to ſhew it unto Eſther,*] That ſhe might be fully ſatisfied what was intended.

And to charge her that ſhe ſhould go in unto the King, to make Supplication unto him, and to make Requeſt before him for her People.] He charged her, I ſuppoſe, in the Name of God, or as ſhe loved her Nation, to go and earneſtly to beſeech the King to be merciful to the *Jews*, as the *Targum* expounds it.

Ver. 9. *And Hatach came, and told Eſther the Words of Mordecai.*

Ver. 10. *Again Eſther ſpake unto Hatach, and gave him Commandment unto Mordecai.*

Ver. 11. *All the King's Servants, and the People of the King's Provinces do know,*] That is, no Body either in the Court or in the whole Kingdom was ignorant.

That whoſoever, whether Man or Woman, ſhall come unto the King into the inner Court, who is not called,] Here the King kept retired from all Company, but ſuch as he called for, or was pleaſed to admit.

There is one Law of his to put him to Death,] Let him be of ever ſuch Quality, there was no Exception; but one Law reached all that were ſo preſumptuous. This ſeems to have been an ancient Law in that Country, mentioned by *Herodotus*, *Lib.* I. and *Athenæus*, *Lib.* XII. But the *former Targum* will have it, that it was procured by *Haman*, that none might come into the King's Preſence unleſs he introduced them.

Except ſuch to whom the King ſhall hold out the golden Sceptre, that he may live:] Which, I ſuppoſe was ſo ſeldom done, that few would venture to ſtand in need of a Pardon. A Sceptre was the Enſign of the higheſt and moſt abſolute Authority; ſo that, as *Wagenſeil* obſerves, when *Mordecai* was advanced to the greateſt Dignity next to the King, having Royal Apparel, and a great Crown on his Head (viii. 15.) yet he had no Sceptre; for that was proper and peculiar to the King.

But I have not been called to come in unto the King theſe thirty Days.] Which might juſtly make her fear his Love was cooled to her, and then her Perſon and Petition might not be acceptable to him.

Ver. 12. *And they told to Mordecai Eſther's Words.*] There ſeems to have been more than one Perſon that went with this Meſſage, to confirm the Truth of what ſhe ſaid.

Ver. 13. *Then Mordecai commanded to anſwer Eſther, Think not with thy ſelf that thou ſhalt eſcape in the King's Houſe, more than all the Jews.*] He would not have her flatter herſelf with a vain Imagination, that becauſe ſhe was Queen ſhe ſhould be ſpared, for ſhe would find no more Privilege in the King's Houſe than the reſt of the *Jews* did abroad.

Ver. 14. *For if thou altogether holdeſt thy Peace at this Time, then ſhall their Enlargement and Deliverance ariſe to the Jews from another Place,*] He did not know whence, but he confided in God, that by ſome Means or other he would preſerve them from utter Deſtruction.

But thou and thy Father's Houſe ſhall be deſtroyed:] He would have her believe that God would cut off her and her Family for Self-love, and want of Zeal to preſerve her Nation.

And who knoweth, whether thou art come to the Kingdom for ſuch a Time as this?] Rather than refuſe to intercede for her People, he would have her think (though there was Danger in it) that God had raiſed her up to the Dignity in which ſhe was, on purpoſe that ſhe might be the Deliverer of her People, and therefore go courageouſly about it.

Ver. 15. *Then Eſther bad them to return Mordecai this Anſwer.*

Ver. 16. *Go gather together all the Jews that are preſent in Shuſhan,*] Not all into one publick Congregation; for that might have given Suſpicion of an intended Inſurrection, but in ſeveral private Aſſemblies.

And faſt ye for me, neither eat or drink three Days, Night or Day,] None, or very few could keep a Faſt for three Days and Nights, without taſting any Meat or Drink: The Meaning therefore is, that they ſhould make no ſet Meal in their Families, neither Dinner nor Supper, but only eat and drink ſo much at Night as would ſupport them in Prayer to God for a Bleſſing upon her Undertaking; or, as *Joſephus* underſtands it, they ſhould abſtain from all Delicacies, and be content with hard and coarſe Fare. But *Druſius* thinks this Faſt was only one whole Day and two Nights, according as it is ſaid of our Saviour, that he lay three Days and three Nights in the Grave; and then they might faſt ſo long without taking any Refreſhment; and in thoſe hot Countries, we read of Monks that faſted four or five Days.

I alſo and my Maidens will faſt likewiſe,] It is not likely her Maidens were *Jews*; yet notwithſtanding they might be diſpoſed to faſt with her; which was not unuſual with the *Gentiles* in Time of great Diſtreſs, as appears

by the Story of the *Nenevites*, whoſe Faſt the *Targum* thinks *Mordecai* imitated, making the Cattle, Oxen, and Sheep to abſtain, as well as Men and Women.

And ſo will I go in unto the King, which is not according to the Law;] Being thus recommended to God, ſhe reſolved not ſo much to regard the Law, as the Preſervation of her People; for there are in ſome Caſes ſuch violent Circumſtances, that to obſerve the Law, as *Grotius* notes, would be to offend againſt the chiefeſt Law. Whither *Puffendorf* refers, what we read in *Valerius Maximus*, *Lib.* III. *Cap.* 7. *n.* 1. and *Cap.* 8. *n.* 6.

And if I periſh, I periſh.] This is not a Speech of Deſpondence, but of Courage and Reſolution; being as much as to ſay, I am content to periſh in ſo good a Cauſe; and if I periſh for it in this World, (as the *Targum* gloſſes,) I ſhall have my Portion in the World to come.

Ver. 17. *So Mordecai went his Way, and did according to all that Eſther had commanded him.*] Betook himſelf to Faſting and Prayer (unto which he called all the *Jews*) as long as *Eſther* required, omitting the Joys of the paſchal Feaſt, and turning it into a Faſt, if we may believe the *former Targum:* For that Paraphraſt thinks that *Haman* laying his Plot in the Month of *Niſan*, (ii. 7.) and *Mordecai* preſently applying himſelf to defeat it, theſe Things muſt fall out about the Paſſover, which was in this Month. But in Memory of this the *Jews* keep a Faſt on the thirteenth of *Adar*, which they call *Eſther*'s *Faſt*.

CHAP. V.

Ver. 1. *NOW it came to paſs on the third Day,*] In the Concluſion of the Faſt, or, as the *former Targum*, on the third Day of the Paſſover.

That Eſther put on her royal Apparel, and ſtood in the inner Court of the King's Houſe, over againſt the King's Houſe:] But firſt, ſaith the *latter Targum*, ſhe made a ſolemn Prayer to God with many Tears, as ſoon as ſhe was dreſſed, ſaying, *Thou art the great God, the God of Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, the God of my Father Benjamin; As thou didſt deliver Hananiah, Miſhael, and Azariah out of the fiery Furnace, and Daniel from the Lion's Den, ſo deliver me now out of the Hand of the King, and give me Grace and Favour in his Eyes*, &c. And ſo he goes on in a very long Prayer.

And the King ſat upon his Royal Throne in the Royal Houſe, over againſt the Gate of the Houſe.] So that he could ſee every one that came into the Court.

Ver. 2. *And it was ſo, when the King ſaw Eſther the Queen ſtanding in the Court, that ſhe obtained Favour in his Sight:*] He was much moved, ſaith the *former Targum*, to ſee Trouble in her Countenance, and her Eyes full of Tears; and ſo immediately comforted her in the Manner following.

And the King held out to Eſther the golden Scepter that was in his Hand:] In token of his Favour, and inviting her Approach. But the other *Targum* ſays, that the Officers about him, as ſoon as ſhe entred, ran to apprehend her, that ſhe might be put to Death. But the King ſtopp'd them, by his ſhewing ſhe was acceptable to him. So true is that of *Solomon*, *The King's Heart is in the Hand of the LORD; as the Rivers of Water, he turneth it whitherſoever he will*, Prov. xxi. 1.

So Eſther drew near, and touched the Top of the Scepter.] Kiſſed it, ſaith the *Vulgar*, or put her Hand under it, ſaith *Grotius*, in Token of her Subjection and Thankfulneſs for his Favour.

Ver. 3. *Then ſaid the King unto her, What wilt thou, Queen Eſther? And what is thy Requeſt? It ſhall be even given thee to the Half of the Kingdom.*] This is an uſual Form of Speech among Kings, when their Hearts are enlarged, and they overflow with Affection to others, or when they give them the freeſt Liberty to demand what they pleaſe, as *Grotius* explains it upon St. *Matth.* xiv. 7. It is a fooliſh Addition, which the *latter Targum* here makes, that he excepted one Thing, which was the Building the Houſe of the Sanctuary at *Jeruſalem*, which he would not grant, becauſe he promiſed *Geſhem*, *Sanballat*, and *Tobiah*, it ſhould not be built, leſt the *Jews* ſhould rebel.

Ver. 4. *And Eſther anſwered, If it ſeem good unto the King, let the King and Haman come this Day unto the Banquet that I have prepared for him.*] It was very prudent not to open her Mind preſently, but firſt to endear his Affection by Feaſting, Muſick, Dancing, and whatſoever might pleaſe him. And it was no ſmall Pleaſure, it is likely, that ſhe invited his Favourite to come to her Entertainment together with him. There was alſo a ſingular Providence of God in this Matter, which ſo diſpoſed her Mind, that the high Honour the King beſtowed on *Mordecai* the next Day might fall out between this and that, and make Way for her Petition.

Ver. 5. *And the King ſaid, Cauſe Haman to make Haſte, that he may do as Eſther hath ſaid.*] Get himſelf ready with all Speed.

So the King and Haman came to the Banquet that Eſther had prepared.

Ver. 6. *And the King ſaid unto Eſther at the Banquet of Wine,*] At the Concluſion of the Entertainment: For they did not drink Wine, but Water, at the Beginning of their Feaſts.

What is thy Petition? And it ſhall be granted unto thee: And what is thy Requeſt? Even to the Half of the Kingdom it ſhall be performed.] This ſhews it was not a ſudden Paſſion of Love that made him ſpeak ſo kindly to her before, but he had a ſettled Affection for her, which diſpoſed him to be very bountiful, and ſhewed he was much pleaſed with her Entertainment.

Ver. 7. *Then anſwered Eſther, and ſaid, My Petition and my Requeſt is*;

Ver. 8. *If I have found Favour in the Sight of the King, and if it pleaſe the King to grant my Petition, and to perform my Requeſt, let the King and Haman come to the Banquet that I ſhall prepare for them, and I will do to morrow as the King hath ſaid.*] That is, make her Requeſt to him: Which ſhe thought would be more ſeaſonable, when ſhe had won his Heart by freſh Expreſſions of her Deſire to pleaſe him, and obtained

obtained alſo a new Promiſe from him, that he would deny her nothing: For there was need of a great Preparation, to diſpoſe him to do ſo great a Thing for her, as to revoke or ſuſpend his own Decree. The *latter Targum*, after his Faſhion, gives ſeveral frivolous Reaſons why ſhe invited *Haman* to the Banquet twice, but the laſt of them is tolerable. The *Iſraelites* were in great Expectation of the Iſſue of this Feaſting, and hoped to ſee *Haman* preſently cut off; but ſhe was reſolved to turn their Thoughts the right Way, that is, from her unto God, looking for Mercy from their heavenly Father.

Ver. 9. *Then went Haman forth that Day joyful, and with a glad Heart:*] To think he was in ſuch Favour with the Queen, as well as with the King.

But when Haman ſaw Mordecai in the King's Gate, that he ſtood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of Indignation againſt Mordecai.] The *Targum* ſtill repeats it, that he ſaw *Mordecai* would not riſe up before his Image.

Ver. 10. *Nevertheleſs Haman refrained himſelf,*] From taking any ſudden Revenge.

And when he came home, he ſent and called for his Friends, and Zereſh his Wife.] The Daughter of *Totni* (ſaith the *latter Targum*) one of the King of *Perſia*'s Governors beyond the River.

Ver. 11. *And Haman told them of the Glory of his Riches,*] How ſplendidly he lived.

And the Multitude of his Children,] It was a Glory in this Country, as *Druſius* obſerves, to have Abundance of Children; but the *Targum* had no Shame, when he affirms he had two hundred and fourſcore, beſides thoſe ten that were Princes in the Provinces, and beſides *Shimſtæus* the King's Secretary.

And all the Things wherein the King had promoted him,] What Offices and Dignities he had conferred upon him.

And how he had advanced him above the Princes and Servants of the King.] So that he took Place of the greateſt Princes who were Natives of the Country; and of all the Officers in the Court.

Ver. 12. *Haman ſaid moreover, Yea, Eſther the Queen did let no Man come in with the King unto the Banquet that ſhe had prepared but my ſelf; and to Morrow am I invited unto her alſo with the King.*] He did not fail to relate the peculiar Honour the Queen had done him, which he could not but look upon as a Token that he was eſtabliſhed in the Favour of the Court.

Ver. 13. *Yet all this availeth me nothing, ſo long as I ſee Mordecai the Jew ſitting at the King's Gate.*] How ſmall a Matter will ſpoil all the Satisfaction of thoſe who are arrived at the Top of human Felicity! Immenſe Riches, Glory and Honour, gave not *Haman* ſo much Pleaſure, as he felt Pain from one Man's Diſreſpect unto him: And yet he might have given himſelf Eaſe before this, by ſpeaking one Word to the King to diſplace *Mordecai*, or put him to Death, if his Pride and Paſſion would have let him be contented, without the Deſtruction of a whole Nation.

Ver. 14. *Then ſaid Zereſh his Wife, and all his Friends unto him, Let a Gallows be made of fifty Cubits high,*] That Men might ſee him that was hanged on it afar off, and be ſtruck with the greater Terror by that Spectacle, of giving any Diſguſt to *Haman*.

And to Morrow ſpeak thou unto the King, that Mordecai may be hanged thereon:] They adviſed him not to wait till the general Slaughter of all the *Jews*, but to rid him preſently of *Mordecai*; for which he had now a fair Opportunity, being to attend on the King to Morrow unto the Banquet.

Then go thou in merrily with the King unto the Banquet.] When his Heart was eaſed of this Trouble; the Diſpatch of his Enemy, and the Banquet, giving him a double Pleaſure.

And the Thing pleaſed Haman, and he cauſed the Gallows to be made.] And ſet up before the Door of *Mordecai*'s Houſe, ſaith the *former Targum*, againſt the plain Words of this Hiſtory, vii. 9. where it is ſaid, they ſtood in *Haman*'s Houſe; from whence, it is poſſible, he intended to remove them to the Door of *Mordecai*: That *Targum* hath a great deal of frivolous Stuff about this Conſultation which *Haman*'s Friends had, how to deſtroy *Mordecai*; ſome adviſing one Way, and ſome another, but none approved of till this was propounded. The Reaſon given for it is fooliſh; but at laſt he concludes piouſly, That the *Jews* were extreamly troubled at the Sight of theſe Gallows, and all cried to God in the Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, cxxiii. 2. *Behold, as the Eyes of Servants look unto the Hand of their Maſters, and as the Eyes of a Maiden unto the Hand of her Miſtreſs; ſo our Eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have Mercy upon us.*

CHAP. VI.

Ver. 1. *ON that Night could not the King ſleep,*] Now follows a wonderful Turn of Affairs: God ſo diſpoſing it, that the King could take no Reſt in the Night, and inſtead of Muſick and Singing, and diverting himſelf with his Wives and Concubines, he called for the Records of the Kingdom to be read to him.

And he commanded to bring the Book of Records of the Chronicles; and they were read before the King.] Theſe were *Diaries* wherein were ſet down what paſſed every Day, which we now call *Journals*, (as I obſerved, ii. 13.) And in them it was the Manner of the *Perſians* to ſet down the Names of thoſe who had done the King any eminent Service; as *Grotius* notes out of *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, and *Procopius*.

Ver. 2. *And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Tereſh, two of the King's Chamberlains, the Keepers of the Door, who ſought to lay Hand on the King Ahaſuerus.*] It was a ſingular Providence of God, that they ſhould read in that very Part of the Book, wherein the Service of *Mordecai* was recorded. And the *latter Targum*, to increaſe the Wonder, ſaith, that *Shimſtæus*, who brought the Book, and opened it at this Place, ſeeing this which was written of *Mordecai*, turned over the Leaves, and would have read in another Part

of the Book; but the Leaves flew back again to the ſame Place where he opened it, and he was forced to read the Story to the King.

Ver. 3. *And the King ſaid, What Honour and Dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then ſaid the King's Servants that miniſtred unto him, There is nothing done for him.*] Great Men ſometimes are unmindful of the higheſt Services that are done them, and take no Care to reward them. Though ſome think the King ordered him a Reward, of which, by the Artifice of thoſe in the Court, who hated the *Jews*, he was deprived. But there was a ſpecial Providence in it, that he went without a Reward then, which procured it for him moſt opportunely at this Time. It is not improbable, that, as *Joſephus* ſaith, the Hiſtory of ſome of his Anceſtors was read before they came to his Reign; wherein was ſet down what Services Men had done, and what Preferment or Gifts had been beſtowed upon them; which moved the King to ask, when they came to this Story of *Mordecai*, what had been done for him?

Ver. 4. *And the King ſaid, Who is in the Court?*] For he was reſolved immediately to ſhew how ſenſible he was of his Service.

(Now Haman was come into the outward Court of the King's Houſe, to ſpeak unto the King, to hang Mordecai on the Gallows that he had prepared for him)] He was come very early to Court that he might gratify his Revenge, and go with more Pleaſure to the Banquet. This was another Part of God's Providence, to bring him ſo ſoon to Court, when the King was thus diſpoſed.

Ver. 5. *And the King's Servants ſaid unto him, Behold, Haman ſtandeth in the Court. And the King ſaid, Let him come in.*] Which he durſt not do, as great as he was, without Leave.

Ver. 6. *So Haman came in: and the King ſaid unto him, What ſhall be done unto the Man whom the King delighteth to honour?*] The King in all Probability would not have asked this Queſtion, but ordered himſelf what he thought fit, if God had not intended that *Mordecai* ſhould have the greateſt Honour done him, and that by the Judgment of his greateſt Enemy.

(Now Haman thought in his Heart, to whom would the King delight to do Honour more than to my ſelf?)] He had Reaſon to think ſo, becauſe he had already heaped ſo many Favours upon him, and was now invited by the Queen to keep him Company at her Banquet.

Ver. 7. *And Haman anſwered the King, For the Man whom the King delighteth to honour,*

Ver. 8. *Let the Royal Apparel be brought which the King uſeth to wear,*] When he went abroad, and appeared publickly among his People; which ſhould rather be tranſlated, *the Royal Robe*, an external Garment, or Stole coming down to his Feet, which none wore but himſelf.

And the Horſe that the King rideth upon,] I ſuppoſe it was a Horſe which none might ride upon but himſelf; like the Mule among the Kings of *Iſrael*, which was peculiarly appointed to their own Uſe, as I have noted on 1 *Kings* i. 33. *Herodotus*, Lib. 1. mentions ſuch a generous and moſt noble Horſe belonging to the King of *Perſia*.

And the Crown Royal which is ſet upon his Head:] That is, upon the Horſe's Head, upon which there was a Royal Ornament; as there is now at *Rome*, called a *Fiocco*. For *Keter* is a very large Word, ſignifying any Ornament about the Head or the Neck. And that this refers to the Horſe, not to the King, is plain in the *Hebrew*, and from the next Verſe, and *Ver.* 10, 11. where there is no more Mention of this *Keter*; but only of the Robe, and of the Horſe, to which this Royal Ornament upon his Head belonged. See *Ludovicus de Dieu*.

Ver. 9. *And let this Apparel and Horſe be delivered to the Hand of one of the King's moſt noble Princes, that they may aray the Man withal whom the King delighteth to honour, and bring him on Horſeback through the Street of the City, and proclaim before him, Thus ſhall it be done to the Man whom the King delighteth to honour.*] This Proclamation, in all likelihood, was made by ſome publick Officer.

Ver. 10. *Then the King ſaid to Haman, Make haſte, and take the Apparel and the Horſe, as thou haſt ſaid, and do even ſo to Mordecai the Jew, that ſitteth at the King's Gate.*] It is very likely theſe Words aſtoniſhed *Haman*, and made as great Commotions in him, as the *Targum* here deſcribes: But he durſt not diſpute the King's Command, nor ask him what *Mordecai* he meant (there being many of that Name) when the King had plainly told him, on whom it was he intended to beſtow this Honour. But if he made any Difficulty to obey this Command, or deſired to be excuſed, the King bid him ſay no more, but go (as the Verſe includes) *and let nothing fail of all that he had ſpoken.*

Ver. 11. *Then took Haman the Apparel, and the Horſe, and arayed Mordecai, and brought him on Horſeback through the Street of the City, and proclaimed before him, Thus ſhall it be done unto the Man whom the King delighteth to honour.*] At which Sight (ſaith the *latter Targum*) *Eſther* praiſed God in the Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, cxiii. 7, 8. *He raiſeth up the Poor out of the Duſt, and lifteth the Needy out of the Dunghil: That he may ſet him with Princes, even with the Princes of his People.* And *Mordecai* ſaid thoſe Words, *Pſal.* xxx. 11, 12. *Thou haſt turned for me my Mourning into Dancing: Thou haſt put off my Sackcloth, and girded me with Gladneſs: I will praiſe thee, O LORD God my Redeemer, that thou haſt not let mine Enemy triumph over me.*

Ver. 12. *And Mordecai came again to the King's Gate:*] Returned to his Duty, clothed not in Sackcloth, as the *Targum* repreſents him (for then he might not have come there) but in his own Raiment; ſhewing he was not puffed up with the Honour that had been done him; but foreſeeing, no doubt, the happy Event which followed.

But Haman haſted to his Houſe, mourning, and having his Head covered.] Which was a Token of Sadneſs and Dejection.

Ver. 13. *And Haman told Zereſh his Wife, and all his Friends,*] Who were waiting to hear what was become of *Mordecai*, whom they adviſed to get hanged on the Gallows.

Every thing that had befallen him.] How croſs every thing had fallen out to him that Morning.

Then ſaid his wiſe Men, and Zereſh his Wife,] They whoſe Counſel he had uſed in his Divination by Lots, now changed their Mind; and his Wife concurred in Opinion with them, that theſe were bad Omens.

If Mordecai be of the Seed of the Jews, before whom thou haſt begun to fall, thou ſhalt not prevail againſt him, but ſhalt ſurely fall before him.] They had obſerved, it is likely, how the *Jews* had been wonderfully raiſed from under great Oppreſſions, ſince the Time of *Cyrus*, and thence conclude there was a particular Providence that took Care of them. And it is poſſible they had heard ſomething of the Oracle againſt the *Amalekites*, that they ſhould periſh by the Hands of the *Jews*. And as Dr. *Jackſon* excellently notes (*Book* 1. on the Creed, *Chap.* 21.) Thoſe Plots which would have cruſhed other Nations, did often turn to their Advancement, and the Fall of their Enemies. Whence both their Riſing and Falling, and conſequently the Succeſs of ſuch as oppoſed them, was in the Apprehenſion of wiſe Men of other Nations merely fatal; altogether incorrigible by worldly Policy. Whence theſe wiſe Men of *Chaldæa* (as he calls them) upon the firſt Notice of the Wind's turning for them, read *Haman*'s Deſtiny. And accordingly *Achior*'s Speech to *Holofernes*, *Judith* v. 17, *&c.* (whether truly uttered, or feigned by the Pen-Man of the Hiſtory) was framed according to the known Experience of thoſe Times, and contained ſuch Advices as a faithful Counſellor, well acquainted with the Eſtate of the *Jews*, ſhould have given to his Lord, who did not ſo well underſtand it.

Ver. 14. *And while they were yet talking with him, came the King's Chamberlains, and haſted to bring Haman unto the Banquet that Eſther had prepared.*] He hearing their Opinion, that theſe Things boded ſome Evil to him, was very ſlow, we may well ſuppoſe, in his Motion; and could have been content, perhaps, not to have gone to the Banquet. Or he was muſing what to do for his Preſervation, which made him ſtay longer than he ſhould have done, before he waited on the King to it.

CHAP. VII.

Verſe. 1. *SO the King and Haman came to banquet with Eſther the Queen.*

Ver. 2. *And the King ſaid again to Eſther on the ſecond Day, at the Banquet of Wine,*] When his Heart was merry, and highly delighted with his Entertainment.

What is thy Petition, Queen Eſther? and it ſhall be granted thee: And what is thy Requeſt? and it ſhall be performed even to the Half of the Kingdom.] This Promiſe renewed the third Time, gave her Courage to preſent her Suit to him.

Ver. 3. *Then Eſther the Queen*] Lifting up her Eyes to Heaven, as the *Targum* enlarges it.

Anſwered and ſaid, If I have found Favour in thy Sight, O King, and if it pleaſe the King,] Thus ſhe prefaced to her Requeſt, when ſhe only beſeeched him to accept of a Banquet from her.

Let my Life be given me at my Petition, and my People at my Requeſt.] That is, the Life of her People.

Ver. 4. *For we are ſold, I and my People, to be deſtroyed, to be ſlain, and to periſh:*] For *Haman* had offered a great Sum of Money to purchaſe their Deſtruction. She uſes ſo many Words, that ſhe might expreſs the outragious Miſchief intended againſt them; which was no leſs than their Extermination.

But if we had been ſold for Bond-Men and Bond-Women, I had held my Tongue,] For that might have turned to the King's Profit, and they might, at one Time or other, have recovered their Liberty.

Although the Enemy could not countervail the King's Damage.] The King would not have gained ſo much as he would have loſt by it. But there is another Interpretation, which *Aben Ezra* mentions; who takes the *Hebrew* Word *Hatzar* not to ſignify an *Enemy*, but *Diſtreſs Miſery* and *Trouble*. Which makes this Senſe, *If they had ſold us for Slaves, I had not troubled the King with my Petition, becauſe that Miſery of ours would not have been ſo much to the King's Damage.* See *de Dieu.*

Ver. 5. *Then the King Ahaſuerus anſwered and ſaid unto Eſther the Queen, Who is he? and where is he that durſt preſume in his Heart to do ſo?*] It ſeemed incredible that any Man ſhould entertain ſuch a Thought (for the King, I ſuppoſe, had forgot the Decree *Haman* had obtained from him) to cut off a whole Nation. In the *Hebrew* the Words are, *Who is he whoſe Heart hath filled him to do ſo?* A Speech like that in the *New Teſtament*, *Acts* v. 3. *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart?* Made thee ſo daring and preſumptuous. The like, *Eccleſ.* viii. 11.

Ver. 6. *And Eſther ſaid, The Adverſary and Enemy is this wicked Haman.*] She found now that ſhe need not fear to ſpeak plainly.

Then Haman was afraid before the King and the Queen.] For he could not but ſee the Danger he was in to loſe his Greatneſs and his Life. And his Fear was the greater now he knew the Queen was one of that Nation whom he had conſpired to deſtroy.

Ver. 7. *And the King riſing from the Banquet of Wine in his Wrath, went into the Palace-Garden;*] To take Breath and cool himſelf; being in a great Commotion, by Variety of Paſſions boiling and ſtruggling in him. For as he loved the Queen, ſo he loved *Haman*; and yet was full of Indignation that he ſhould engage him in ſuch an odious Deſign.

And Haman ſtood up to make Requeſt for his Life to Eſther the Queen:] Who he thought might have ſo much Tenderneſs, as to take Compaſſion upon him, and forgive him.

For he ſaw that there was Evil determined againſt him by the King.] Which he diſcerned by the King's Countenance, and by his going out of the Room in a great Fume, and violent Paſſion; which, it is likely, broke out into threatning Words.

Ver.

Ver. 8. *Then the King returned out of the Palace-Garden, into the Place of the Banquet of Wine; and Haman was fallen upon the Bed whereon Eſther was.*] They ſate, or rather lay upon Beds, as they eat and drank: And *Haman* fell down as a Supplicant at the Feet of *Eſther*, laying his Hand upon her Knees, and beſeeching her to take Pity upon him. I have not read any where that this was the Manner among the *Perſians*; but it was among the *Greeks* and *Romans*, to embrace the Knees of thoſe whom they petitioned to be favourable to them. Inſomuch that it was a Rite in their religious Worſhip to touch the Knees of their Gods. See *Pliny*, Lib. 11. Cap. 45. And thus *Sulpitius Severus* takes it to have been done here, *Deinde regreſſus Rex, vidit Aman Reginæ genua amplexum.*

Then ſaid the King, Will he force the Queen alſo before me in the Houſe?] The King finding him in this Poſture, interpreted it, as if he were ſo impudent as before the King's Face, and in his own Palace, to offer Violence to the Queen's Chaſtity. Not that he believed this was his Intention; but in his furious Paſſion, he turned every Thing to the worſt Senſe, and made uſe of it to aggravate his Crime.

As the Word went out of the King's Mouth, they covered Haman's Face.] That he might not ſee the Face of the King any more. Or rather, as a Man condemned, this told him his Doom: For it is likely the King, when he ſaw him in that Poſture, made a Sign what they ſhould do with him, which immediately was performed. Though *Aben Ezra* ſaith, this was always done to thoſe with whom the King was angry, though they were not put to Death; to ſhew them what they deſerved, never to ſee the King more.

Ver. 9. *And Harbonah, one of the Chamberlains, ſaid before the King,*] The *latter Targum* ſaith, that this *Harbonah* was one of *Haman*'s Counſel, who adviſed him to ſet up the Gallows to hang *Mordecai*; but ſeeing this ſtrange Turn of Affairs, incenſed the King, by telling him what *Haman* deſigned againſt him who had ſaved the King's Life.

Behold alſo the Gallows fifty Cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had ſpoken good for the King, ſtandeth in the Houſe of Haman.] Upon which he intended to make *Mordecai* an Example to all thoſe that ſhould preſume to offend him.

Then the King ſaid, Hang him thereon.] But whether dead or alive is not ſaid, as *Salmaſius* obſerves; who ſhews by many Inſtances (in his Book *De Cruce*, p. 494.) that it was the Manner of the *Perſians* firſt to cut off the Heads of Malefactors, and then to hang them on a *Gibbet*. *Joſephus* indeed ſaith, that he commanded *Haman* ἐκ ξυλου κρεμαθῆναι ἀποθανεῖν, to be put to Death hanging on a Croſs: But Crucifying was not a *Perſian* Puniſhment; nor did the *Romans* let the Bodies of Malefactors die on the Croſs of themſelves; but they extinguiſhed them ſome other Way.

Ver. 10. *So they hanged Haman on the Gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the King's Wrath pacified.*] The *latter Targum* here adds a great deal of frivolous Stuff, how the King ſent for *Mordecai*, and charged him to ſee the Execution done upon *Haman*; and how he begged of *Mordecai* to ſpare his Life, at leaſt not hang him, who had been ſo great, like a Varlet, *&c.* but he concludes very well, that now was verified the Obſervation of *Solomon*, *Prov.* xi. 8. *The Righteous is delivered out of Trouble, and the Wicked cometh in his ſtead.*

I cannot think fit to end this Chapter without taking Notice of a Reflection, which a great Man of our own Church made long ago upon it: That in this wonderful Deliverance of the *Jewiſh* Nation, there was no extraordinary Manifeſtation of God's Power, no particular Cauſe or Agent, that was in its working advanced above the ordinary Pitch of Nature; and yet the Contrivance, or Suiting of thoſe ordinary Agents appointed by God, is more admirable than if the ſame End had been effected by Means truly miraculous. That a King ſhould not ſleep is not unuſual, nor that he ſhould ſolace his waking Thoughts by hearing the Annals of his own Kingdom, or the Journals of his own Reign read to him, *&c.* But that he ſhould lie awake at that Time eſpecially, when *Haman* was watching to deſtroy the *Jews*; and that in the Chronicles of the Kingdom, they ſhould light on that Place where *Mordecai*'s unrewarded Services were recorded; and that he ſhould reſolve forthwith to do him Honour; and *Haman* come in at that very nick of Time when the King was ſo diſpoſed; and ſhould ignorantly determine what Honour ſhould be done him, and be made the Inſtrument of it: This was from the Keeper of *Iſrael*, who neither ſlumbers nor ſleeps, and was truly marvellous in his People's Sight, as Dr. *Jackſon* ſpeaks in his ſecond Sermon upon 2 *Chron.* vi. 39, 40. where he obſerves, that Miracles are in their Nature more apt to affect the Senſe; but ſuch ſecret Contrivances of God's Wiſdom and Providence do more affect the Underſtanding. The one works Aſtoniſhment, the other Admiration. For which Reaſon Miracles were more frequent in the Infancy of our Religion, to enforce Unbelievers to give ear to the Words of Life, and to take God's Promiſes (which otherwiſe they might have ſlighted) into ſerious Conſideration: But now the Ways of God's Wiſdom, or ſecret Diſpoſitions of his Providence, are more apt to cheriſh the Seed of Life, ſown in the Hearts of Believers. Miracles by continual Frequency would ceaſe to be Miracles, and not be wondered at; whereas the unſearchable Ways of God's Wiſdom in contriving extraordinary Succeſſes by Means ordinarily, will inceſſantly breed in us Matter of Admiration. And his wiſe Contrivances are ſtill in one kind or other moſt viſible; but we want Eyes or Hearts to obſerve or contemplate them.

CHAP. VIII.

Verſe. 1. *ON that Day did the King Ahaſuerus give the Houſe of Haman the Jews Enemy, unto Eſther the Queen:*] That is, he beſtowed on her the whole Eſtate belonging to

his Family (for this is meant by *his Houſe*) his Lands, his Goods, his Servants, his Cattle, all the Money he had treaſured up. For by his Crime all was forfeited to the King; who could not more fitly diſpoſe of it, than to her who would have been the greateſt Sufferer by him.

And Mordecai came before the King;] By *Eſther*'s Interceſſion.

For Eſther had told what he was unto her.] Which was not known at Court till now; though two Eunuchs, who were her Confidents, knew ſomething of it, ii. 21. and he perhaps who carried Meſſages between them, iv. 5, 13.

Ver. 2. *And the King took off his Ring which he had taken from Haman,*] Which he had formerly given him, iii. 10. but now had reſumed.

And gave it unto Mordecai.] In Token that he put the ſame Confidence in him, to be the Keeper of his Signet.

And Eſther ſet Mordecai over the Houſe of Haman.] Not over his Family, for that was deſtroyed; but over his Lands and Goods which the King had given to *Eſther*: Of which ſhe made *Mordecai* her Steward, that he might manage that vaſt Eſtate, which *Haman* no doubt had heaped up, for her Advantage.

Ver. 3. *And Eſther ſpake yet again before the King, and fell down at his Feet and beſought him with Tears,*] The Danger was not yet over, and therefore ſhe renews her Petition in the moſt humble and moſt moving Manner; for Tears flowing from ſo great a Perſon, have a great Power to move Compaſſion. But ſhe had not yet delivered her Petition, theſe Words only expreſſing what ſhe intended and was prepared to do.

To put away the Miſchief of Haman the Agagite, and his Device that he had deviſed againſt the Jews.] By repealing that bloody Decree, which he had obtained from the King, iii. 13.

Ver. 4. *Then the King held out the Golden Sceptre toward Eſther.*] Who it ſeems had adventured to preſs into the King's Preſence once more, without being called: Which he did not take ill, but graciouſly invited her to come to him by this Token.

So Eſther aroſe and ſtood before the King,] She roſe from her Knees, and ſtood before him to make her Requeſt.

Ver. 5. *And ſaid, If it pleaſe the King, and I have found Favour in his Sight, and the Thing ſeem right before the King, and I be pleaſing in his Eyes;*] She uſes ſuch Variety of Expreſſions for the ſame Thing, to inſinuate her ſelf into the King's Favour, by an entire Submiſſion to his Pleaſure. For ſhe knew what an unuſual Thing it was that ſhe was about to deſire.

Let it be written to reverſe the Letters deviſed by Haman the Son of Hammedatha the Agagite, which he wrote to deſtroy the Jews which are in all the King's Provinces:] This Edict which *Haman* procured, ſome think was not made in ſuch a Manner as to become immutable, like that, i. 19. but might be revoked by another Edict more peremptory. But this I think is a Miſtake, for it was ſealed with the King's Ring, which he himſelf ſaith, *Ver.* 8. *no Man may reverſe.*

Ver. 6. *For how can I endure to ſee the Evil that ſhall come unto my People? or how can I endure to ſee the Deſtruction of my Kindred?*] If ſhe herſelf ſhould be ſpared, ſhe repreſents to him that it would break her Heart to ſee all her Kindred, nay, her whole Nation deſtroyed.

Ver. 7. *Then the King Ahaſuerus ſaid unto Eſther the Queen, and to Mordecai the Jew,*] Who, I ſuppoſe, was ſent for to hear the King's Anſwer to her Petition.

Behold, I have given Eſther the Houſe of Haman, and him they have hanged upon the Gallows, becauſe he laid his Hand upon the Jews.] That is, intended to deſtroy them all. By what the King had done to ſhew his Reſentment againſt *Haman*, they might eaſily believe he would deny them nothing that was neceſſary for their Preſervation.

Ver. 8. *Write ye alſo for the Jews,*] As *Haman* had done againſt them.

As it liketh you,] In as full Words as you can deſire for your Safety.

In the King's Name, and ſeal it with the King's Ring:] To give it the ſame Authority which the former Writing had.

For the Writing which is written in the King's Name, and ſealed with the King's Ring, may no Man reverſe.] This ſeems to me to ſignify, that the King could not do what *Eſther* deſired, *Ver.* 5. for it was contrary to the Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians* to reverſe any Decree. But he promiſes to do what he was able, to make that Decree ineffectual, by giving them Power to defend themſelves againſt all that ſhould aſſault them. And for that End he bid them draw up a Letter, in Words as ſtrong as they could deviſe, which would hinder the former Decree from being executed, though he could not annul it. And accordingly we find by what follows, that there is not a Word ſaid of revoking *Haman*'s Decree; but only that they ſhould ſtand for their Lives and deſtroy all, little and great, that ſhould attempt to execute the Decree ſent by *Haman*. Thus he choſe to fill his Realm with Blood, rather than revoke a raſh Decree; which was agreeable enough to the Temper of *Ochus*, who is repreſented by *Valerius Maximus* as very cruel. So *Jacobus Capellus* obſerves, *ad A. M.* 3650. where he ſaith he doth not remember any Heathen Writer who mentions ſuch an abſurd Law as this of the *Medes* and *Perſians*; though *Ælian* mentions one, not much leſs unreaſonable.

Ver. 9. *Then were the King's Scribes called at that Time*] As they had been before by *Haman* to write his Decree, iii. 12. The Author of the *Apocryphal* Additions to this Book, hath forged a Copy of this Letter; wherein the King tells his Subjects, that it was not Levity which made him change his Mind, and contradict the former Decree; but he found he had been deceived by the falſe Suggeſtions of thoſe whom he highly honoured; as many other great Kings had been before him. Which Letter diſcovers the Ignorance of him that wrote it, in that he calls *Haman* a *Macedonian*, who intended to dethrone him and take away his Life.

In the third Month (that is in the Month Sivan) on the three and twentieth Day thereof,] A little more than two Months, after the former Decree.

And it was written (according to all that Mordecai commanded) unto the Jews,] That they might prepare themſelves for their Defence, the beſt they could; and let all Men know what Power the King had given them.

And to the Lieutenants, and the Deputies and Rulers of the Provinces] Who were commanded (as they were in *Haman*'s Decree, iii. 12.) to be aſſiſtant to them, and furniſh them with Means to defend themſelves.

Which are from India unto Ethiopia, an hundred twenty and ſeven Provinces, unto every Province according to the Writing thereof, and unto every People after their Language, and to the Jews according to their Writing, and according to their Language.] This doth not prove that there were ſo many diſtinct Languages ſpoken in his Dominions, and many different Ways of Writing; but, as *Bochartus* obſerves, whatſoever any People ſpake, or what Character ſoever they uſed (which might be the very ſame in ſome Provinces) there were Letters wrote to them in that Language, and in that Character, *Lib.* 1. *Phaleg, Cap.* 16.

Ver. 10. *And he wrote in the King Ahaſuerus his Name, and ſealed it with the King's Ring, and ſent Letters by Poſts on Horſeback, and Riders on Mules, Camels, and young Dromedaries:*] It is very difficult to render this Verſe Word by Word, though the Senſe be very plain. For the firſt Words *Bejad haratzim* ſeem to me to ſignify *by the Hand of Couriers*, as we now ſpeak; for *Ratzim* ſignifies *Runners* or *Racers*. And the next *Baſuſim*, undoubtedly ſignifies, on *Horſes:* The *former Targum* ſaith, of Horſes whoſe Spleen were cut out, and their Hoofs pared; which *Bochartus* ſhews was ſometimes practiſed, in his *Hierozoicon*, *P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 11. Then here follows *Rocheve harecheſ*, Riders on a ſwift Beaſt, called *Reches*. But what Animal that was is very uncertain. Many ſay a *Dromedary*; with which *Druſius* is unſatisfied, but leaves it in Doubt, *Miſcellan. Cent.* 2. *Cap.* 73. *Bochartus* thinks it is a Word added to explain what went before, ſignifying that he ſent the Poſts upon the ſwifteſt Horſes; for *Reches* was a kind of Horſe. See 1 *Kings* iv. 28. Our Tranſlation takes it for *Mules*, which *Ælian* ſaith, were ἄγαν δρομάιους, exceeding ſwift Runners, and therefore uſed in the *Olympick* Races, as *Bochartus* obſerves, *Hieroz. P.* 1. *Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 21. Then the next Word, *Ahaſhteranim* (which we tranſlate *Camels*) he takes to be a *Perſian* Word, for there is a Word at this Day in that Language of the ſame Sound and Signification, *viz. Aſthera*. See his *Phaleg*, *Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 15. Then follows *Bene haramachim*, which we tranſlate *young Dromedaries*; and the *latter Targum*, the *Foals of Mares*. And ſo *Bochartus* ſhews that *Ramec* doth ſignify a *Mare*; from whence he thinks the Word *Marc* among the ancient *Gauls* was derived, which *Pauſanias* tells us ſignified a *Horſe:* For there was ſuch a Tranſpoſition of Letters as is in the Word *forma*, which comes from μορφὴ. In his *Canaan, Lib.* 1. *Cap.* 42. There is extant a Work of a very learned young Man of our own (now with God) who, after that he had obſerved that neither the latter nor the ancient *Jews*, nor the *Gemariſts* themſelves knew what to make of this Word, hath made a long Diſcourſe about it. See *Guil. Guiſius* in his *Anontations* upon that Title in the *Miſchnah*, called *Kelaim*.

The Senſe of the whole is, that he ſent Men on Horſeback (naked, as the firſt *Targum* will have it, that they might be lighter) and upon other Creatures as ſwift as Horſes, and upon Mules both old and young, according as the Places were nearer or farther off. So he ordered the Letters to be ſent with great Speed by the Poſt, which carried them from Stage to Stage, till they came to the Place whither they were directed.

Ver. 11. *Wherein the King granted the Jews, which were in every City, to gather themſelves together,*] Notwithſtanding that former Decree ſent by *Haman*.

And to ſtand for their Life, to deſtroy, to ſlay, and to cauſe to periſh all the Power of the People, and Province, that would aſſault them, both little ones, and Women, and to take the Spoil of them for a Prey:] It muſt be preſumed that ſome would obey the former Order, out of their Hatred to the *Jews*; therefore this gives them Authority, if any Attempt was made upon them, either in great Bodies or ſmall Parties, not only to defend themſelves and repel them, but to make as great a Slaughter of them as they were able (for he uſes many Words to expreſs the Liberty he gave them to deſtroy their Enemies) not ſparing Children and Women; and to poſſeſs themſelves of their Goods, as Men uſed to do in War, and as *Haman* had procured them Licenſe to take the Goods of the *Jews*, iii. 13.

Ver. 12. *Upon one Day, in all the Provinces of King Ahaſuerus, namely, upon the thirteenth Day of the twelfth Month, which is the Month Adar.*] Which Day was choſen and appointed by *Haman* for their Deſtruction.

Ver. 13. *The Copy of the Writing for a Commandment to be given in every Province*] To warrant them to do what was therein commanded.

Was publiſhed unto all People, and that the Jews ſhould be ready againſt that Day, to avenge themſelves on their Enemies.] Furniſh themſelves with Arms, and all Things neceſſary for their Defence, and to annoy their Enemies on that Day. The *latter Targum* makes bold to inſert a Copy of this Letter, which imports, that the King was deceived by *Haman*, who perſuaded him to write the former Letter; but now he had hanged him, becauſe he found the *Jews* to be an innocent People, worthy of his Protection: And eſpecially commended *Eſther* and *Mordecai*, whom he had taken into his Favour. And therefore ſent this new Signification of his Will and Pleaſure to them in the Behalf of the *Jews*. There are many Expreſſions in it, which, no doubt, he never uſed; but the Senſe of it is good.

Ver.

Ver. 14. *So the Poſts which rode upon Mules and Camels, went out,*] Here are two of the ſame Words uſed again, *Reches* and *Haaſhteranim*; the latter of which is tranſlated *Camels*, as it was before; which, though they be not a ſwift Creature, yet are very fit to travel through dry Countries better than Horſes, being very patient of Thirſt and Labour.

Being haſtened and preſſed on by the King's Commandment;] Who gave them a ſtrict Charge to make all the Speed poſſible to diſperſe this new Order.

And the Decree was given at Shuſhan the Palace.] As that ſent by *Haman* was, iii. 15. and, as I there obſerved, ſigned, it is probable, by the King's Counſellors.

Ver. 15. *And Mordecai went out from the Preſence of the King, in royal Apparel of blue and white,*] In ſuch Robes as the Princes of *Perſia* were wont to wear.

And with a great Crown of Gold,] Not like that of the Kings; but ſuch a Coronet as was uſed by the greateſt Peers of the Realm.

And with a Garment of fine Linen, and Purple;] This was his inner Garment, as the former was the outward. The *former Targum* hath made an extravagant Deſcription of the Riches of the Habit, wherein *Mordecai* appeared; his Tunick coſting four hundred and twenty Talents of Gold; and many ſuch Things which he ſaith about his Sword, and the Chain of Gold about his Neck, which it would be a Vanity to mention. But one Thing he ſaith, which is pious, if it were truly related, That *Eſther* looking out of her Window, ſaw him walk in this State. And he ſpying her, ſaid thoſe Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, cxxiv. 6. *Bleſſed be the LORD, who hath not given me a Prey unto their Teeth.* To which ſhe replied in the Words of *Pſalm* cxxii. 7. *Our Help ſtandeth in the LORD, who hath made Heaven and Earth.*

And the City of Shuſhan rejoiced and was glad:] At his Advancement, and at the Fall of *Haman*, who deſigned the Ruin of ſuch an excellent Perſon.

Ver. 16. *The Jews had Light and Gladneſs, and Joy,*] All theſe Words ſignify the ſame Thing, expreſſing the higheſt Joy and Satisfaction.

And Honour.] They were much reſpected by the People.

Ver. 17. *And in every Province, and in every City, whitherſoever the King's Commandment and his Decree came,*] His Commandment was, that the Decree ſhould be publiſhed with all Speed; and both of them were known together; what Decree the King had made, and how he preſſed the Delivery of it, *ver.* 14.

The Jews had Joy and Gladneſs, a Feaſt and a good Day:] Not only in *Shuſhan*, but every where elſe, they entertained one another, and their Neighbours with good Cheer, being full of Joy at this unexpected Alteration of their Affairs. For they doubted not this new Decree of the King's would be obſerved by his People; and they were reſolved to defend themſelves againſt thoſe that did not obſerve it, and deſtroy them.

And many of the People of the Land became Jews;] Many of the *Perſians* became Proſelytes to the *Jewiſh* Religion, as both the *Targums* explain it; but that they were circumciſed is not probable. Such Perſons there were in all Times, eſpecially in the Days of *David* and *Solomon*, when the Affairs of the *Jews* were very proſperous. But the *Jews* ſay they did not admit them preſently, till the Court of Judgment approved them as ſincere Converts. See *Selden De Jure Nat. & Gent. Lib.* 2. *Cap.* 2. & 4. where he obſerves, that ſuch Perſons ever after went by the Name of *Jews* (as *Dio* himſelf takes notice) and were not reckoned *Gentiles* if they fell to Idolatry, but called Apoſtates. See *p.* 149, 150, *&c.* 160.

For the Fear of the Jews fell upon them.] The Liberty granted rhem by the King's Edict, and the Power of the Queen and *Mordecai*, made the *Perſians* ſtand in awe of them and of their God, who had ſo marvellouſly diſpoſed Things in their Favour. See the next Chapter, *ver.* 2, 3.

But this hath made ſome admire that ſuch a marvellous and memorable Thing ſhould not be related, nor ſo much as touched by any exotick Writer whatſoever. Of which *Jacobus Capellus* hath given a plain Reaſon, that the Hiſtory of *Ochus* is deſcribed by no Writer, but only *Diodorus Siculus*; and he meddles with the Affais of *Perſia* no further than as they cohere with the Affairs of *Greece*.

CHAP. IX.

Verſe 1. *NOW in the twelfth Month (that is the Month Adar) on the thirteenth Day of the ſame, when the King's Commandment and his Decree drew near to be put in execution, in the Day that the Enemies of the Jews hoped to have Power over them*] As they often boaſted (it is likely) and threatned, ſince the Decree, which *Haman* ſent, came to them; for that had gotten ſtart of the other and put the *Jews* into great Terror and Confuſion, and their Enemies into high Expectation of their Ruin.

(Though it was turned to the contrary, that the Jews had Rule over them that hated them)] As it appeared preſently when the Time was come for the executing both the Decrees.

Ver 2. *The Jews gathered themſelves together in their Cities throughout all the Provinces of the King Ahaſuerus, to lay Hand on ſuch as ſought their Hurt*;] As ſome did, being poſſeſſed with Hatred to them, and being combined, it is likely, upon the Receipt of *Haman*'s Decree, to endeavour to deſtroy them. It cannot be imagined, that when *Haman* periſhed, all his Friends and Potentates periſhed with him; but he had a great Party every where, ſome of which were ſo furiouſly enraged at his Fall, that they could not contain themſelves from ſhewing their Indignation at thoſe who were the Occaſion of it.

And

And no Man could withſtand them:] But they fled before them.

For the Fear of them fell upon all People.] When they heard that *Haman* had loſt all his Authority and his Life, and that his Family was deſtroyed, and how *Mordecai* was in great Power (as it here follows) and the Queen herſelf was a *Jew*, no doubt it daunted all thoſe who were diſpoſed to execute the firſt Decree. And though ſome were ſo deſperately envenomed againſt the *Jews*, that they did riſe up to aſſault them, yet they had not ſuch Courage as the *Jews* had to oppoſe them.

Ver. 3. *And all the Rulers of the Provinces, and the Lieutenants, and the Deputies, and Officers of the King, helped the Jews:*] Which was a great Advantage to them, and diſheartened their Enemies, who hoped for their Aſſiſtance.

Becauſe the Fear of Mordecai fell upon them.] They were Men of the Times (as we ſpeak) and would have been as ready to execute *Haman*'s Decree, if he had continued in Power, as to aid the *Jews* in this: Which it was their Intereſt to do, being afraid to be turned out of their Places by *Mordecai*, who was the chief Miniſter, if they did otherwiſe.

Ver. 4. *For Mordecai was great in the King's Houſe,*] Having the Management of all the Queen's Affairs in the Court, where ſhe was beloved of the King; who alſo (it appears by the foregoing Chapter, *Ver.* 15.) gave him the higheſt Authority in the Kingdom.

And his Fame went out throughout all the Provinces:] It is ſoon known every where, who is the Favourite at Court, which makes all Addreſſes to be paid to him.

For this Man Mordecai waxed greater and greater.] In the Eſteem of the People, who not only ſtood in Awe of his Power, but highly applauded his Wiſdom and Juſtice in the Management of all Affairs: For one cannot but think he was very eminent in thoſe noble Qualities.

Ver. 5. *Thus the Jews ſmote all their Enemies with the Stroke of the Sword, and Slaughter, and Deſtruction,*] That is, they that had no Swords ſlew them with Clubs and Staves, and ſuch like Weapons as they could procure; as the *former Targum* underſtands it.

And did what they would unto thoſe that hated them.] Had them perfectly at their Mercy.

Ver. 6. *And in Shuſhan the Palace*] That is, in the City where the King's Palace was.

The Jews ſlew and deſtroyed five hundred Men.] It is commonly thought that theſe and the reſt mentioned, *Ver.* 15, 16, were ſuch as they knew were confederate with *Haman*, and perhaps *Amalekites* (as the *latter Targum* ſaith) for *Mordecai*, they think it is likely, required them to kill none but thoſe who declared themſelves forward to execute *Haman*'s Decree. But I ſee no Ground for this: If Men were quiet, and did not riſe up againſt them, they had no Authority to hurt them, much leſs to kill them. Therefore theſe five hundred, and the reſt killed in other Places, were Men who could not conceal their wicked Inclinations, but openly aſſaulted them; and ſuch *Ahaſuerus* gave them Power to deſtroy, viii. 11. And Dr. *Alix* thinks the Conjecture of the *Targum* is right, that theſe five hundred Men were *Amalekites*, who followed the Fortune of *Haman*: And by their Slaughter were accompliſhed the Prophecies againſt *Amalek*. Some others, it is likely, joined with them; but they were the moſt enraged againſt the *Jews*, and the readieſt to attempt their Deſtruction.

Ver. 7. *And Parſhandatha, and Dalphon, and Aſpatha,*

Ver. 8. *And Poratha, and Adalia, and Aridatha,*

Ver. 9. *And Parmaſhta, and Ariſai, and Aridai, and Vajezatha,*] It is too curious an Obſervation of ſome of the *Jews*, that the Letter *Vau* before the laſt of theſe Names is larger than ordinary, to ſhew, that though this was the youngeſt Son of *Haman*, yet he was the moſt violent againſt the *Jews* of all the reſt. Or, as others will have it (for ſuch Conceits are endleſs) this being the Numeral Letter for the Number Six, it ſignifies this was the ſixth Son of *Haman*, but placed laſt, out of Contempt, as the vileſt of them all.

Ver. 10. *The ten Sons of Haman the Son of Hammedatha, the Enemy of the Jews, ſlew they;*] It is likely they were in the Head of the reſt, who were ſo bold as to attempt the Deſtruction of the *Jews* in this City; being mad with Rage, and reſolved to revenge their Father's Death; and rather periſh than not execute his Deſign as far as they were able.

But on the Spoil laid they not their Hand.] The King had granted them Leave to make it, vii. 11. but they would not meddle with it, that they might not ſeem to deſire any thing but their own Safety, and that the King might have the greater Kindneſs for them, into whoſe Exchequer theſe Goods were to come, if he pleaſed.

Ver. 11. *On that Day the Number of thoſe that were ſlain in Shuſhan the Palace, was brought before the King.*] Who required an Account, that he might know how People ſtood affected towards the *Jews*.

Ver. 12. *And the King ſaid unto Eſther the Queen, The Jews have ſlain and deſtroyed five hundred Men in Shuſhan the Palace, and the ten Sons of Haman; what have they done in the reſt of the King's Provinces?*] That was not yet known, but he thought in all likelihood they muſt have killed a great many more.

Now what is thy Petition? and it ſhall be granted thee: Or what is thy Requeſt further? and it ſhall be done.] If this did not ſatisfy her, he asks her what ſhe had to deſire further, and he would not deny her.

Ver. 13. *Then ſaid Eſther, If it pleaſe the King, let it be granted to the Jews which are in Shuſhan, to do to Morrow alſo according unto this Day's Decree,*] That is, kill as many of their Enemies as they could find; for ſome that appeared againſt them, perhaps eſcaped their Hands, whom they might meet withal the next Day.

And let Haman's ten Sons be hanged upon the Gallows.] By their Father, I ſuppoſe.

Ver.

Ver. 14. *And the King commanded it ſo to be done; and the Decree was given at Shuſhan,*] That both her Petition and Requeſt ſhould be granted. This was a new Decree, authorizing them to do on the fourteenth Day as they had on the thirteenth.

And they hanged Haman's ten Sons.] For their greater Infamy, that they might be expoſed to publick Reproach, and their Bodies remain unburied, being left to rot upon the Gallows, or to be devoured by Crows and Vultures, and ſuch like ravenous Creatures. For, though the *Jews* ſuffered none to hang on a Tree (ſo they called a Gallows) longer than till the Evening of the Day, whereon they were hanged; yet other Nations let them hang till they were there conſumed; as appears from the Story of the *Gibeonites*, 2 *Sam.* xxi. 9, 10. and from the vulgar Saying among the *Romans*, *Paſcere in Cruce Corvos*, to feed Ravens on a Gibbet.

Ver. 15. *For the Jews that were in Shuſhan, gathered themſelves together on the fourteenth Day alſo of the Month Adar, and ſlew three hundred Men at Shuſhan; but on the Prey they laid not their Hand.*] The *former Targum* ſaith ſtill, theſe three hundred Men were of the Family of *Amalek*. But whoſoever they were, I take them to have been ſuch as the Day before roſe up againſt them, but in the Conflict eſcaped by Flight, and now were found out and killed.

Ver. 16. *But the other Jews that were in the King's Provinces, gathered themſelves together, and ſtood for their Lives,*] This they did upon the thirteenth Day, when they defended themſelves from thoſe that roſe up againſt them to deſtroy them.

And had Reſt from their Enemies,] Who could not ſtand before them; but ceaſed to moleſt them.

And ſlew of their Foes ſeventy and five thouſand;] There is ſome Reaſon to think theſe were *Amalekites*, as the *former Targum* ſaith: For, it is likely, many of that Nation might be diſperſed throughout the King's Provinces as well as the *Jews*; and being the old Enemies of the *Jews*, might be very forward to help to deſtroy them. But whoſoever they were, the *Jews* prevailed againſt them, and ſlew ſo many thouſands, that thereby we may judge what a great Number of *Jews* ſtill remained in other Countries, and did not return to their own.

But they laid not their Hands on the Prey.] It is likely *Mordecai*, in his Letters, had charged them not to make Uſe of the Liberty the King had given them to take the Spoil (viii. 11.) becauſe they univerſally avoided it.

Ver. 17. *On the thirteenth Day of the Month Adar,*] This is to be referred to the foregoing Words; the Slaughter was made in the Provinces on the thirteenth Day of this Month, when they ſhould have been deſtroyed themſelves.

And on the fourteenth Day of the ſame, reſted they, and made it a Day of Feaſting and Gladneſs.] And ſo the *Jews* in the Provinces made the next Day a Feſtival of Rejoicing for their great Deliverance. For there never was any Day of Joy and Gladneſs for any Bleſſing, without Feaſting and liberal Entertainment of each other, and of the Poor.

Ver. 18. *But the Jews that were at Shuſhan, aſſembled together on the thirteenth Day thereof, and on the fourteenth thereof; and on the fifteenth Day of the ſame they reſted, and made it a Day of Feaſting and Gladneſs.*] The *Jews* indeed in the City of *Shuſhan* made the fifteenth Day a Feſtival, becauſe they had Liberty to avenge themſelves of their Enemies, not only on the thirteenth, but on the fourteenth, which were both Days of Slaughter; and therefore they reſted not till the fifteenth Day.

Ver. 19. *Therefore the Jews of the Villages, that dwelt in the unwalled Towns, made the fourteenth Day of the Month Adar, a Day of Gladneſs and Feaſting, and a good Day, and of ſending Portions one to another.*] This Verſe gives an Account of the Reaſon of the different Obſervation of the Feſtival in *Shuſhan*, and in the Country Towns throughout the King's Provinces. There they had Leave only on one Day to ſlay their Enemies, which was the thirteenth of *Adar*; therefore the fourteenth was a Day of Gladneſs to them: Whereas in *Shuſhan* the fifteenth was the Day of Gladneſs, the fourteenth being by the King's Leave made like the thirteenth, another Day of Slaughter. But this was at the firſt done thus, only of their own free Accord; afterwards the Law eſtabliſhed it otherwiſe.

A Day of Gladneſs and Feaſting, and a good Day.] A Day of Thankſgiving and Praiſe to God, as well as of Feaſting one with another, and of ſending Portions to their Neighbours out of their good Cheer, that the meaner Sort might feaſt and rejoice alſo. And as to add to their Joy, they ſent them Meat from their Tables; ſo the *Jews* have made a Conſtitution, that they ſhould make a Collection of Money to ſend to the Poor at this Time of the Year, that they may provide themſelves Things neceſſary to make a Feaſt. Which Money it is unlawful (as *Guilielmus Schickardus* obſerves) to apply to any other Uſe, but only the making themſelves merry at this Time. See *Nehem.* viii. 10.

Ver. 20. *And Mordecai wrote theſe Things, and ſent Letters unto all the Jews that were in all the Provinces of the King Ahaſuerus, both nigh and far,*] That which they had done at the firſt voluntarily, he thought good to turn into a Law; and ſent it into the whole Realm.

Ver. 21. *To ſtabliſh this among them, that they ſhould keep the fourteenth Day of the Month Adar, and the fifteenth Day of the ſame yearly:*] But to make theſe more ſolemn Times, they now keep a Faſt before the Feaſt (after the Example of *Eſther*) on the thirteenth Day of the Month *Adar*.

Ver. 22. *As the Days wherein the Jews reſted from their Enemies, and the Month which was turned unto them from Sorrow to Joy, and from Mourning into a good Day: That they ſhould make them Days of Feaſting and Joy, and of ſending Portions one to another, and Gifts to the Poor.*]

For in the Provinces they had done their Work before the fourteenth Day, and then reſted and rejoiced; but in *Shuſhan* not before the fifteenth, and then they rejoiced there.

Ver. 23. *And the Jews undertook to do as they had begun, and as Mordecai had written unto them.*] That is, to keep theſe Days as Feſtivals every where, throughout all Generations.

Ver. 24. *Becauſe Haman the Son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Enemy of all the Jews, had deviſed againſt the Jews to deſtroy them, and had caſt Pur (that is, the Lot) to conſume them, and to deſtroy them:*

Ver. 25. *But when Eſther came before the King, he commanded by Letters, that his wicked Device which he deviſed againſt the Jews, ſhould return upon his own Head, and that he and his Sons ſhould be hanged on the Gallows.*] Theſe two Verſes give an Account why this Feſtival was ordained, which they took Care ſhould be underſtood by all Poſterity, who obſerve it at this Day, and tell us it conſiſts in theſe *three* Things; in *Reading*, in *Reſt* from Labour, and in *Feaſting*. The Reading begins in the Evening, as ſoon as the Stars appear, when the Hiſtory of *Haman* is read from the Beginning to the End, out of a *Hebrew* Manuſcript written on Parchment; for it is not lawful to read it out of a printed Bible, no more than they do the Law itſelf, as *Shickard* obſerves out of their Writers, who ſay, three Prayers go before this Reading: In the *Firſt* of which, they praiſe God for counting them worthy to attend this divine Service. In the *Second*, they thank him for the miraculous Preſervation of their Anceſtors; and in the *Third*, that they have lived to obſerve another Feſtival in Memory of it. After this they go to Supper upon Spoon-Meats, and next Morning to the Synagogue, where the Hiſtory is read over again with the ſame Ceremonies. After which they have done with Religion and Piety, and ſpend the two Days in Idleneſs, and Eating and Drinking. *Surenhuſius* hath given a full Account of this Reading, and the Benedictions, in his *Notes* upon the *Megillah*, p. 387. And for their *Reſt* and *Feaſting*, they ſay in their Books, that the firſt is kept ſo ſacredly, that they will not ſo much as ſet, or ſow any Thing in their Garden on theſe Days; but play at Cheſs, and ſuch like Games, or ſpend the Time in Muſick and Dancing, till it be Time to feaſt; and then they indulge themſelves ſo far, that they think it not unlawful to drink ſo much, as not to be able to diſtinguiſh between the Bleſſing of *Mordecai* and the Curſe of *Haman*, as they themſelves ſpeak. Inſomuch that our learned Primate *Uſher* calls this Feaſt, *The Bacchanals of the Jews.*

Ver. 26. *Wherefore they called theſe Days Purim, after the Name of Pur:*] A *Perſian* Word, ſignifying a Lot.

Therefore for all the Words of this Letter, and of that which they had ſeen concerning this Matter, and which had come unto them,] This ſeems to refer to the foregoing Words; wherefore they called theſe Days *Purim*, becauſe of what was contained in the Letters of *Mordecai*; and becauſe of what they had ſeen when theſe things fell out, and what they heard reported of them in the Places where they could not ſee them; but we take them to be the Reaſon of what follows, *viz.* of the keeping theſe Days.

Ver. 27. *The Jews ordained, and took upon them, and upon their Seed, and upon all ſuch as joined themſelves unto them,*] All that ſhould become Proſelytes to their Religion.

So as it ſhould not fail that they would keep theſe two Days according to their Writing, and according to their appointed Time every Year:] According as *Mordecai* had written, ſo they engaged without fail to keep theſe two Days, in the Time appointed; *viz.* on the fourteenth Day they kept the Feſtival in the Country all over the King's Dominions, and on the fifteenth they kept it in *Shuſhan*. The former of theſe the *Jews* now call in their Calendar the *leſſer Feaſt of Purim*, and the latter *the greater Feaſt*.

Ver. 28. *And that theſe Days ſhould be remembred, and kept throughout every Generation, every Family, every Province, and every City;*] Accordingly at this Day they keep this Feſtival, as they did in more ancient Times; for in the ſecond Book of *Maccabees* xv. 37. we find, that *Judas* having obtained a great Victory over *Nicanor*, they ordained it ſhould be commemorated upon the thirteenth of *Adar*, *the Day before the Feaſt of Mordecai*, which was this of *Purim*. This ſhews, that in thoſe Days they kept this Deliverance in Memory by celebrating this Feaſt, and that the thirteenth of *Adar* was not then a Faſt.

And that theſe Days of Purim ſhould not fail from among the Jews, nor the Memorial of them periſh from their Seed.] This is but a Repetition of what was ſaid before, to make them more ſeriouſly attend to their Obligation, which was laid upon them all throughout all Generations. Accordingly now, as they tell us in their Books, the little Children, the Women, they that are baſe born, and Servants, *&c.* are bound to keep this Feaſt.

Ver. 29. *Then Eſther the Queen, the Daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all Authority, to confirm this ſecond Letter of Purim.*] Theſe Days were firſt recommended to their Obſervation by the Authority of *Mordecai*, v. 20. But either they were neglected, or ſometime intermitted, or were thought not to be ſufficiently eſtabliſhed; therefore the firſt Order was confirmed and ratified by a ſecond, which was backed by the Authority of the Queen. And the Opinion of *Maimonides* is not improbable, that this was alſo an Ordinance of the Prophets, *viz. Haggai*, *Zachariah*, and others that lived in the Days of *Eſther*. But this cannot be true, for they were dead long before this Time.

Ver. 30. *And he ſent the Letters unto all the Jews, to the hundred twenty and ſeven Provinces of the Kingdom of Ahaſuerus,*] And conſequently as far as *Jeruſalem*; for *Syria* and *Judæa* were among his Provinces, and the *Jews* ſhould

have been killed there, as well as in the reſt of his Dominions; and were bound to thank God for their Preſervation throughout all Ages, for otherwiſe they had not been any longer a People.

With Words of Peace and Truth:] Full of ſincere Love and affectionate Deſires of their Happineſs. *Verbis amicis & ſinceris.* Or, as others will have it, wiſhing their Proſperity, and exhorting them to live in Love and Peace, and to be faithful in their Religion; and particularly in keeping their Promiſe of obſerving theſe Days. But after all, *Conradus Pellicanus* ſeems to me to have gueſſed the beſt at the Meaning of theſe Words, *Peace* and *Truth*; which he thinks were the Salutation on the Top of the Letter.

Ver. 31. *To confirm theſe Days of Purim in their Times appointed, according as Mordecai the Jew, and Eſther the Queen had enjoined them, and as they had decreed for themſelves and for their Seed, the Matters of the Faſtings and their Cry.*] Some learned Men underſtand theſe Words as if they meant, that theſe Days of *Purim* were therefore appointed, that they might be a Memorial of that Deliverance, which was obtained of God, by Faſtings and Prayers unto him; which, if it be admitted, gives no Ground to conclude from thence, that they obſerved a Faſt upon this Occaſion, as well as a Feaſt. The *Jews* indeed think quite otherwiſe; and if we may believe their *Calendar*, have ever ſince kept a Faſt on the thirteenth of *Adar*, which was the Day appointed for their Extirpation. Upon the Hearing of which Decree, all Places were filled with doleful Lamentations, there being no Help for them if God did not deliver them; unto whom therefore they cried with Faſting and Prayer. In Memory of which they undertook to keep a yearly Faſt, as well as Days of Feaſting and Gladneſs, which immediately enſued. But their Calendar is a new Piece, and of no Credit at all, nor do we find the leaſt Indication that *Eſther*, or *Mordecai* enjoined any Thing but a Feaſt, no mention being made of a Faſt in their Decree. And therefore it was voluntarily undertaken by the *Jews* themſelves in After-Ages, as this Verſe ſeems to import. Which the *former Targum* thus paraphraſes (and the *latter* to the ſame Purpoſe) *To confirm theſe Days of Purim, as Mordecai the Jew, and Eſther the Queen appointed concerning them: And as the Jews ordained for themſelves, and for their Poſterity, to keep in Memory the Matter of their Faſtings and their Prayers.*

Ver. 32. *And the Decree of Eſther confirmed theſe Matters of Purim, and it was written in the Book.*] Either ſhe made a new Decree by her ſole Authority to inforce the former; or the Meaning is, that ſhe commanded the forementioned Decree, which confirmed the Days of *Purim*, to be recorded and made a publick Act, in a Book where perhaps this whole Hiſtory was contained: Which Record teſtified in Time to come, what paſſed in her Days; *viz.* their Danger, and their wonderful Deliverance, and the Decree of *Eſther* concerning the Obſervation of theſe Days.

CHAP. X.

Ver. 1. *AND the King Ahaſuerus laid a Tribute upon the Land, and upon the Iſles of the Sea.*] Having great Occaſion for Money, he laid a new Tax upon all his Provinces, both in the Continent (as we ſpeak) and in the Iſles of the Sea, belonging to his Dominions. Some think, that the Impoſts which he releaſed to his People at the Marriage of *Eſther* (ii. 18.) which continued for ſome Years, were now revived, and that this is all which is meant by theſe Words. But this doth not well agree with this Phraſe, of *laying a Tribute* on them. Our Primate *Uſher* underſtands by the *Iſles* here mentioned, thoſe in the *Ægean Sea*, which were conquered by *Darius Hyſtaſpis*, who was the firſt that laid a Tribute on his Subjects; for *Cyrus* and *Cambyſes* before him laid none; but being begun, they continued it to the Reign of this King, *ad Annum Per. Julian.* 4219. *Strabo* ſaith (Lib. xv. p. 735.) that the Tribute exacted on the Sea-coaſt was paid in Silver; but that from the Land, in ſuch Commodities as every Country afforded, in Wool, Drugs, Cattle, *&c.*

Ver. 2. *And all the Acts of his Power, and of his Might,*] Which was ſo great, that the *Egyptians* in their *Hieroglyphicks* repreſented *Ochus* by a *Sword*. And *Plutarch* (as *Jacobus Capellus* obſerves) calls him the moſt terrible of all the *Perſian* Kings.

And the Declaration of the Greatneſs of Mordecai, whereunto the King advanced him, are they not written in the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Media and Perſia?] Theſe Words ſignify, that as this King did great Things, ſo they were to be aſcribed very much to the Management of *Mordecai*, after he was advanced to the higheſt Authority in the Kingdom. But it was not the Deſign of the Author of this Hiſtory, to relate ſuch Things; for which he refers to the publick Records of the Kingdom, which were kept in ſome Part of the King's Houſe (it appears from vi. 1.) and were extant in thoſe Days, when this Book was written.

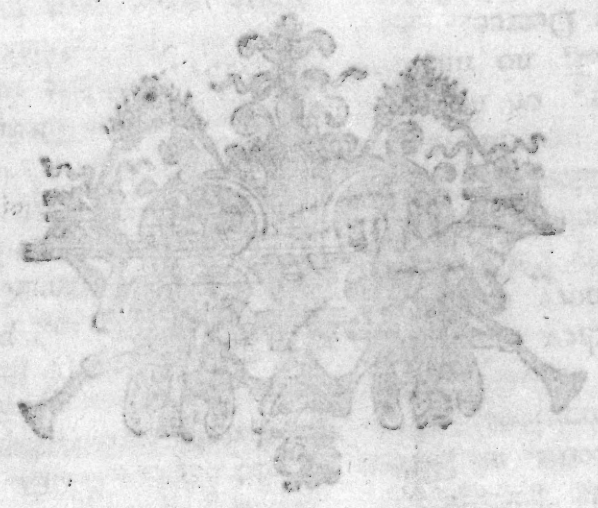
Ver. 3. *For Mordecai the Jew was next unto King Ahaſuerus,*] I cannot but obſerve here, in the Concluſion of this Book, that *Mordecai* is ſo often called *the Jew* by this Author (ſee ix. 29, 31.) that it hath inclined me to think it was not written by one of that Nation, but by ſome Proſelyte of *Perſia* who was converted, as many were at this Time (viii. 17.) to the *Jewiſh* Religion. Some of which might be in theſe Times divinely inſpired, as *Nicholas* a Proſelyte of *Antioch* was in the Apoſtles Days, *Acts* vi. 5. But I have no Authority for this, which I mention as a meer Conjecture.

And great among the Jews, and accepted of the Multitude of his Brethren,] His Greatneſs did not make him forget his Brethren; by whom he was highly eſteemed, and much honoured by every one of them.

Seeking

Seeking the Wealth of his People,] And no Wonder he was ſo acceptable, for his Study was how to do them good.

And ſpeaking Peace to all his Seed.] Adviſing and promoting whatſoever was for their Advantage; and ſpeaking ſtill to the King for that which might tend to the Happineſs and Proſperity of his Nation, which he advanced to the utmoſt of his Power. Unto which a moſt earneſt Deſire of the Coming of the MESSIAH contributed exceedingly, and the ſerious Study of the Law, which he recommended to them, as the only Means of living happily. Thus *Conradus Pellicanus* concludes his *Commentary* on this Book; but where he found this I cannot tell. It is only highly probable, that ſo good a Man as *Mordecai*, was very ſolicitous they ſhould be obedient to the Law of *Moſes* (as *Malachi* was) and live in Expectation of the MESSIAH, concerning whom *Moſes* propheſied. For as *Epiphanius*, and *Seder Olam*, and others obſerve, this Book of *Eſther* is the laſt Canonical Book of the *Old Teſtament*; and the nearer they approached to the Coming of *Chriſt*, the more deſirous holy Men were to ſee him. Others indeed think *Malachi* is the laſt divine Writer; but on the other Side, it ſeems probable, that he having taken no Notice of the Deliverance under *Eſther*, propheſied ſome Time before it.



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